

God's Greatest Gift:
The Lamb

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*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from
the King James Version.*

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INTRODUCTION

“As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter” (Romans 8:36).

If we behold God’s Lamb, Jesus Christ, then being led *daily* as sheep to the slaughter is not a burden; it is a great privilege. But, a believer will never desire to qualify for this privilege until he understands this message. If I am walking in the light, confessed up to date, there is always a wonderful purpose for the next thing God allows in my life—whether it’s a blessing, or a blessing in disguise because of suffering.

However, most people do not behold the Lamb. Instead, they behold lust patterns in sick minds. People who complain are not following the Lamb. People who live in negativity or depression are not following the Lamb.

Those who follow the Lamb recognize Him as God’s greatest gift to man. I will follow the

Lamb because I behold Him. I become occupied with His nature, gazing upon His meekness and gentleness, which were expressed on my behalf at the Cross and are still expressed as He intercedes for me in heaven. Knowing this gives me the desire to follow the Lamb and lay down my life with a lamb-like spirit.

I cannot behold two things at once. I cannot behold my problems *and* the Lamb; one would interfere with the other. So, I learn to behold the Lamb, placing Jesus Christ before everything in my life, which reveals great honor—a tribute to Him, who alone deserves all the glory.

Chapter One

THE LAMB THAT TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Lambs were made to be used as food and to provide wool for garments. They are gentle creatures. Therefore, the Lord likened Himself unto a lamb.

After thousands and thousands of ceremonial sacrifices through the ages, perhaps we can have some idea of how tremendous that event was when John the Baptist realized who Jesus Christ was and is. Imagine how John must have felt at that moment when he beheld the Lamb of God coming toward him! With his understanding of the Passover and what the lamb represented in the Old Testament sacrifices, this wonderful man of God cried out, “Behold the Lamb of God.”

The Passover Sacrifice

Throughout the Scriptures, the lamb is always included as part of the Passover. In Exodus 12:3-8 God established the Passover: "In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it."

In Numbers 9:2-3, the Lord told Moses concerning the Passover, "Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season

...according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.”

The children of Israel were to eat all of the lamb on the same night it was prepared, so they could go on their journey; nothing was to be left until the morning (Exodus 12:10). “And [Pharaoh] called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said” (Exodus 12:31).

The Two Goats

“And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD’S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:7-10).

In Leviticus 16, there were two goats, which picture of the God-ward and man-ward aspects

of the sacrifice of the Lamb—*expiation* and *propitiation*. In expiation, Jesus Christ died, representing all men, to satisfy the demands of the Father's perfect justice and holiness. In propitiation, Christ paid the price of sin for man so that man could have free access to God through mercy. Too often, expiation and propitiation are confused because people think they are interchangeable terms, but they are not. That's why there were two goats—one for God and one for us.

As the lot fell upon the scapegoat of Leviticus 16:8, so the lot of expiation had to fall on Jesus, but He first had to vindicate the holiness, righteousness, and justice of God's majesty by living His life on earth without sin. If the Father's justice had not been vindicated by the Son's sinless life, the lot would never have been able to fall upon Him as the scapegoat, who carried our sins away.

Chapter Two
THE LAMB IN ETERNITY

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood the Lamb *as it had been slain...*” (Revelation 5:6).

Think of all the sacrifices that had been made under the law, to meet the needs of so many. Then, finally, the Son of God comes on the scene! I hope when I’m in heaven, God will allow me to see an eternal picture of that moment when John saw Jesus and cried out, “Behold the Lamb.” What a moment that must have been.

Consider the gentleness and meekness of Jesus, who was “brought as a lamb to the slaughter” (Isaiah 53:7). We will see the effects of that slaughter throughout eternity (Revelation 5:6). This is so significant: Jesus Christ will have *fresh* wounds in His hands, His feet, and His side. He will bear those marks for all eternity.

I have often wondered—even after the former things are passed away and Jesus has wiped away the tears from our eyes—why will those wounds remain fresh forever? It is because God the Father, who will wipe away every remembrance of sin, will not allow one single redeemed person to forget the sacrifice of the Lamb, His only Son, who was wounded and shed His blood for all of our sins.

Reclaiming the Title Deed

“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon” (Revelation 5:1-3).

This scene in heaven will take place after the Rapture of the Church (Revelation 4:1-2; 3:10). God the Father is there, seated on His throne, with the title deed to the universe in His hand. All born-again believers will be there. Yet, of all the multitudes of the redeemed there in heaven at that moment, *no one* is qualified to take the title deed to the universe from the Father.

Imagine the drama that is going to take place there. Remember, the glorified Lamb, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, has not yet appeared on the stage of this eternal drama. So, we, along with the multitudes of Church-age believers, will weep (Revelation 5:4), because among all of those present, no one will be able to take the title deed to the universe, which Adam, representing all men, forfeited to Satan in the Fall.

Then, in Revelation 5:6, while the multitudes are weeping, the Lamb comes on the stage! This is an eternal scene in the drama of eternal history: The Lamb goes over to the Father and takes the title deed.

A New Song

At that moment, supernaturally—and with all the spontaneous recognition of the reality of redemption—we will all break into a *new* song. No one has ever heard that song. Yet, in all the beauty and perfection of eternal glory, and with the supernatural essence of our new bodies, we will sing about the Lamb and the Blood: “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation”

(Revelation 5:9). Supernaturally, we will be given the words without any past knowledge of them.

Picture it! All of us will be there, in perfect bodies, weeping because none can be found to open the book, then singing when our redeemer, the Lamb, makes His entrance. We will behold Him. We will be gazing at the Lamb, totally occupied with Him.

In eternity, we will behold Him in His glorified state. In the billions of years to come, the Father will never let us forget that the Lamb was slain for us. We will *not* have old sin natures nor any remembrance of our sins. Still, the Father will never let us forget the Lamb! That is why praise, honor, and glory will always go to the Lamb. All of us, in our heavenly perfection, with our old sin natures gone, will enter into perfect praise, adoration, and worship as we behold the glorified Lamb of God.

Chapter Three

LED TO THE SLAUGHTER

“These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are *virgins*. These are they which follow the Lamb withersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb” (Revelation 14:4).

This passage, speaking of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (the virgins) who will be commissioned to preach during the Tribulation period, has application for believers in the Church Age. It says that they followed the Lamb wherever He went. In order to follow the Lamb, it is necessary that we, too, live as sheep who are led daily to the slaughter (Romans 8:36). This is what it means to follow the Lamb.

Whatever the plan of God holds, whatever His eternal purpose is, if we are going to follow the Lamb, identify with Him, and experience fellowship with Him, we must be led to the

slaughter every day. A wife who is led to the slaughter doesn't defraud her husband in sex, even if he doesn't deserve it. A man who is led to the slaughter is a great husband to his wife, even if she doesn't deserve his initiations of grace. A single person who is led to the slaughter daily has godliness with contentment, even if God doesn't see fit to bring him someone to marry. They are following the Lamb.

The virgins in Revelation 14 will be in the devastating Tribulation period as saved people; and they follow the Lamb through it. In Revelation 1, the apostle John had been exiled to the isle of Patmos because of the great persecution of the Church, during the reign of the emperor Domitian. During this time of personal tribulation, John continued to behold the Lamb. In our times of tribulation, even as Jesus Christ was a friend to John on Patmos, He is our friend. No matter how dark our circumstances may be, the Lamb is the light of heaven (Revelation 21:23).

Continue Beholding Him

If I continually behold the Lamb, I will be so overcome that I will be humbled in every area of life. As I look at the Lamb, the questions I have about my life will be answered. As I look at the

Lamb, my relationships become very meaningful. As I behold the Lamb, studying is a thrill.

If I behold the Lamb, I will have no problem with people who take advantage of me. As I behold the Lamb in the Gospels, I see God Almighty becoming a man, suffering because of human sin and the satanic government of evil around Him. I can see the Lamb being led, by the Father, to the slaughter.

Chapter Four
FOLLOWING THE LAMB
IN DEGREES OF GRACE

There are progressive stages in the Christian life, and there is grace for every stage. First, there is *common grace* for all people, saved or unsaved. God makes the sun rise on the evil and the good, and sends the rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45b). Everyone gets common grace because of Christ's unlimited atonement—because of the Lamb. *Efficacious grace* is for those who have believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior. They are saved by grace through faith forever (Ephesians 2:8).

We have *grace to grow* in the knowledge and experience of His person, lordship, and nature through doctrine (2 Peter 3:18). As we grow in grace, we are *established in grace* through sound doctrine which produces sound minds (Hebrews 13:9).

Then we enter into *greater grace* (James 4:6), advancing to the stage where we can be used against Satan. God uses greater grace Christians throughout the world, no matter who they are or where they go to church. He allows them to be persecuted, like Job, and despised, like the apostle Paul. They go through trials to prove God's character and vindicate His faithfulness to sinners saved by grace. A greater grace Christian is one who has become a living testimony for Jesus Christ. This believer is unaware that he is a witness for Christ in the invisible battle between Satan and God.

Finally, there is *supreme grace*—the height of grace in the degrees of growing in Christ. In supreme grace, Jesus uses me in the angelic conflict to suffer far beyond what other people might suffer. He can use me to suffer in my marriage, if that's God's design. He can use me to suffer as a pastor, or to suffer in illness if that's His will. He can use me in anything.

Vindication for His Character

When we follow the Lamb, we vindicate the truth about God's character before Lucifer and his demons. We validate the truth that Jesus Christ is indeed the Lamb for us, though we do

not deserve it. Not only did He pay for our sins, but He also gives us the spirit of the Lamb to reveal to the fallen angels what they are missing in their state of rebellion against the Lord.

Satan is always approaching God and His people from a different angle. This is why suffering has to be diverse, so I can receive manifold grace to handle manifold trials and temptations.

I can picture the devil coming before God, asking for permission to make Fanny Crosby blind: "If you let me bring blindness to this saint of God, she will not be as spiritual as she is now." God permitted it so, in turn, she could glorify God through her blindness as she wrote over eight thousand magnificent hymns. She glorified God in a manifold temptation of Satan without ever being told why she was blind.

Amy Carmichael was bed-ridden for the same reason—to bring glory to God in the angelic conflict. It was not because she lacked faith, or because she had done something to deserve it. No, her affliction was allowed because she was a greater grace Christian who went on to the highest honor on earth: she experienced supreme grace through undeserved suffering. At the Bema Seat of Christ, Amy Carmichael and Fanny Crosby will receive tremendous rewards be-

cause they glorified God despite unusually terrible conditions.

This is what it means to follow the Lamb. God places us in situations daily where we must be led to the slaughter; not occasionally, not only when we are feeling spiritual, not just when we are having a good week or month. Romans 8:36 says we are to be led to the slaughter *daily*.

CONCLUSION

Behold the Lamb! If you have a problem in your life, behold Jesus Christ, gaze upon Him, be occupied with Him.

David, in Psalm 16:8, said that he always set the Lord before his face. This means he was beholding the Lord in His victory as the Lamb. David did not set lustful thoughts, problems or sorrow before his face; he set the Lord before him.

We must gaze upon the Lamb. We must behold Him and love what we see so that we will follow Him wherever He goes. Daily, we must be led to the slaughter and take up the spirit of the Lamb.

Following the Lamb will motivate us to lay down our lives. Purified in holiness, living in the quietness of heaven's provisions, we will begin to reveal the gentleness and meekness of the Lamb.

Just as a lamb is used for food, our lives become bread for others. Just as a lamb's wool provides clothing, our edification becomes a covering for others as they are becoming established in Christ. Our lives vindicate the Finished Work victory of the Son, as sinners saved by grace.