

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE LAMB

by David Yoon

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the center of the Divine Trinity and the holy Word. The intrinsic focus of the divine revelation in the holy Word is the all-inclusive Christ as the centrality and universality of the Triune God and of His eternal economy. No other person, matter, or event spoken of in the entire Bible is greater, higher, or more important than Jesus Christ.

As the last book of the Bible and conclusion of the entire revelation in God's Word, the book of Revelation is the consummate revelation, the ultimate unveiling, of Jesus Christ. This fact is communicated by John's opening words: *the revelation of Jesus Christ* (1:1). This particular expression indicates that this book is not merely a revelation conveyed *by* Christ but also a revelation *concerning* Christ and an unveiling *of* Christ. Christ is not only the agent of the revelation shown in this book but also, more significantly, the content of the revelation, its focal point and predominant figure. Horatius Bonar echoes this notion in "The Book of the Last Days":

The title of this last and most wondrous of inspired books is "the Revelation (uncovering, unveiling) of Jesus Christ." It is He who here "unveils," and who is here UNVEILED to us, and shines out with transfiguration-brightness before the Church's eye. The spirit and sum of this book is "testimony to Christ" (ch. xix. 10). He is its Alpha and Omega. We find Him everywhere,—in description, in song, in symbol, in prediction; in things past, present, and to come. Here Christ is all and in all. This last book completes the "unveiling" which was begun in the Gospels and carried on through the Epistles. The last fragment of the veil is here taken from His face. We see Him *as He is*, on the Father's right hand, on the throne, through the rent veil. The heavens are opened, and we are made to see Him (as Stephen did) in His present glory and in the glory of His second coming. (209)

Based on Revelation 1:1, C. I. Scofield in *The Scofield Reference Bible* states that Christ is "the central *theme* of the book" (1330). To be sure, Revelation is a book of prophecy, revealing many details regarding "the things that must quickly take place" and "the things which are about to take place" (vv. 1, 19; cf. 4:1). However, the future events recorded in this book must be properly understood as the background that reveals Christ as He carries out God's eternal purpose to its completion. The subject of this book is not coming events but an excellent, mysterious, and marvelous person—Christ as the center of God's universal administration according to God's eternal economy. Revelation describes the things to come mainly because Christ is unveiled in them. Regrettably, many study Revelation out of a fascination with end-time prophecies rather than out of a desire to know Christ. Such ones need to realize that the book of Revelation was written not primarily to provide a preview of the things to come but to present the unique and ultimate revelation of the all-inclusive Christ for the fulfillment of God's economy. The coming events predicted in Revelation,

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beginning from the ascension of Christ and continuing into eternity future, are but the issue of Christ in His person and work and set the stage for the unveiling of Christ as He is.

One of the most prominent aspects of Christ unveiled in the book of Revelation is that of Him as the Lamb. Throughout the Old Testament Christ is intimated as the Lamb (Gen. 22:7-8; Exo. 12:3-13; 29:40-42; 34:20; Lev. 4:32, 35; 5:7; 9:3; 14:10; Ezek. 45:13, 15; Isa. 53:7; cf. Jer. 11:19). In the four Gospels and the book of Acts Christ is referred to as the Lamb three times (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32), and the Epistles mention Christ as the Lamb once (1 Pet. 1:19). However, the concluding book of the Bible contains twenty-eight references to *a Lamb* or *the Lamb* (both signifying Christ), and many of these occur in passages laden with profound significance concerning God's economy, including the redemption of the believers, the conquest of God's enemies, and God's reign over the universe. Given this designation's conspicuous frequency in the book of Revelation, biblical commentators have identified "the Lamb" as "the dominant title for Jesus" (Guthrie 64), "the key figure in the visions of Revelation" (Barker 8), and "the leading Christological expression of the book" (Gallusz 54). In "The Lamb in the Structure of the Book of Revelation" Donald Guthrie goes so far as to state that "the title Lamb must provide an important clue for determining the purpose and meaning of the whole book" (64).

Many expositors contend that the principal theme of the book of Revelation is concerned with the Lamb's victory and reign through His suffering and death as a pattern for the believers. In other words, since the Lamb, who is enthroned in heaven and destined to rule for eternity, conquers evil not through His "military might" but through His "sacrificial death" on the cross (MacLeod 334), the believers, if they would share His throne with Him, should follow His example and conquer evil not through "hostile action" but through "fidelity and endurance" (McDonald 39, cf. 45-46). Robert H. Mounce enunciates this notion in "The Christology of the Apocalypse," stating that the Lamb of Revelation is the very embodiment of "love going forth in sacrifice"—a "messianic leader" who has achieved His position "not... by force but by sacrifice" and "in complete and perfect self-surrender" (45). In Mounce's view, "this concept of victory through sacrifice is the underlying philosophy of the entire Apocalypse" (45). Accordingly, Mounce suggests that since Christ's sacrifice "supplies both the example and the enabling power for believers about to pass through the fiery trial of martyrdom" (45), His followers should "take the way of the Lamb," which he defines as the way of "the self-sacrifice of holy love" (50).

However, this notion of the Lamb in Revelation, reflecting only a "philosophy of martyrdom" (50), comes short of capturing the intrinsic and strikingly profound essence of the visions in Revelation. The book of Revelation unveils Christ as the crucified, resurrected, ascended, glorified, and enthroned Lamb who, as the embodiment of God in the flesh realized as the life-giving Spirit, carries out God's New Testament economy for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose to express His glorious image and establish His unshakable dominion through humanity. In executing this grand economy, Christ as the redeeming Lamb has purchased God's chosen people by His blood, and He administrates the universe as the Lion-Lamb on the throne through the seven eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven Spirits of God. He also imparts Himself into the believers in order to reproduce Himself in them, making them the testimony of Jesus, the corporate expression of God in Christ.

The Redeeming Lamb

The redeeming Lamb in Revelation is the reality of the Old Testament type of the lamb. He is the fulfillment of the type of the passover lamb that redeemed the first-born of the Israelites (Exo. 12:3-13; 1 Cor. 5:7); the Servant of Jehovah who, as a

lamb led to slaughter, bore the iniquities of sinners and suffered God's judgment in their place (Isa. 52:13—53:12); and the Old Testament offerings, including the burnt offering (Lev. 9:3), the peace offering (3:6), the sin offering (4:32), the trespass offering (5:6), the wave offering (14:12), the heave offering (Ezek. 45:13, 15), and the freewill offering (Lev. 22:21). The redeeming Lamb in Revelation is also the consummation of the Lamb unveiled in the New Testament. The Lamb was foreknown before the foundation of the world, indicating that before the creation of the universe, He was ordained by God to be the redeeming Lamb according to God's determined counsel and foreknowledge, by which He anticipated the fall of man (1 Pet. 1:19-20; Acts 2:23). Hence, in the eternal view of God, the Lamb was slain "from the foundation of the world, that is, from the fall of man as part of the world... (Rev. 13:8)" (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Pet. 1:20, note 1). When the fullness of the time came, Christ the Lamb was manifested for the sake of God's elect; He as the eternal Word became flesh in order to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Gal. 4:4; John 1:1, 14, 29). Apart from becoming flesh, that is, without partaking of blood and flesh, He could not have been the redeeming Lamb, for He would have had neither a sinless body with which to bear our sins nor genuine human blood to shed for the forgiveness and cleansing of our sins (Heb. 2:14; 9:22; 1 Pet. 2:24; Matt. 26:28; 1 John 1:7, 9).

As the Lamb of God who was obedient to God and meek before man, He delivered Himself into the hands of His persecutors without resistance and submitted Himself to God's will to suffer the death of a cross, dying a substitutionary death in order to put away sin—the inward nature of sin—and take away sins—the outward acts of sin (Phil. 2:8; Jer. 11:19; Matt. 11:29; Acts 8:32; Heb. 9:26; 1 John 3:5). On the cross, as the Lamb without blemish and without spot, He poured out His precious and incorruptible blood, the blood of God's sacrifice, in order to redeem us from our vain manner of life unto a holy life (1 Pet. 1:15-19; Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:28; John 19:34; Exo. 23:18). In light of the Lamb unveiled in the first sixty-five books of the Bible, the redeeming Lamb in Revelation should be understood as the God-ordained Redeemer, the incarnated and crucified Christ as a God-man whose sinless body bore our sins on the cross and whose precious blood cleanses us from our sins for our judicial redemption.

In Revelation the Lamb is tied to the word *slain* four times, alluding to His redemptive death on the cross (5:6, 9, 12; 13:8). The book of Revelation unveils the rich experiential implications of the redemption that Christ the Lamb accomplished through the shedding of His blood. In 1:5 John says that Christ the Lamb "loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood." The proof of the Lamb's love is seen in the pouring out of His precious blood on our behalf, which both cleanses us from our sins and releases us from the consequences of sin, including judgment, condemnation, wrath, and death. In the verse immediately following, John further states that because of the Lamb's love for us, we have been made "a kingdom, priests to His God and Father." The juxtaposition of these two verses implies that the redemption accomplished through His blood has made us a kingdom and priests to God. The goal of the Lamb's redemption is that we may become a kingdom of priests (Exo. 19:6). The kingdom of God is a divine realm in which God can exercise His authority, His dominion, for the fulfillment of His intention (Matt. 6:9-10).

In the Old Testament, priests were given to eat of the offerings and the bread of the Presence (Lev. 2:3; 10:17; 24:9), signifying that the New Testament believers may, as priests, participate in Christ as the reality of all the offerings and of the bread of the Presence (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 5:12; John 6:48-51). According to Exodus, the priestly garments, which were primarily for "glory" and "beauty" (28:2), signify the expression of Christ's divine glory, His divine attributes, and His human beauty, His human virtues. Hence, the New Testament priests are the believers who partake of Christ as

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their life and life supply and thus live Christ, the image of the invisible God, for His magnification so that they may express Christ with divine glory and human beauty (Phil. 1:19-21; 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4; Col. 1:15). Because the Lamb loves us, He shed His blood to redeem us so that we might fulfill God's purpose by expressing Him in His image and representing Him with His dominion. This thought is echoed in Revelation 5:9-10, which records a song of praise addressed to the Lamb: "You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth." These verses reveal that the Lamb has paid the price of His blood to purchase men out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation in order to make these redeemed ones a kingdom and priests to God so that they may reign on the earth as kings for the representation of God's authority and accomplish the divine ministry as priests for the expression of God's image.

The relationship between the blood of the Lamb and the kingdom of God is further indicated in Revelation 12:7-11, in which the casting down of Satan from heaven to earth, following the war in heaven, ushers in the kingdom of God and the authority of His Christ. According to verse 5, the man-child, composed of the overcomers, is caught up to the throne of God in heaven. Verse 11 indicates that a primary characteristic of these believers is that they overcame the devil "because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony." The blood of the spotless Lamb, not the believers' perfect conduct, is the basis for victory in spiritual warfare against the ancient serpent, Satan, who accuses the brothers before God day and night (v. 10). Christ's redeeming blood answers before God all the accusations of the devil, silencing his slandering mouth and enabling us to conquer him. As children of God, we must see the value, effectiveness, power, and authority of the blood of the Lamb and learn to apply His blood as our covering against Satan's attacks. We need to reject every accusation of the devil, exercise our faith in the Lamb's blood, and boldly declare to the foe the word of our testimony that the blood of the Lamb has cleansed us from every sin and that we overcome him not by our merit or strength but by the prevailing blood of the Lamb (Rom. 3:25). This is to execute God's rule over His enemy for the establishment of His dominion, for wherever Satan is overcome, the kingdom of God is brought in (Matt. 12:25-29).

Revelation also unveils that the blood of the Lamb opens the way for the believers to enter into the temple of God and participate in Him as their life and life supply (John 14:6). According to Revelation 7:9, the believers—those who have been purchased for God by the blood of the Lamb out of every nation, tribe, people, and tongue—stand before the Lamb "clothed in white robes." "Robes (plural) signify the righteousness of the believers' conduct," and "white indicates that the conduct of the believers is pure and has been approved by God through having been washed in the blood of the Lamb (v. 14)" (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 9, note 3). Immediately after saying that the believers "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (v. 14), John declares, "Because of this they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them...For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life" (vv. 15, 17). This indicates that because of the washing of the blood of Christ, the believers are brought into God's temple to serve the living God (Heb. 9:14) and to enjoy Christ overshadowing them as their tabernacle, and that through the cleansing of the blood of the Lamb, they are shepherded by Him and led by Him to the waters of life to enjoy the dispensing of the Triune God as life for their satisfaction.

The blood of the Lamb not only qualifies us to serve God in His temple and to drink of the springs of water of life but also gives us the right to feed on God in Christ as the tree of life (John 1:4; 14:6; 15:1) and to enter into the holy city, the New Jerusalem

(Rev. 21:2). Verse 14 of chapter 22 says, “Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.” After creating man, God placed him in front of the tree of life, a symbol of God in Christ as life to man, indicating that man had the right to partake of Him as life (Gen. 2:7-9). However, because of his fall, man’s access to the tree of life was closed off by virtue of God’s glory, signified by the cherubim (3:24; cf. Ezek. 9:3; 10:4; Heb. 9:5); God’s holiness, signified by a flame (cf. Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29); and God’s righteousness, signified by a slaying sword (cf. Lam. 3:42-43; Rom. 2:5). As the Lamb of God, Christ fulfilled the demands of God’s glory, holiness, and righteousness through His redemptive death on the cross, restoring man’s access to the tree of life. When Christ’s flesh was crucified, the veil of the temple was rent (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19-20), thereby abolishing the separation between us and God and opening the way for us to enter into the Holy of Holies to contact God and enjoy Him as the tree of life. Those who wash their robes in the redeeming blood of the Lamb are truly blessed, for they may come forward to the Holy of Holies with boldness by the blood of Jesus to partake of the tree of life in the holy city as their portion (v. 19; Rev. 22:14). The believers’ enjoyment of the Triune God as the water of life and the tree of life based on the Lamb’s redemption will consummate in the New Jerusalem, where they will eat of the tree of life and drink of the river of water of life, which flows from the throne of God and of the redeeming Lamb (vv. 1-3).

The Lion-Lamb

Although Revelation presents a wonderful portrait of the Lamb slain for our redemption, the Lamb in Revelation is much more than a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins; He is also the triumphant King enthroned in heaven as the Executor of God’s administration. Revelation 4 presents a vision of the throne in heaven and of the God who sits upon it (vv. 2-3), and Revelation 5 presents a vision of the slain, resurrected, and ascended Lamb in the midst of the throne. The apostle John saw on the right hand of God on the throne “a scroll written within and on the back, sealed up with seven seals” (v. 1). John also saw “a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll and to break its seals?” (v. 2). Here the scroll is the new covenant, the new testament, “enacted with the blood of the Lamb for God’s redemption of the church, Israel, the world, and the universe” (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 1, note 1). According to the context of the book of Revelation, the scroll with its seven seals signifies God’s New Testament economy from Christ’s ascension to His eternal reign in the New Jerusalem (6:1—11:15; 22:1). To open the scroll is both to unlock the mystery of God’s economy, which has been hidden in Him throughout the ages, and to accomplish this economy for the realization of the good pleasure of His will (4:11; Eph. 3:9; 1:5, 10). Yet no one in heaven nor on the earth nor under the earth was able to open the scroll or look into it (Rev. 5:3-4). Thus, John wept much, moved by a deep concern for the execution of God’s economy. However, John heard the glad tidings from one of the elders: “Do not weep; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so that He may open the scroll and its seven seals” (v. 5). Although Christ was introduced to John as the Lion, John saw Him as the Lamb: “I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth” (v. 6).

When this Lion-Lamb took the scroll out of the right hand of God on the throne, He was praised for being worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, for He had been slain and had purchased the believers for God by His blood (vv. 7-9). If the scroll containing the secret of God’s economy had remained forever sealed, the universe and all things therein would have concluded in vanity, because the will of God, for which they were created, would have remained concealed and unfulfilled (4:11; cf. Eph. 1:4-5). Yet Christ came, both as the meek Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world,

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experienced as the
sevenfold Spirit.*

accomplish redemption, and establish the new covenant with His blood (Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:20) and as the victorious Lion to bind the strong man and overcome the world through His God-expressing human living, to destroy the devil in His all-terminating crucifixion, to overcome death, Hades, and the grave in His all-conquering resurrection, and to vanquish the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies in His all-transcending ascension (Matt. 12:29; John 16:33; Heb. 2:14; Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:18; Eph. 1:21; 6:12; 1 Pet. 3:22). Having removed all hindrances to the accomplishment of God's economy, Christ as the redeeming Lamb and the overcoming Lion is uniquely qualified to unveil and execute God's mysterious economy. For this reason, Revelation 5 unveils the coronation of the Lamb as the God-appointed Administrator of the universe, One invested with all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18), with all the creatures in the universe echoing the joyful praise of the four living creatures and the twenty-four angelic elders in worshipping the Lion-Lamb as the only One worthy to disclose and accomplish God's will: "Worthy is the Lamb who has been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing...To the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever" (Rev. 5:12-13).

In Revelation the Lamb is mentioned in conjunction with the throne of God, which is the center of God's administration, eight times (vv. 6, 13; 6:16; 7:9-10, 17; 22:1, 3). On the one hand, the ascended Lamb is sitting on the throne of the divine administration in heaven, the throne of God and of the Lamb (v. 1), for He testified, "I...overcame and sat with My Father on His throne" (3:21). According to the book of Hebrews, Christ, "having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (1:3); that is, He "sat down on the right hand of the throne of God" (12:2; cf. 8:1). Having successfully accomplished His ministry on earth by offering Himself as a sacrifice for sins, removing sins once for all, and obtaining an eternal redemption, Christ ascended and sat down forever on the right hand of the throne of God in the heavens, where He has been restfully sitting ever since (9:12; 10:12). On the other hand, the Lamb is standing in the midst of the throne to execute His heavenly ministry for the administration of God's universal government. Revelation unveils that, in carrying out the divine administration, the glorified, enthroned Lion-Lamb with His seven burning eyes is exceedingly active and operative. As the Ruler of the kings of the earth, He reigns over the entire earth for the building of the church; He also operates, as the High Priest walking among the churches, within the believers to make the churches the golden lampstands, the shining testimony of Jesus (1:5, 12-13, 20; 2:1).

The Lamb with Seven Eyes


In Revelation 5:6 the ascended Lamb, the God-ordained Administrator of the divine government over the universe, is described as having seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. This indicates that Christ the Lamb carries out God's New Testament economy by means of the seven Spirits of God. In George Eldon Ladd's view, *the seven Spirits* refers to "the Holy Spirit in his sevenfold fullness" (24). This designation of the Spirit should be understood not as referring to seven individual Spirits but to the one unique Spirit of God who has been intensified sevenfold to counteract the degradation of the church and to complete God's economical move on earth (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13): "In essence and existence, God's Spirit is one; in the intensified function and work of God's operation, God's Spirit is sevenfold" (Lee, Recovery Version, Rev. 1:4, note 5). In the same way that a person's expression is conveyed by his eyes, which are distinguishable but not separate from his person, so also the seven Spirits of God as the seven eyes of the Lamb express the Lamb but cannot be separated from Him. The sevenfold intensified Spirit as the eyes of the Son is the reality of the Son. In other words, Christ the Lamb is realized, expressed, and experienced as the sevenfold Spirit. The Lord Jesus as the last Adam became the life-giving

Spirit in resurrection, and the Lord in His post-resurrection status is the Spirit today (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17). This is confirmed by the fact that each of the seven epistles in Revelation 2 and 3 begins with a proclamation from Christ to the messenger of each church yet concludes with a call to hear what the Spirit speaks to the churches. Christ's speaking is characterized as the Spirit's speaking because the Spirit is Christ reaching the churches and applying Himself to them (John 16:13-14). John conveys a similar notion in Revelation 22:17 with the expression *the Spirit and the bride say*. Since in 21:9 the bride is identified as "the wife of the Lamb," we might expect 22:17 to read "the Lamb and the bride." However, verse 17 pairs the Spirit with the bride, indicating that as the realization of the Lamb, the Spirit is the counterpart of the bride. Therefore, *the seven Spirits of God* refers to the sevenfold intensified pneumatic Christ, the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit in His sevenfold intensification. It is as the sevenfold intensified pneumatic Christ that the Lamb executes God's administration for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose.

The seven Spirits of the Lamb, through which the Lamb carries out God's governmental administration in the universe, are closely linked with the throne of God. In Revelation 1:4 John says that the seven Spirits are before the throne, immediately before speaking of Jesus Christ as "the Ruler of the kings of the earth" (v. 5). Furthermore, in Revelation 4:5 John identifies the seven Spirits as the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." The throne in these verses refers to the throne of God and of the Lamb, the throne of administration on which Christ sits with His Father (3:21). This suggests that the seven Spirits execute the policies, decisions, and judgments of the administrative throne in coordination with the enthroned Lamb who sovereignly rules over the earth to manage the world situation for the spread of the gospel and the raising up of the churches (1:5; Matt. 16:18; Zech. 4:6, 10). All the domestic and international affairs on earth are subject to the flame of the seven Spirits before the throne of God. In brief, Christ the Lamb carries out His work as the Ruler of the kings of the earth by means of His seven eyes, the seven burning Spirits who are before His throne and who are sent forth into every part of the earth (cf. Prov. 15:3; 20:8).

The Lamb with His seven flaming eyes executes God's judgment not only upon the earth but also upon the churches, enlightening, observing, searching, and burning the believers in order to purify them. In "The Christology of the Apocalypse," Robert H. Mounce posits that the seven eyes of the Lamb "signify perfect knowledge": "to each of the seven churches he writes, 'I know' ([Rev.] 2:2, 9, 13; 3:1, 8, 15)," "he sees all and knows all," and "nothing can escape his penetrating gaze" (44). Indeed, with His eyes like a flame of fire, Christ the Lamb is the One "who searches the inward parts and the hearts" (2:23), bringing to light aspects of the degraded situation of the churches—their abandonment of their first love, their deadness, spiritual pride, poverty, blindness, and lukewarmness—and judging the evil teachings found therein, including the teaching of Balaam, the teaching of the Nicolaitans, and the teaching of Jezebel (1:14; 2:4, 14-15, 20, 24; 3:1, 14-17; cf. John 16:8). Moreover, the seven eyes of the Lamb serve not only the negative purpose of refining the believers but also the positive purpose of infusing His element into them for their growth in life and their transformation into His image. Just as a person's eyes are the channel through which he conveys his feelings to others (cf. S. S. 4:9; 6:5; Luke 22:61), so also the seven eyes of the Lamb transmit what He is into us whenever He looks at us, thereby making us the same as He is in life, nature, and expression (but not in the Godhead). Like the apostle Paul, we need to live in the index of the Lord's eyes so that He as the overcoming Lion-Lamb may gaze uninterruptedly at us with His seven eyes, thereby transfusing Himself into our being and duplicating Himself, the unique Overcomer, in us to be the many overcomers (2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6).

As the redeeming Lamb, the overcoming Lion-Lamb, and the administrating Lamb



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The overcomers among the believers who are alive at the time of Christ's return will be reaped as the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. The first-ripe believers, the firstfruits of God's salvation in life, are the reproduction of the Lamb.

with the seven eyes, the seven Spirits, Christ is executing God's economy to gain a corporate expression of Himself in the church as the testimony of Jesus by reproducing Himself in the believers. This corporate reproduction of the Lamb is revealed mainly in four aspects: the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb for Their enjoyment; the wife of the Lamb for His satisfaction in love; the army of the Lamb for the defeat of His opposers and the bringing in of His kingdom; and the New Jerusalem for the eternal manifestation of God's glory and reign over the new heaven and new earth. These four aspects mark the consummate fulfillment of God's purpose to gain a corporate God-man, the testimony of Jesus, as His expression and representation.

The Firstfruits to God and to the Lamb

Revelation 14 shows that the overcoming believers who are the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb are a reproduction of the Lamb. In Revelation 5:6 the apostle John saw an overcoming Lamb standing alone in the midst of the throne in heaven, yet in 14:1 John saw "the Lamb standing on Mount Zion" in the heavens with one hundred forty-four thousand overcoming believers, who have "His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads." The way that Christ writes His name upon the overcoming believers is primarily through the ministry of the new covenant, which imparts Christ as "the Spirit [who] gives life" into them (2 Cor. 3:6). For the overcomers to have the name of the Lamb written on their foreheads signifies that, through the dispensing of Christ as the Spirit into them, they have been made the same as He is in life, nature, and expression, but not in the Godhead, in order to become His organic reproduction. Since Christ the Lamb is the embodiment of God, for the overcomers to become the same as Christ is for them to become the same as God.

In the New Testament the believers are described as God's cultivated land, God's crop (1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 9:37-38; Luke 10:2). In His first coming, Christ sowed Himself as the seed of the divine life into His believers (Matt. 13:3-8, 24). The firstfruits to God and to the Lamb mentioned in Revelation 14:4 are the first of God's crop to ripen. They are the overcoming believers who have matured early by allowing Christ as the seed of the divine life to grow in their heart unto maturity (Matt. 13:19, 23; Eph. 3:17). According to the epistle to the church in Philadelphia, the overcomers therein will be kept out of the hour of trial that is about to come on the whole inhabited earth, referring to the great tribulation at the end of the present age (Rev. 3:10). This means that the overcomers among the believers who are alive at the time of Christ's return will be raptured before the great tribulation, reaped as the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb, whereas the majority of the living believers will be left on earth to ripen in the "intense summer heat" of the great tribulation and will be reaped in the general harvest that will take place at its conclusion (14:14-16). The first-ripe believers who are the firstfruits of God's salvation in life are nothing less than the reproduction of the Lamb, the Son of God, who alone can satisfy God (Rom. 5:10). Like the Lamb without blemish and without spot, in whom no fault was found (1 Pet. 1:19; Exo. 12:5; John 18:38), these overcomers are also without blemish, undefiled by earthly things, wholly sanctified unto God in their spirit, soul, and body, and have their heart established "blameless in holiness" before their God and Father at the coming of the Lord Jesus (Rev. 14:4-5; cf. 2 Pet. 3:14; Eph. 5:27; 1 Thes. 3:13; 5:23). Just as no guile was found in Christ's mouth, for in Him the devil, the father of liars and the source of lies, had nothing (1 Pet. 2:22; John 14:30), so also in the mouth of the overcomers no lie is found, indicating that "there is nothing of Satan in their expression" (Lee, Recovery Version, Rev. 14:5, note 1). And just as Christ, the firstfruits of resurrection and the Firstborn from the dead, ascended to the Father in the freshness of His resurrection for the Father's enjoyment (1 Cor. 15:20; Col. 1:18; John 20:17), so also the overcomers who are the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb will be raptured to the heavenly Mount Zion for Their delight and satisfaction (Rev. 14:1, 4).

In Revelation 14:4 John discloses a defining characteristic of the overcomers who are raptured as the firstfruits: “These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go.” In order for us to grow in life unto maturity and thus become a duplication of Christ, we need to follow the Lamb absolutely. The Lamb whom we follow is the pneumatic Christ, Christ in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit, who is joined to our regenerated human spirit to become one mingled spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:16). Before the Lord’s crucifixion the Lord’s disciples followed Him in an outward way (Matt. 4:18-22; 16:24). After His resurrection, however, we as His disciples today follow Him in an inward way; we follow Him as the Spirit in our spirit by walking according to the mingled spirit (2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16-25). If we would be led by the Lamb as the Spirit in our spirit, we need to follow John’s pattern to be in the mingled spirit continually (Rev. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10).

According to the book of Revelation, in order to follow the Lamb and thus mature in life, we also need to eat Him as our food, as evidenced by the Lord’s promise to the overcomers that they will be given to eat Him as the tree of life and the hidden manna (2:7, 17). In Exodus the children of Israel were instructed to eat the flesh of the passover lamb, which was roasted with fire, including its head, legs, and inward parts, so that the children of Israel could be not only judicially saved from God’s judgment but also organically nourished and strengthened to make their exodus from Egypt. This signifies that we need to feed on the Lamb who was sacrificed on our behalf by partaking of Him in His wisdom, move, and inward parts so that we may be empowered to leave the world behind (1 Cor. 1:24; 5:7; John 21:22; Phil. 1:8). The type of the passover is fulfilled in John 6, in which Christ, prior to the actual Passover feast, revealed Himself as the reality of the manna, the bread of life, who came down out of heaven to give eternal life to the world (vv. 4, 32-33, 51). He also exhorted the believers to eat “the flesh of the Son of Man” as the “true food” (typified by the flesh of the passover lamb) (vv. 53, 55), which signifies the edible life of Christ as their life supply. Furthermore, Christ encouraged the believers to eat Him by contacting Him as the life-giving Spirit embodied in the word of life so that they might have life and live because of Him (vv. 57, 63, 68). We need to be led by the Spirit in our spirit and feast on Christ as the Passover Lamb so that we may be overcomers who follow the Lamb, participating in His life and maturing in this life for the purpose of becoming His reproduction (Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 5:7-8).

The Wife of the Lamb

Revelation further shows that the overcoming believers as the duplication of the Lamb are not only firstfruits to God and to the Lamb but also the wife of the Lamb. Revelation 19:7 signals the completion of God’s New Testament economy with the announcement of a momentous event—the wedding of the Lamb: “Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” Here *the Lamb* refers to the pneumatic Christ, the embodiment of the processed Triune God consummated as the life-giving Spirit, and *His wife* refers to the aggregate of all the Old and New Testament overcomers before the end of the great tribulation. In the Gospel of John, John the Baptist introduced the Lord Jesus as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (1:29), and completed his testimony by presenting Him as the One “who has the bride,” that is, as the Bridegroom (3:29). This indicates that the goal of the Lamb’s redemption is not merely to remove sin but to gain the bride. In the context of the preceding verses in chapter 3, the Lord’s bride refers to a living composition of the regenerated believers, those who have been born of the Spirit in their spirit by receiving the divine life in addition to their human life (v. 6). Immediately after referring to the Lord as the Bridegroom who has the bride, John the Baptist declared that “He must increase,” further revealing that the Lord’s bride is His increase in the divine life (v. 30). Thus, John 3 parallels the record in Genesis 2, in which the bride of Christ as His increase

Revelation further shows that the overcoming believers as the duplication of the Lamb are not only firstfruits to God and to the Lamb but also the wife of the Lamb. The goal of the Lamb’s redemption is not merely to remove sin but to gain the bride.

After the wedding of the Lamb and before the age of the millennium, the Lamb, the embodiment of God, with His bridal army will war against Antichrist, the embodiment of Satan, and his armies in order to deal with God's opposers on earth.

is typified by Eve, the increase of Adam. Eve, Adam's wife, was the issue and increase of Adam; because she was built with a rib that was taken out of Adam's opened side, Adam recognized her as bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, a counterpart who matched him in life and nature (vv. 18-24; 5:2). Similarly, the church in its ultimate status as the wife of the Lamb is the issue and increase of Christ the Lamb, who is also the last Adam; she is built with the indestructible, divine life of Christ that was released through His death and is thus the organic Body of Christ, matching Him in life and nature as His counterpart (1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 5:29-31; 1 Cor. 12:12; John 1:12-13).

According to Revelation 19:7, the marriage of the Lamb can commence only when His wife has made herself ready. Verse 8 continues, "It was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints." This indicates that the readiness of the wife of the Lamb depends on the preparation of her wedding garment of fine linen, which is bright in expression and clean in nature, signifying the righteousnesses of the saints. The expression *the righteousnesses of the saints*, which also may be translated "righteous deeds of the saints," does not refer to Christ as our objective righteousness, which we received by the grace of God and through faith in Christ when we first believed (1 Cor. 1:30), but instead to the righteous acts in our daily walk, through which the indwelling Christ as our subjective righteousness is lived out (Phil. 1:11, 19).¹ Whereas Christ as our objective righteousness enables us to meet the requirements of the righteous God for our justification before Him (Luke 15:22), Christ as our subjective righteousness enables us to match the overcoming Christ for our marriage to Him (Matt. 22:11-12).

The bridal garment, which qualifies us to enter into the marriage dinner of the Lamb, is not the product of the effort of our natural life but the issue of the operation of Christ as the Spirit within us. As Charles John Vaughan asserts in *Lectures on the Revelation of St. John*, the wedding dress of the Lamb's wife refers to "the compound and aggregate of all the truly righteous acts done by God's several saints on earth, and of all the truly righteous characters which have been formed in them by the grace of His Holy Spirit" (229). The more we receive Christ as the life-giving Spirit of grace into us, the more Christ is constituted into our being and expressed through us as our righteousness in our daily life so that we as His bride may be clothed with Christ as our surpassing righteousness and be admitted to the wedding feast of the Lamb (2 Cor. 3:8-9; Matt. 5:20). We need to prepare our bridal garment by partaking of the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ for His magnification (Phil 1:19-21). Such a Christ-filled and Christ-magnifying counterpart of the Lamb is the holy and glorious church, without spot, wrinkle, or any other blemish, whom He will present to Himself in marriage at His return (Eph. 5:25-27). This corporate spouse of the Lamb, who fulfills God's eternal purpose to gain a corporate expression through humanity, will, in the coming age of the millennial kingdom, be the bride of Christ, composed of the overcoming saints as the New Jerusalem in its initial consummation, and will, in eternity future, be the wife of the Lamb, composed of all the saved saints as the New Jerusalem in its ultimate consummation.

The Army of the Lamb

According to the sequence of events in the book of Revelation, after the wedding of the Lamb and His bride and before the age of the millennium, the Lamb, the embodiment of God, with His bridal army will war against Antichrist, the embodiment of Satan, and his armies at Armageddon in order to deal with God's human opposers on earth. According to Revelation 17 and 19, Antichrist, the ten kings, and their armies will gather together to make war with the Lamb and His armies (17:13-14; 19:19). After the marriage dinner Christ the Lamb will come as a fighting General with His bride as His armies to fight in righteousness against Antichrist, the man of lawlessness,

and judge the kings under him with their armies (2 Thes. 2:3, 7-8). The Lamb's armies will be dressed in "fine linen, white and clean," just as His bride will be clothed in "fine linen, bright and clean" (Rev. 19:14, 8). This implies that the overcomers' wedding garment—the pneumatic Christ as their subjective righteousness wrought into them and lived out of them in their daily walk—will also serve as their armor for fighting (Eph. 6:14-17). The Lamb will mount a white horse, and the overcomers as His armies will follow Him on white horses (Rev. 19:11-14). The Lamb, the Commander-in-chief, is called "Faithful" (v. 11), and the overcomers who are with Him are also designated "faithful" (17:14). This indicates that the overcomers as the bridal army are the reproduction of the Lamb as the faithful One, just as Antipas, an overcomer in the church in Pergamos, who is identified as Christ's "witness" and His "faithful one," is a duplication of Christ "the faithful Witness" (1:5; 2:13; 3:14).

Revelation 17:14 foretells the triumph of the Lamb and His army over Antichrist and his kings: "The Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them." As a consequence of this glorious triumph, Antichrist and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity, the armies of the kings of the earth will be killed by the sword that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lamb, and Satan will be cast into the abyss for a thousand years (19:20-21; 20:3). When these rebellious creatures are removed from the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (11:15). This will usher in the millennial kingdom in which the Lamb will reign with His overcoming saints as His co-kings over the earth, thereby fulfilling His promise to the overcomers that they will sit with Him on His throne and participate in His authority to rule over the nations and shepherd them with an iron rod (2:26-27; 3:21; 20:4, 6). The victory of the Lamb with His army in the war at Armageddon and the reign of the Lamb with His co-kings in the millennial kingdom signal the realization of God's purpose to obtain a corporate man to exercise His dominion and subdue the earth (Gen. 1:26-28).

The Lamb in the New Jerusalem

The revelation of Jesus Christ as the Lamb in the book of Revelation culminates in the vision of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth. According to the opening verse of Revelation, God made known the revelation of this book "by signs," that is, by symbols with spiritual significance. As the final and greatest of the signs in Revelation, the New Jerusalem is not a literal city but the aggregate symbol of the ultimate consummation of God's eternal economy accomplished by the Lamb. In keeping with the prominent and frequent reference to the Lamb throughout this book, the Lamb is mentioned no less than seven times in relation to the holy city (21:9-10, 14, 22-23, 27; 22:1, 3). A close examination of the relationship between the Lamb and the city reveals that the Lamb is the centrality and universality of the New Jerusalem.

The King

Twice in Revelation the apostle John calls the throne in the holy city "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (22:1, 3). The existence of a single throne occupied jointly by God and the Lamb affirms a crucial trinitarian principle—the eternal coinherence, the mutual indwelling and operation, of the Father and the Son (John 10:38; 17:21; 7:16; 8:28, 38; 12:49-50; 14:10-11, 24). We need to realize that God and the Lamb do not sit side by side on the throne in the holy city but in the way of coinherence, of mutual indwelling (Rev. 21:23). Furthermore, while God the Father and the Lamb as the Son are distinct, They operate inseparably in Their eternal reign in the holy city. This thought is corroborated in Revelation 11:15, which says, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever." After speaking of *our Lord*, which refers to God, and *His Christ*,

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The Lamb,
who was
foreordained to
redeem us before
the foundation
of the world
and who in the
fullness of time
came to die
for our eternal
redemption,
will be a memorial
of redemption
in eternity as our
beloved Redeemer.

which refers to Christ the Lamb, this verse does not say, "They will reign," as we might expect; instead, it says, "He will reign." According to Watchman Nee, this verse "enables us to understand" that "the Lord's reign is Christ's reign," that "Christ's reign is God's reign," and that "the kingdom of God is the kingdom of Christ" (107). The Lamb as the eternal King incorporates God in His operation of reigning in the New Jerusalem.

On the one hand, the throne of God and of the Lamb is the throne of authority, from which the Lamb-God, the Lamb as the embodiment of God, executes the divine administration, based upon His redemption, in the New Jerusalem as the eternal kingdom. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be the administrative center of the holy city, which, in turn, will be the center of God's universal administration in the new heaven and new earth. On the other hand, the throne of God and of the Lamb is the throne of grace, the source of the life supply of the holy city. Out of this throne proceeds the bright-as-crystal river of water of life, beside which grows the tree of life with its abundant fruit (22:1-2). The river of water of life signifies the pneumatic Christ as the Spirit of life to quench our inner thirst, and the tree of life signifies the redeeming and nourishing Lamb as the embodiment of life to satisfy our inner hunger (1 Pet. 2:2-3; Rev. 2:7). The Lamb, who was foreordained to redeem us before the foundation of the world and who in the fullness of time came to die for our eternal redemption, will be a memorial of redemption in eternity as our beloved Redeemer, out of whose pierced side unceasingly flows the rich supply of the grace of life (John 19:34; 1 Pet. 3:7). For eternity the Lamb will govern the New Jerusalem as the King, watering and feeding her with the riches of life on the basis of His eternally efficacious redemption. Today we need to allow the throne of God and of the Lamb to be established in our heart, giving the Lamb the place of preeminence in us, so that we may continually enjoy the dispensing of the Triune God as life, eating the Lamb as the tree of life and drinking of the Spirit as the river of water of life (Col. 1:18).

The Husband

In Revelation 21:9 an angel said to John, "Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb," and in verse 10 what the angel showed him was "the holy city, Jerusalem." This indicates that a primary designation of the New Jerusalem is *the wife of the Lamb* and that the Lamb is the eternal Husband of the New Jerusalem. This thought is confirmed by John's description of the New Jerusalem in his introduction of the holy city in verse 2: "I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth as the universal wife of the Lamb is the totality of all the chosen, redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified saints, including those who are defeated in the present age but will be perfected and matured during the millennial age (vv. 12-14). The New Jerusalem is portrayed as a pure, chaste bride adorned *for her husband*, indicating that she loves the Lamb with the first love and exists exclusively for the satisfaction of the Lamb, her beloved Husband (2:4). When all of God's elect are fully prepared and adorned as a bride who matches the Lamb, He will rejoice over the New Jerusalem with the joy of the Husband over His wife, who is "the perfection of beauty" (Psa. 50:2; Isa. 62:5). The issue of the Lamb's accomplishment of God's New Testament economy is not mainly the believers' own glorification but the fulfillment of His long-awaited desire for a fully adorned counterpart.

The adornment of the wife of the Lamb depends upon the transforming work of the Lamb as the life-giving Spirit within the believers. The Spirit's pivotal role in adorning us to be the wife of the Lamb is unveiled in Revelation 22:17, which says, "The Spirit and the bride say." In order for the bride, the wife of the Lamb, and the Spirit, the reality of the Lamb, to speak together as one, the believers who compose

the bride need to be saturated with the Spirit until the Spirit makes His home in their hearts (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 3:17). It is by continually receiving the dispensing of the Spirit into our inward parts that we are prepared and adorned as the wife of the Lamb for the fulfillment of the desire of His heart.

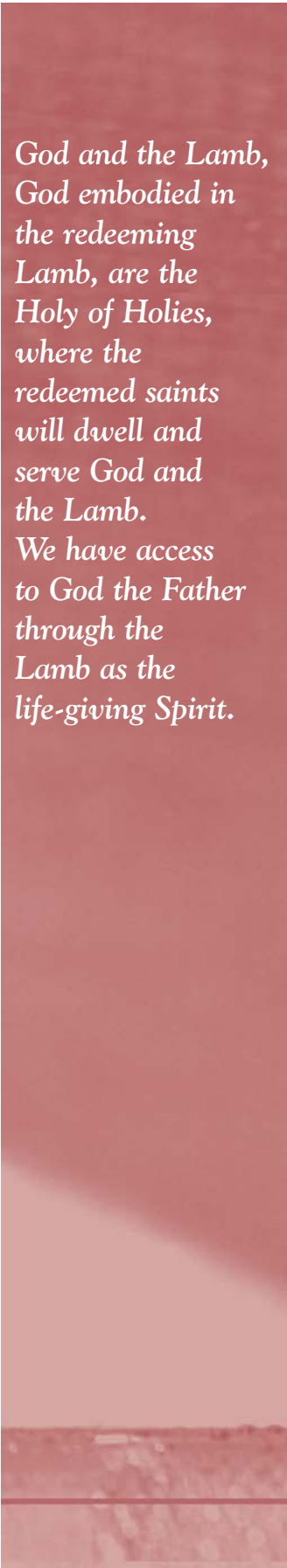
The Master

The Lamb in the New Jerusalem is also the Master. In Revelation 22:3-4 John says, “The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him; and they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.” We need to note that the pronouns mentioned in these verses (*Him* and *His*) are singular, not plural. However, these singular pronouns refer to both God and the Lamb, indicating that God and the Lamb are distinct yet not separate. In Matthew 28:19 *the name* (singular) is used in reference to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, implying that the three of the Godhead are one. Similarly, the singular possessive pronoun *His* in the phrase *His name* in Revelation 22:4, in reference to the name of both God and of the Lamb, affirms the Son’s declaration that He and the Father are one (John 10:30). For eternity God’s redeemed people as both His slaves and priests will participate in the blessing of serving God and the Lamb as their Master. The redeemed saints will also partake of the blessing of continuously seeing the face of God and the Lamb. While the unbelievers “will pay the penalty of eternal destruction from the presence [literally, “face”] of the Lord and from the glory of His strength” (2 Thes. 1:9), God’s redeemed will share in the eternal privilege of beholding and reflecting with an unveiled face the incomparable glory in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6). Because the redeemed saints will see the redeeming Triune God as He is, they will be like Him (1 John 3:2). For this reason, they will enjoy the blessing of having the name of God and of the Lamb written on their foreheads, which indicates their oneness with the Lamb-God. The name of God and of the Lamb written on the saints’ foreheads will forever testify of *His* complete ownership of their tripartite being and the consummation of their deification in Christ. God’s redeemed will not only belong to God and the Lamb as *His* unique possession, peculiar treasure, and precious inheritance but will also have become the same as God and the Lamb in life, nature, constitution, and expression—but not in the Godhead or as an object of worship (Titus 2:14; Exo. 19:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; Eph. 1:11).

The Temple

In the New Jerusalem God and the Lamb are not only the object of the believers’ service and worship but also the sphere in which they serve and worship Him. This notion is presented in Revelation 21:22, where John says that he saw no temple in the holy city, “for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.” Here the Greek word translated “temple” (ναός) denotes the inner temple, the Holy of Holies. God and the Lamb, God embodied in the redeeming Lamb, are the Holy of Holies, where the redeemed saints will dwell and serve God and the Lamb. We have access to God the Father through the Lamb as the Redeemer and in the Lamb as the life-giving Spirit (Eph. 2:18). The Lamb with His redeeming blood is the unique way for us to enter into God as the Holy of Holies (John 14:6; Heb. 10:19). We can enter into and dwell in God only through the crucified and resurrected Lamb, who is both the Redeemer and the Spirit (John 14:20; 1 John 4:13).

In the New Jerusalem, John saw not a physical temple but a personal temple, the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. The temple, which is the Lamb with the Lord God the Almighty, is the dwelling place of all the redeemed saints who serve the redeeming Triune God by dwelling in Him. This thought is confirmed in Revelation 7:15, which says that God’s redeemed people “serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them.” The temple



God and the Lamb, God embodied in the redeeming Lamb, are the Holy of Holies, where the redeemed saints will dwell and serve God and the Lamb. We have access to God the Father through the Lamb as the life-giving Spirit.

The ultimate consummation of the Lamb is that He is the lamp of the holy city, holding God as light and radiating Him into the redeemed elect for the eternal corporate expression and representation of the Triune God.

in which God's redeemed will serve Him is nothing less than the enthroned God who overshadows them with Christ the Lamb as the tabernacle (John 1:14). Consistent with this revelation, the Old Testament saints spoke of God as their eternal dwelling place, their sanctuary (Psa. 90:1; Deut. 33:27; Ezek. 11:16), and the psalmists attested to their enjoyment of beholding the beauty of Jehovah and His shekinah glory in the temple (Psa. 26:8; 27:4; 29:9). Moreover, the New Testament apostles underscored the believers' need to abide in God and in Christ (John 15:6-7; 17:21; 2 Cor. 12:2; Phil. 3:9; 1 John 2:6, 24, 27-28; 3:24). If we would have the highest and fullest enjoyment of the redeeming God, we need to walk according to our spirit, thus heeding the Lamb's exhortation that we abide in Him, taking Him as our abode, so that He may abide in us, taking us as His abode (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16, 25; John 15:4). The New Jerusalem, the mutual abode of the redeeming God and His redeemed saints, is the consummation of our present experience of enjoying, serving, and worshipping the Lamb-God, the redeeming Triune God, by dwelling in Him as the temple (Rev. 21:3).

The Lamp

The ultimate consummation of the Lamb is that He is the lamp of the holy city, holding God as light and radiating Him into the redeemed elect for the eternal corporate expression and representation of the Triune God. In the Old Testament the Holy of Holies had no light from the sun, the moon, or the lampstand; light came from God alone in His radiant glory (Exo. 25:21-22; Heb. 9:5). In the New Jerusalem, which is the consummate Holy of Holies (denoted by its being equal in all three dimensions (Rev. 21:16)), there is "no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations will walk by its light" (vv. 23-24). The illuminating glory of God, which is the light of the holy city, is the God of glory—God Himself as the unique, divine, and uncreated light (1 John 1:5). Light is the nature of God in His expression, and the Lamb as the lamp is the embodiment and expression of God as light. Although God dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16), in the redeeming Lamb as the lamp, God as the divine light becomes an approachable, touchable, receivable, and enjoyable light. In such a light the believers in Christ can walk and have fellowship with the Triune God and with one another, experiencing the constant cleansing of the blood of the Lamb from every sin (1 John 1:6-7). Even in eternity the believers' enjoyment of God as the light of life depends upon the Lamb-lamp who shines forth the divine light of God into them.

By virtue of the constant illumination of God as light in the Lamb-lamp into the holy city, the city becomes a light-bearer that shines with the glory of God, and her light is "like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal" (Rev. 21:11). The redeemed saints who constitute the New Jerusalem are children of light and are even "light in the Lord," those who are made the same as God in the nature of His expression through their union in life with the Lord (Eph. 5:8). Therefore, just as there is no darkness in God who is light (1 John 1:5), so also there will be no night in the holy city, the city of eternal light, for every constituent of the city will be completely permeated with God as light, having no dark part in their tripartite being (Rev. 22:5; Luke 11:36). Today we need to allow God in the Lamb as light in the lamp to shine into us in order to both saturate our inward parts and shine forth from within us so that we may let our "light shine before men," thereby becoming "the light of the world," in the organic union with Christ the Lamb, who is "the light of the world" (2 Cor. 4:6; Matt. 5:14-16; John 8:12). The consummation of our shining as luminaries in the world in the present age will be the holy city, the New Jerusalem, which is the universal lampstand holding the Lamb as the lamp to shine forth the light of God to the new heaven and new earth for eternity (Phil. 2:15).


Because God coinheres with the Lamb, God will shine in and through the redeeming

Lamb as the lamp in order to illumine the New Jerusalem, and because the Lamb coinheres with the saints, the constituents of the holy city, the Lamb will shine in and through the transparent city as a diffuser in order to illumine the nations in the new heaven and new earth. Such an illumination of the New Jerusalem is the realization of God's eternal intention to head up all things in Christ as the Head and through the believers as His Body (Eph. 1:10, 22-23). Just as the Lord God in the Lamb, the Head of the Body, will reign over the redeemed saints by shining upon them with light as ruling power, so also the saints, the members of the Body, will reign by shining upon the nations, who will walk by the light of the city (Rev. 21:23-24; 22:5). The New Jerusalem as a great luminary will stand as an eternal testament that through God's salvation in life based on the Lamb's redemption, the believers have become the same as God not only in His nature and expression but also in His function of ruling over the universe. This will be the ultimate fulfillment of God's purpose for a corporate man to manifest His splendid glory and maintain His unchallenged dominion through the Lamb's execution of God's New Testament economy.

Conclusion

At its heart the book of Revelation presents the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Lamb—Christ, as the embodiment of the Triune God and realized as the sevenfold intensified Spirit, who executes God's economy through His incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, enthronement, ministry in heaven, second coming, and eternal reign for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose to gain a corporate man as His expression and representation. Foreordained before the foundation of the world, the Lamb of God, the eternal Word who became flesh, was slain on the cross, shedding His blood to release us from our sins and purchase us for God in order to make us a kingdom and priests to God. It is by the precious blood of the spotless Lamb of God that we can overcome Satan and wash our robes in order to eat the Lamb as the tree of life and drink of Him as the springs of waters of life. After conquering death and Hades in His resurrection, the Lamb ascended to heaven and sat with His Father on His throne. As the victorious Lion-Lamb, He was found uniquely worthy to unveil and accomplish the mystery of God's New Testament economy. In His heavenly ministry the Lamb carries out God's universal administration by means of His seven eyes, the seven Spirits of God, which are before His throne and which have been sent forth into all the earth. It is by His seven eyes that the Lamb executes God's judgment upon the universe and the churches and transfuses all that He is into the believers in order to produce them as His overcomers, His organic duplication.

At the end of the present age, these overcomers will usher in the marriage of the Lamb, for they will constitute His wife who has made herself ready by allowing the pneumatic Christ to be constituted into and lived out of them as their surpassing righteousness in the details of their daily walk. These Christ-filled and Christ-expressing overcomers will be not only admitted to the marriage dinner of the Lamb for the delight of His heart but also qualified to participate in the war at Armageddon as His army for the defeat of His opposers on earth. The glorious victory achieved by the Lamb and His bridal army in this war will usher in the age of the millennial kingdom, in which the Lamb will reign on the earth with His overcomers as His co-kings for a thousand years. For eternity the Lamb will be the centrality and universality of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth. The Lamb will be the eternal King enthroned in the center of the holy city, governing the city by watering and feeding it as the river of water of life and the tree of life. The Lamb will be the eternal Husband of the New Jerusalem, delighting in her as a bride adorned for Him through the transforming work of the life-giving Spirit. The Lamb will be the eternal temple in which the redeemed saints dwell, seeing His glorious face and serving Him as His slaves. The Lamb will be the eternal lamp of the holy city that contains and radiates God as light to illuminate the city with His glory so that the transparent city as a



The New Jerusalem will stand as an eternal testament that through God's salvation in life based on the Lamb's redemption, the believers have become the same as God not only in His nature and expression but also in His function of ruling over the universe.

By our knowing,
enjoying, and
expressing the
Lamb unveiled
in Revelation,
may we follow
Him wherever
He may go,
cooperating with
Him to carry
out God's
New Testament
economy for the
fulfillment of His
eternal purpose.

universal light-bearer may, in turn, illuminate the nations in the new heaven and new earth to bring them under His reign for the heading up of all things in Christ. Such a rich revelation of Jesus Christ as the Lamb should inspire us with fresh and continual praises: Worthy is the Lamb! By our knowing, enjoying, and expressing the Lamb unveiled in Revelation, may we follow Him wherever He may go, thereby cooperating with Him to carry out God's New Testament economy for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose. **AFC**

Notes

¹In *Occasional Lectures* William Kelly makes the same point, interpreting the expression *the righteousnesses of the saints* in Revelation 19:8 as the fruit of the Spirit in the believers:

Consistency with our relationship is ever spoken of, as far as the creature is concerned, as either conferred by the Lord Jesus Christ, or as the fruit of the Holy Spirit's practical action in the soul. Righteousness therefore may be either that which we are accounted in Christ—what is commonly called imputed righteousness—when by faith the believer though unrighteous in himself is accounted righteous in the Lord, which is perfectly true, and a very important truth; or, on the other hand, it is that which the Spirit of God exercises us in practically day by day. I have not the slightest doubt that in this case the reference is to the latter. "The fine linen is the righteousness of saints." For this reason the word really means here "righteousnesses." It is a different form of word, and plural. If it were a question of what we are made in Christ, neither would be the case. (15-16)

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