

THE SECRET OF HIS PURPOSE THE PLAN FOR THE FULLNESS OF THE TIMES
TO HEAD UP ALL THINGS IN THE KING,
EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND ON THE EARTH,
IN JESUS....

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Lambkin [Arnion] of God

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For those who have read some of my writings, you might have noticed (and wondered why) I occasionally use the word *lambkin* to refer to the Lord Jesus that John unveils in the *Revelation*. I'll explain.

In Greek scripture, the word *lamb* comes from one of two Greek words, *amnos* or *arnion*.

The word *amnos* is a *young sheep* and is used exclusively when referring to Jesus as the lamb of God dying for the sin of the world (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19).

The word *arnion* is a *little lamb* and is used by John, exclusively in the book of Revelation. According to Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance*, *arnion* is "a lambkin; - lamb." As we will see, *lambkin* refers to a specific type of lamb; but, to my knowledge, only one translation makes the distinction by translating *arnion* exclusively with the word *lambkin*. However, some do use the expression *little lamb*. The exception is the *Concordant Literal Version* (CLV) that uniformly translates, some thirty times, *arnion* with the word *lambkin*. Here is one example.

And I perceived, in the center of the throne and of the four animals, and in the center of the elders, a Lambkin [*arnion*] standing, as though slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God, commissioned for the entire earth. And It came and has taken the scroll out of the right hand of Him Who is sitting on the throne. And when It took the scroll, the four animals and the twenty-four elders fall before the Lambkin [*arnion*], each having a lyre, and golden bowls brimming with incenses, which are the prayers of the saints. (Revelation 5:6-8 CLV)

Without any doubt, the lambkin uniquely refers to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus. Only He has the right to take the scroll and to be worshipped by all creation (Revelation 5:11-14). This is unquestionable; however, the question arises as to whether there is some greater significance to John's use of the word *lambkin*. Why did he use the Greek word *arnion* and not *amnos*? Here are some thoughts.

First, in Webster's dictionary, a *lambkin* is defined as "a little lamb; sometimes applied to a child or young person as a term of affection." As such, *lambkin* speaks of something fresh and new, portraying youthfulness and affection. We could say that a lambkin has youthful vitality.

Given this definition, one might surmise that John used *arnion* to bring attention to a freshly slain lamb, indicating the scene he saw took place shortly after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. There is merit to this since John was told to write what must "soon take place." It makes sense that John was shown something that had transpired in God's realm (i.e., heaven) during John's day and not something far off into the future. In this sense, Jesus was a freshly slain lambkin.

In contrast to this, the word *amnos* is used prior to Jesus' actual crucifixion. It is simply a declaration before He is slain, meaning the fresh slaying was on the horizon. For example, John the Baptist twice declared: "*Behold, the lamb of God.*" Here the young sheep word is used.

Second, the *lambkin* seems to be linked to God's declaration: *Behold, I am making all things new* (Revelation 21:5). There is something new, vital, and fresh in this newly slain lambkin. He is the inauguration of the new creation that ultimately and, perhaps, progressively leads to a new heaven, a new earth, and New Jerusalem.

But, as great as these are, this is far more than some new spatial reality where heaven and earth come into the union God has always intended these two realms to have. It is about a new humanity that has finally and fully become an image-bearer of God, where heaven and earth are embodied in a people. This new humanity is called *new creation* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15). Right from the start, God made it very clear that He is after a being that fully manifests His image in heaven and on earth and, I surmise, anything and everything that might be beyond this that we have no clue about today. It is as if the Father has declared: I must have an image-bearer in order to bring about My ultimate purpose of being all in all, and this image-bearer must be in the image of My Son, the lambkin of God.

Jesus is the pattern son for the *new creation son*. All who form this new creation will be conformed to His image. However, let us be clear that this new creation was inaugurated nearly 2,000 years ago, but it awaits the second coming or manifestation of the Son of God to begin consummating the work He began. For this reason, those who have been called out and chosen as a new creation (and have been over two millennia) are eagerly waiting for our Savior to come from heaven to change our poor bodies into the likeness of His glorious body (Philippians 3:20-21). This is the adoption of sons, the redemption of our body (Romans 8:23). Let us not lose sight of the fact that this is about resurrection and transfiguration. He has the power to do it, and He will do it to perfection! And, when He does, we will receive Him to ourselves and introduce Him to a world that is in desperate need of one to rescue it.

You might be wondering what this has to do with the lambkin. Everything! It has everything to do with new creation, for the lambkin is representative of life, especially conquering life that conquers every form of death. Keep in mind that John saw a lambkin slain but that now lives. John declared: *Him who is, who was, and who is to come* (Revelation 1:4). The lambkin is who is to come. The one who comes will consummate all new. He is like a fresh breeze blowing throughout creation as He brings about a new creation, inaugurating it as *the firstborn of creation* and consummating it as *the firstborn from among the dead*.

New means something of an entirely different character from what previously existed. And, this new is something fresh and new, portraying youthfulness and affection; it has youthful vitality. Think about it. Today, as we live in mortal bodies, we continue to struggle against things that are of the old nature that strive to hold onto the old, which is corruptible and contrary to life. New creation is beyond death and is incorruptible!

Third, this leads to another aspect of new creation. *The* lambkin is very much like *the* Christ, if not precisely one and the same. Elsewhere, I made the point that Paul saw *the* Christ as both the

head and the body. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul uses the expression *the* Christ in speaking of God's ultimate plan for the heavens and earth.

To head up all in *the* Christ—both that in the heavens and that on the earth.... (Ephesians 1:10 CLV)

As I see it, the expression *the* Christ explains how God intends to head up all things. It is through the body of Christ joined with its head—a vessel Paul calls *the complement of the one completing the all in all* (Ephesians 1:23). As His complement, He completes us and we complete Him. And, it is through this complete complement that all creation gets summed up or gathered up. In Christ, both head and body!

See *Head Up All Things in the King* — <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art37.pdf>

Now, there is another set of verses that include *the* Christ. This one is not quite as obvious as the one above; nevertheless, it is worth mentioning.

For, just as, the body, is one, and yet hath many members, but, all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so, also, *the* Christ; —For, even to one Spirit, we all, into one body, have been immersed.... (1 Corinthians 12:12-13a Rotherham)

At first glance, we might be tempted to read into this that the head of this body is Jesus. Don't take this the wrong way—Jesus truly is the head of His body: *He is the head of the body, the ecclesia* (Colossians 1:18). The headship of Christ speaks of His authority over and life within His people, the ecclesia (or, church). But further on in Corinthians, Paul writes: *And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?* (1 Corinthians 12:16-17). Clearly, Paul includes the eyes and ears, which are part of the head, as part of the body. Here he is dealing with functionality of the Lord's people, and not directly with the headship of Christ over His ecclesia. The 1912 Weymouth translation clearly makes the point.

For just as the human body is one and yet has many parts, and all its parts, many as they are, constitute but one body, so it is with the Church of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12 WNT)

As an aside—depending on the translation, some use the expression *the* Christ and others use simply *Christ* without the definite article *the*. Recently, I read that when the definite article *the* is not used in the Greek, it refers to quality, not identity. In the case of this verse, it appears that in most manuscripts the article is not used, meaning that Paul was dealing with a quality issue, not an identity one.

I may be breaking a rule, but spiritually speaking, I believe *the* Christ is just as valid, for Paul is clearly dealing with an identity and a quality issue, all in one. He is identifying *the* Christ as a many membered body, from head to toe. Concurrently, He is also speaking of the quality of Christ—a multi-functional body immersed in one spirit, full of the spirit of the Lord. Consider how Jonathan Mitchell phrases it.

For we, ourselves – within the midst of and in union with one Spirit – are (or: were) all submerged (immersed, baptized) into one body – whether Jews or Greeks (or: Hellenists), whether slaves or free ones – and we all are (or: were) made (caused) to drink one Spirit (or: spirit). For, indeed, the body is not one member, but to the contrary, [it is] many. (1 Corinthians 12:13-14 JM-NT)

Notice how the translator uses the word *union*—*within the midst of and in union with one spirit*. Immersion in the spirit brings the Lord's people in union with one another and with the Lord's spirit. Thus, *identity* is the multi-functional body of Jesus made up of many members, regardless of ethnic origin or background; the *quality* is a body in union with the spirit of the Lord. *We were all given one spirit to drink*. And, on a much higher level, all of this comes under the headship of Jesus, which is perhaps the strongest argument in favor of *the Christ* or *the Lambkin*.

Now, returning to the lambkin. Using lambkin language, based on the above, we have been immersed in the lambkin. We are one in the fresh, youthful lambkin of God. We are of His nature and are in union with Him in this capacity.

After all, when Eve was fashioned out of the body of Adam, it was declared that they had become one flesh (Genesis 2:24). We can only imagine the joy Adam had when he first gazed upon Eve that was formed from his very own bones. Paul tells us that this mystery is great as he declares that this now speaks of the Christ and His ecclesia, which is His body. The two are now one (Ephesians 5:22-33). What joy this must continue to bring to the heart of the last Adam.

To make the point, let us start with the only reference to the word *lambkin* used outside of the Revelation. In the last chapter of John's gospel, it is recorded that Peter decided that they should go fishing, so they did. The story is well-known and has many truths in it, but notice that when He spoke to Peter, Jesus used the word *arnion* or *lambkin*.

When, then, they lunch, Jesus is saying to Simon Peter, "Simon of John, are you loving Me more than these?" He is saying to Him, "Yes, Lord, Thou art aware that I am fond of Thee!" He is saying to him, "Graze My lambkins [*arnion*]!" (John 21:15 CLV)

Peter could only acknowledge that he was fond of his Lord and, to this confession, the Lord told him to graze or feed His lambkins, His young, tender lambs. In other words, the Lord Jesus Himself calls His people *arnions* or *lambkins*. This is significant, for Jesus laid the groundwork for His lambkins to be included in *the lambkin* of Revelation, just as the body is included in *the Christ*. To be sure, there are times when the lambkin and the Christ refer singly to the Lord Himself, but there are also times when we need to see that both *the lambkin* and *the Christ* ultimately refer to the two, that is, the head and the body being one. I propose that the Revelation signifies this truth, especially as New Jerusalem comes into view.

And a temple I did not perceive in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lambkin [*arnion*]. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon, that they should be appearing in it, for the glory of God illuminates it, and its lamp is the Lambkin [*arnion*]. (Revelation 21:22-23 CLV)

What is the temple of God? It is more than just Christ alone; it is *the* Christ, Christ and His body of conquerors. They are the light of the world, for their head is the light of the world; they are the city set on a hill, shining for all to see; they are the dwelling of God in spirit, the sons of glory. The physical temple long ago gave way to the spiritual temple of living stones. But there is more, for this lambkin is not only the temple but also the throne or the seat of governance over all creation. John saw the throne of God and of the lambkin (Revelation 22:1, 3). Life emanates from this throne. But who sits upon this throne, or rather, who is vested with the right and privilege to reign with Jesus? The conquerors are the ones counted worthy to reign; the immortal, glorified, celestial ones. They are the ones counted worthy to sit upon His throne (Revelation 3:21). In God's age, they, along with their head, sit upon the throne of God ruling and reigning as all creation is progressively brought into the will and love of God, until all mankind is ultimately rescued, even from the fire of God. This is the lambkin that feeds humanity until God is all in all new.

Fourth, the word *arnion* or *lambkin* appears thirty times in the new testament. The number 30 signifies "dedication" or "spiritual maturity." Joseph, a type of Jesus, was 30 years of age when he was set over the land of Egypt (Genesis 41:46). David, another type of Jesus, began to reign when he was 30 years of age (2 Samuel 5:4). Jesus began His ministry when He was 30 years of age (Luke 3:23). Likewise, the word *arnion* or *lambkin* appears 30 times to signify the spiritual maturity of the sons of glory, those who conquer through the love of Christ. In other words, a day is fast approaching when the lambkin will have matured into the likeness of Yeshua and will reign with Him, sitting upon the throne of God. The thirtieth mention of the lambkin declares that the throne of God and of the lambkin is in New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:3). Thus, the conquerors arrive at their manifest destiny!

Fifth, I have saved the best, at least to me, for last. The word *lambkin* has an endearing feel to it. The word *endearing* means "to inspire love or affection." Synonyms for *endearing* also add to the sense of the word: *engaging*, *captivating*, *lovely*, to name a few. Truly, all of these and more speak to the heart of love Jesus has for us, and we are to have for Him. Is He not engaging to us? Has He not captivated our hearts? Isn't He altogether lovely? Doesn't He inspire love and affection, not only for Him as the love of our life but also for all humanity created to be in His image?

The lambkin slain is love personified. Yes; in John's day, the lambkin of God had to judge His own that had rejected Him. But behind all that transpired in John's day, that has transpired down through the centuries to the present, and that is yet to come as the Father wraps up this age, there is the tender heart of the lambkin for all humanity. He does not hate the race of Adam that was made to be His image-bearer. Never! He loves, for that is the very essence of God. Jesus has tender feelings for all humanity. His feelings are not fleeting, but forgiving and everlasting. *Forgive them, for they know not what they do!*

Jesus' mission as the lambkin of God is to bring all of us born of Adam's race into the new creation of the last Adam, the second man. Perhaps not all in the same day or even in the same way, but all through the lambkin slain. For those who know Him (and have known Him since Calvary), there is a new day coming, a joyously beautiful day in which we will be harbingers of the harvests to follow. In that glorious day, we will frolic in the pastures of glory as youthful, vibrant, joyful

lambkins of God, never again plagued by the old, but forever embracing all that is new, even going from new creation to new creation, all to the glory of God, as His heart is fully satisfied in His all in all new and in love.

Praise the Father and His Son, the lambkin of God!