

STUDY 5

REVELATION'S ANCIENT DISCOVERIES



Revelation's Peace Maker

by Mark Finley

The very first words of this book we're studying are "*The revelation of Jesus Christ.*" That's how John's prophecy got its name. It's a revelation from Jesus and about Jesus. A few verses later, lest there be any doubt about who is at the center of this book, John presents Jesus Christ as "The faithful witness, and firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . be glory and dominion forever and ever." **Revelation 1:5-6.**

Jesus Christ is the Hero of the book of Revelation. Its pages are saturated by His presence. Note just a few of the ways He's described:

Revelation 1:8 – "the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End," always present.

Revelation 5 – the only One who can open the scrolls of judgment and redeem us.

Revelation 12:5 – the male Child born of a virgin to become our mighty Savior!

Revelation 14:14 – the Son of Man

with a sickle in His hand to reap earth's final harvest.

Revelation 15 – the triumphant Hero, praised with God the Father on a sea of glass.

Revelation 19:7-9 – the Bridegroom preparing for a great marriage supper with His people.

Revelation 19:11 – the great Deliverer riding to our rescue on a white horse!

Revelation 19:16 – the majestic King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 21 – the One who makes all things new, creating a new heaven and new earth.

Revelation 22:12 & 20 – the One who repeats the wonderful assurance: "I am coming quickly!"

So Jesus makes many dramatic appearances in Revelation, but one symbol of Jesus dominates this book—it's Jesus as the LAMB of God. Jesus is described as the Lamb 27 times in Revelation. In **Revelation 5:6** John says, "I looked and behold, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as though it

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had been slain.” **Revelation 13:8** calls this Lamb the One “slain from the foundation of the world.” In chapter 14 the Lamb reappears; the redeemed surround His throne and praise Him forever. In the next chapter, faithful believers stand on a sea of glass, and they sing the song of the Lamb, crying out: “Great and marvelous are Your works. . . . Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints.” **Revelation 15:3**.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, stands at the center of the book of Revelation. And the remarkable thing is—the Lamb faces all kinds of evil, vicious forces represented by a seven-headed beast, a fiery red dragon, a seductive harlot, a corrupt empire called Babylon, and many terrifying disasters. Yet this book has a wonderful message for us: When the forces of evil gang up on this Lamb, the Lamb is going to *win*—and *we can win with Him!* “These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” **Revelation 17:14**.

The Sanctuary Lamb Slain: The slain lamb depicts Christ crucified on the cross. His sacrifice was symbolized in the Old Testament by various ceremonies at the Hebrew temple. When anyone sinned, God gave this specific instruction in **Leviticus 5:5-6**: “It shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that *he shall confess that he has sinned* in that thing; and he shall bring his trespass offering [a lamb without blemish] to the Lord for his sin which he has committed. . . .”

Let’s go back to that temple or tabernacle and imagine what the ceremo-

ny means to one struggling with guilt: The sinner brings a small lamb, pure and spotless. He walks through Israel’s encampment and knows that friends, relatives, and strangers know where he’s going. He’s going to the tabernacle to slit this animal’s throat. He’s driven there by a sin that’s gnawing at his bones—he has to make it right. At the tabernacle, he waits with others who have brought sin offerings. He watches as the priests perform their ancient ritual. Then a priest approaches, and it’s his turn. He places his hand on the lamb’s head and confesses his sin, trying not to look in the animal’s trusting eyes. Quickly he lifts its head. There’s a swift flash of the knife. Dark blood spurts out on the ground. The lamb kicks once and falls limp. Priestly assistants then take the carcass toward the large altar. They drain the blood into a trench at its base. Then they place the slain animal on the grating and flames begin to consume it. As black smoke curls up toward a perfect blue sky, he feels rescued. This spotless sacrifice points to a divine forgiveness.

That’s what happened at the Hebrew tabernacle, at the altar of burnt offering. Aside from the sad fact that sin brings death (**Romans 6:23** & **James 1:15**), note two beautiful things in this God-ordained service:

People were *accepting responsibility* for their wrong doing. They were facing up to it squarely, confessing it. No denials, no excuses. People today often deny their faults or try to excuse their sins. The most fundamental truth about human guilt is that we can never escape it till we accept it. That’s why people brought their lambs to the tem-

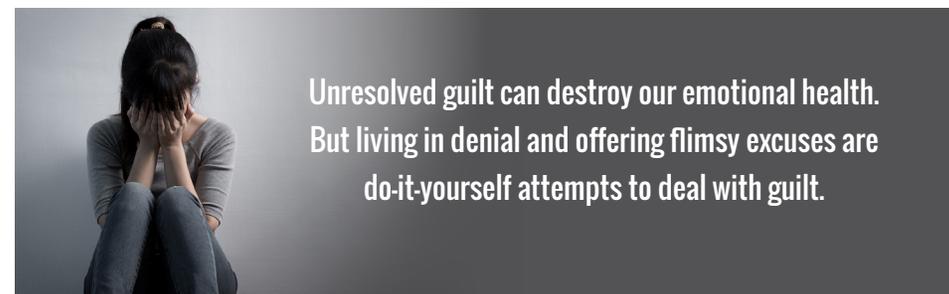
ple. They were *accepting* their guilt.

But they were also acknowledging something else—the fact that *they* couldn’t atone for their sin. They couldn’t really make up for it or erase their guilt by performance. Slaying that spotless lamb was an act of faith—faith that *Another* would take their guilt. Another would make atonement.

Romans 6:23 clearly states, “The wages of sin is death.” In the Old Testament when the guilty sinner confessed his sin, the guilt was symbolically transferred to the innocent lamb. The lamb bore the sinner’s guilt. The sinner could live. The lamb must die. That

took our guilt and gave us His righteousness, His right standing with the Father. The apostle Paul makes this plain in **2 Corinthians 5:21**: “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Christ never sinned. He lived a spotless, perfect life. But He became sin by assuming the guilt of sin for us.

Look at **Romans 6:23** again. It states that “the GIFT of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.” **Ephesians 2:8-9** emphasizes this point: “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the GIFT of God, not



lamb pointed forward to Jesus, “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” **John 1:29**. But the blood of animals could save no one from sin—**Hebrews 10:4**—it only pointed forward to the divine One who would save. **Hebrews 10:10-14**.

Unresolved guilt can destroy our emotional health. But living in denial and offering flimsy excuses are do-it-yourself attempts to deal with guilt. Real forgiveness can come from only one source—it must be *God* who forgives. When we fail morally, pardon must come from the Lawgiver. So Christ poured out His life on the cross as the spotless Lamb of God. He

of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Friends, the good news is what it has always been. Forgiveness—eternal life—is a gift. That’s the most wonderful piece of news ever announced on this planet. Without grace, we’re compelled to keep going down this one-way street all the way to the dead end. Please let this gift of Jesus Christ begin reshaping your life. Have you found peace and forgiveness in your life? Have you come to the foot of the cross where the guilt problem is solved once and for all? Come to the Hero of the book of Revelation—come to the Lamb of God who takes on the sin of the world! **R**

Our heavenly Father has so much He longs to teach us! Think of each seminar session as one in a series of steps leading upward—a series of “lessons from heaven.” May we learn our lessons well, so we in turn can teach others. God’s Word, the Bible—our Textbook for this seminar—offers **Learning Unlimited!**

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1. Some hang onto *denial*, putting on a bold front, saying, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” *not knowing* they are “_____ , _____ , _____ , and _____ .” (REVELATION 3:17)
 2. T F God vividly impressed on people in Old Testament times the *cause-and-effect* relationship between SIN and DEATH, when any sinner—from king to commoner—would have to confess his sin on the head of a sacrificial animal, then *take the knife* and *slay* the animal himself. (LEVITICUS 4:22-30, ETC.)
 3. *Perfect balance* is seen in the Scripture that says, “The wages of _____ is _____ ,but the _____ of God is eternal _____ in *Jesus Christ our Lord*.” (ROMANS 6:23)
 4. Those who fear coming to Christ will “cramp their lifestyle” overlook Christ promise: “I have come that they may have _____ , and that they might have it more _____ .” (JOHN 10:10)
 5. Men sometimes make salvation unnecessarily complicated, but the Bible makes it simplicity itself, reducing it to its *lowest common denominator* as an *either-or proposition* in saying: “He who *has* the _____ *has* life; he who does *not* have the Son of God does _____ have life.” (1 JOHN 5:12)
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Your Name: _____ Date _____

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Romans 6:23** The wages of sin is death—that’s its ultimate payoff.
- James 1:15** Sin ultimately brings forth death.
- John 10:11** But Jesus, the good Shepherd, laid down His life for His sheep.
- Lev. 5:5-6** Old Testament sinners had to bring a sin offering—an animal to sacrifice.
- Hebrews 10:4** The blood of mere animals could not actually take away sins.
- Heb. 9:12-14, 10:10-14** Those sacrifices pointed forward in faith to Christ’s atoning death.
- John 1:29** Jesus is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
- Isaiah 53:4-7** Jesus was wounded for our transgressions and led as a lamb to the slaughter.
- Eph. 2:8-9** By God’s grace we’re saved through faith in the Lamb of God—as a gift!
- Romans 6:23** Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord is the gift of God.
- John 3:16** Any who believe in the sacrifice of God’s dear Son will have everlasting life.
- 2 Cor. 5:21** Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin (took its penalty) for us.
- 1 Pet. 1:18-19** Silver and gold can’t redeem us—only the precious blood of Christ.
- John 10:10** Jesus came in order that we might have the abundant life—here and hereafter.
- 1 John 5:11-13** Believing in Jesus and accepting His sacrifice, we have eternal life.
- Rev. 13:8** God’s divine plan of salvation was not an afterthought—Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world! (See also 1 Peter 1:19-20.)
- Rev. 17:14** Forces of evil war against the Lamb, but He overcomes them.
- Rev. 19:11-16** Jesus is not only the Lamb of God, He’s the Hero of the book of Revelation who will triumphantly return as King of kings and Lord of lords!
- Rev. 5:1-10** Only Jesus, the once-slain Lamb, was able to unseal the scroll/book.
- Rev. 21:22** The Lamb and His heavenly Father will be the temple of the New Jerusalem.
- Rev. 22:1, 3** The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be set up in the New Earth.
- Isaiah 9:6** Jesus, the divine Lamb of God, is “the Prince of Peace.”
- John 14:27** As the heavenly Peace Maker, Jesus promises us peace, comfort, and forgiveness.