



Victory of the Lamb ~ April 21, 2019

OPEN

We associate Handel's musical masterpiece with Christmas. But the *Messiah* oratorio does not only portray the story of Jesus' birth. Nor does it conclude with the Halleluiah chorus. The end of the story is the Lamb of God seated on His throne! The final chorus is "Worthy is the Lamb That Was Slain".

John witnessed the *suffering* Lamb of God and also Jesus' *resurrection*. In **Revelation 5:9-13** John recorded his vision of the *glorified* Lamb of God which concluded with the new worship song, "*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.*" This is a powerful paradox in which Jesus went from the agony of the cross to His victory over death.

DIG



The Moravian Church's emblem is the Lamb of God with the flag of victory and the inscription "Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow Him". Paul Spilsbury writes "*To worship God means to follow the Lamb.*" (***The Throne, The Lamb, & The Dragon***). Before exploring the worship from Revelation 5, read the background to this account.

John 18:1 – 19:37 - The Passion of Jesus

John 19:38 – 20:29 - The Resurrection of Jesus

One way we follow the Lamb is to depend on His victory

Revelation 5 records a dilemma. God holds a sealed scroll and John weeps for lack of one to open the seal and reveal the truth. Then the "Lion of the tribe of Judah; Root of David" (messianic titles) who has "*overcome*" enters the scene. But when John looked at the *Lion* he saw the *Lamb as if slain*" (v. 6). Remember, John saw Jesus as the Lamb at His baptism (John 1); then on the cross (John 19); and now in His eternal victory (v. 6) unsealing the scroll (6:1). And the slain Lamb is ultimately victorious over all! Notice that He has *seven horns* (omnipotence), *seven eyes* (discernment), and *seven spirits* (judgement). In **Revelation 17:14** we read that those led by the Beast "*will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.*"

We can depend upon the Lamb! If Jesus was never resurrected and glorified, His death would be mere martyrdom or just an inspiration for self-sacrifice. Jesus has won the victory over sin, death, and our enemy – Satan.

*O God of peace, strong is the enemy, but Thou art nigh
And he must fall beneath our feat, because of Calvary!
~ Amy Carmichael*

Another way we follow the Lamb is to declare His glory

When the slain Lamb took the scroll the four living creatures and twenty-four elders (12 tribes + 12 apostles) sang a *new song* celebrating the redemption Jesus provided humanity (v. 9). Lamb followers are privileged as kingdom and priests (v. 10 – see Exodus 19:4-6 and I Peter 2:9). Tens of thousands of angels joined the song of praise; later joined by "every created thing" (v. 11-14) to sing both to God and to the Lamb. In **Revelation 15:2-4** the "*song of the Lamb*" was the "*song of Moses*" through which Israel praised God for their redemption out of Egypt. Who sings such a song? Those who are redeemed!

Susan S. Phillips in ***The Cultivated Life*** suggests that exaltation is akin to what psychologists call "elevation" which is "elicited by acts of virtue or moral beauty; it causes warm, open feelings...in the chest; and it motivates people to behave more virtuously." Declaring the glory of the Lamb is good for us. Why?

☒ It provides perspective ☒ It develops depth ☒ It generates joy

REFLECT

What is the song of your life? Can you sing "the song of the Lamb"? Twila Paris has written a song that could express your longing and love for the Lamb.

*Your only Son no sin to hide, but You have sent Him from Your side
To walk upon this guilty sod and to become the Lamb of God
Your gift of love they crucified, they laughed and scorned Him as he died
The humble King they named a fraud and sacrificed the Lamb of God*

*Oh Lamb of God, Sweet lamb of God, I love the Holy Lamb of God
Oh wash me in His precious Blood, my Jesus Christ the Lamb of God
I was so lost I should have died but You have brought me to Your side
To be led by Your staff and rod and to be call a lamb of God*

We should be living with a far greater sense of victorious hope in the Lamb of God. Eugene Peterson wrote that Revelation is a book in which God has the "last word" (***Reversed Thunder***). Quoting from Evelyn Underhill, Peterson properly points out that God has the final word on worship. "Many a congregation when it assembles in church must look to the angels like a muddy puddly shore at low tide; littered with every kind of rubbish and odds and ends – a distressing sort of spectacle. And then the tide of worship comes in, and it's all gone: the dead sea urchins and jelly fish, the paper and the empty cans and the nameless bits of rubbish. The cleansing sea flows over the whole lot. So we are released from a narrow selfish outlook on the universe by a common act of worship."