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FEED MY LAMBS

NO.251

THE LAMB COMPANY

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath CHOSEN US in him BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” (Eph.1: 3-4)

There was a time when I thought that we were first called then chosen according to how well we walked out our calling. But now I see that we were first chosen in Him before the foundation of the world so that we could walk out our calling in the world. We were chosen to overcome sin and death and to show forth the image of the Son of God in these earthen vessels.

We were “Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world...” (Eph.1: 4a) This means that we were predestined and fully equipped for this calling because we were chosen IN HIM. The vision that John saw on Patmos shows “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (Rev.13: 8b)

Before Christ ever triumphed over sin and death, He was the Lamb that was slain. This is how we find Him before the foundation of the world. And this is when we were chosen in Him. We were not chosen in the “victorious” Lamb, we were chosen in the “Slain” Lamb. The nature that we came into the world to show forth is the nature of the sacrificial Lamb. We were sent as lambs among wolves.

The calling that we have been given is to lay our lives down as lambs in order to overcome sin and death. The blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross opens the way for us to do that. Because we were chosen in the slain Lamb, we came forth as lambs to be slain.

When we were sent into this world, we were already predestined to fulfill our calling as lambs. Jesus came into this world as the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. He was not begotten of Adam, He was begotten of God and had sinless spotless blood to atone for the sins of the world. We were sent into the world in Adam to overcome the nature of sin and death by the power of the sinless blood of the Lamb.

John the Revelator beheld this company of lambs, “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount of Sion, and with him and hundred forty and four thousands, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.” (Rev.14: 1)

One hundred and forty-four is the square root of twelve. A square has four equal sides and it speaks of perfection. The holy city was foursquare. “And the city lieth foursquare and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.” (Rev.21: 16)

The city being foursquare is the church in perfec-

tion. “Twelve” furlongs shows that she is fully under the government of God. One hundred and forty-four thousands speaks of the entire “lamb company having come to perfection or complete fulfillment, perfect maturity in Christ.

After John saw the vision he heard a voice as the voice of many waters and the voice of great thunder... and he heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. There is great rejoicing among these lambs. And he heard them singing as it were a new song...they were unfolding a new message for the earth...a new day.

They were singing “as it were” a new song because it was not really new...it had been from the beginning only it was the first time that it was sung from earthen vessels.

“These were they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouths was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.” (Rev.14: 4-5)

They were not defiled with women. In the language of the Spirit, women speak of churches and assemblies that have been raised in the name of Christ. Most of them have been defiled with the ways of the world. We are aware of Mystery Babylon which is named after the Babylon of old and was a fierce enemy of Israel. Today, the Babylon of Christendom has been a fierce and forceful adversary of the true church of Jesus Christ.

God's lambs are no longer part of any of these “women.” They most likely were “in them” at one time, but were never really “of them.” They never fit in, and sooner or later they were rejected because their word of truth became a threat. Often unknowingly, these lambs have been led to the slaughter but in it all, Christ was always their covering and their protector.

And they are firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

This means that their lives are dedicated to following the Lamb and be an offering unto God. It means that each time they are faced with a decision, they choose the way of the defenseless lamb over saving their own reputation. They live for God's purposes. They are not sheep whose offering is their wool; they are lambs who lay down their lives.

What they accomplish is never to promote or better themselves; it is always and only for the Kingdom of God. And they are God's chosen priesthood. In Old Testament order, the tribe of Levi was the tribe of the priesthood. They had no inheritance in the land. They were supported by the tithes of the people and they were themselves the tithe offered unto the Lord.

These lambs are God's priesthood. This is no longer the priesthood of the old Levitical order; it is the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Jesus is the High Priest of this order; they are His inheritance and He is theirs.

And they are without fault before the throne of God. In their mouths is found no guile. Guile is deadly. It is defined as “insidious cunning to attain a goal. Crafty deception. Trickery and fraud.” This is the old nature of the Adam man. It is filled with guile.

All that offends is removed from the lambs as they embrace the cross of Christ daily. They stand before the throne of grace and God sees them in His Son perfectly without fault. They are ready to lay their lives down for creation and also to pick up their garment of resurrection and glory.

CHOSEN AND CALLED

The lambs were in Him from the foundation and they were chosen or elected for this work. *“God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind... (He) hath saved us, and called us with a holy CALLING, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus BE-*

FORE THE WORLD BEGAN.” (II Tim. 1:7, 9)

Paul tells us to press toward the mark of this high calling. He also tells us that we were not given this calling because we were wise after the flesh or because we were part of nobility. “*God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.*” (I Cor.1: 27b)

Just as Jesus' disciples were chosen to confound the wise, so are we. God has not given this mission to world leaders or men of renown. We are lambs unto our God, therefore the things that happen to us in life are all designed to keep us humble and useless to the world. This is the narrow way that He chose for us. Do not ever think that your lives have been in vain; they have been ordained of God for His great plan and purpose to save His creation.

These lambs WERE REDEEMED FROM AMONG MEN. They were in the world and plunged into the darkness of man's religions in order to find their way out of it. Just as the little lilly pushing up the heavy sod, they struggled up to the true Light.

Way down deep, the voice of their Beloved was calling. They found themselves as the Shulamite in the luxury of the King's palace. It is there that the bride was groomed to be given fully to the King and to bear his children. And for a time this was her life...yet down deep she knew she did not belong there. She was hearing the voice of her true Shepherd who kept wooing her to come away.

“Behold, thou art fair, my love; thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes...O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret place of the stairs...Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth...Arise my fair one and come away.” (Excerpts from Song of Songs).

While she yearned for true love amid the glamor of the palace, her true Shepherd was whispering these words into her heart. And so we found ourselves in the palaces of the king of religions. It was there that

we went looking for the true Shepherd but found only the rigors of man's rituals. But all along, deep in our hearts...His voice was calling us: Rise up and come away!

We found nothing satisfying in the king's palace. We were sometimes given places of honor to hold us, but even those could not fill the void in our souls. Well did the Psalmist declare, “*As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*” (Ps.17: 15)

Nothing short of this will satisfy our longing. We are being awaken to our true identity, yet it is still hidden inside these bodies of humiliation. “*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.*” (II Cor.4: 7) We were chosen for this from the beginning and we will not be satisfied with anything less.

Paul classified this company as “foreknown and predestinated.” “*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*” (Rom.8: 29-30)

Because He predestined us from the beginning, He also equipped us so that we would not fail. We are bond to make mistakes, but we are also prepared to overcome all of them. This is why we can look back at our lives and see how the Lord has been leading in every situation.

We did not know this at the time but it had all been pre-arranged for us. This is why before I even thought of the United States, I dreamed of arriving in New York City. God was in charge of my life. He is in charge of all our lives even when we do not yet know Him.

SAVED FROM THE DRAGON

In John's vision, the Lord reveals the beast which

“..rises up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns...” (Rev.13:1a) A beast speaks of an organized collective power such as a government, a union, societies, sects and so on. Human beings are controlled by such beasts which rise among them to govern and control their lives and their wealth. The beast that John saw came out of the sea of turbulent humanity. We do not need to detail this beast for this study, but we need to know that it was the “*dragon who gave power unto this beast.*”

The dragon is the serpent of old that has increased its power over humanity. It has taken control over the minds of men. It has set up its own leaders over the nations. This way he rules the world behind the scene. The great deception is that man believes he is the one ruling the world when in reality it is empowered by the devil.

This is why, when Jesus went into the wilderness to be tested, the devil showed Him “*..all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*” (Matt.4: 8b-9)

By enticing men with the power of this world, the dragon has been ruling it and keeping it in the cycle of darkness and death. He is the ruler of the darkness of this world. Yet, this has all been God's plan from the beginning.

We are told that “*ALL THE WORLD WONDERED AFTER THE BEAST. AND THEY WORSHIPPED THE DRAGON WHICH GAVE POWER UNTO THE BEAST, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?*” (Rev.13: 3b-4) By admiring and giving homage to his own exceptional mental abilities, man is worshipping himself and also worshipping the dragon.

Make note that “*All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him (the beast) and all whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” (Rev. 13: 8) To have our name in the book of life of the Lamb means to be part of what He is doing. To be one of

the characters in the book.

Only those who have overcome the dragon's controls are part of the Lamb's book. The world's multitudes are unaware that there is a dragon and that it is its power that controls the world's systems.

The violence and cruelty that are now beginning to unfurl before our eyes reveal the crafty and evil schemes of this enemy while God's kingdom is being established in earth. Well did Jesus teach us to pray, “*Thy kingdom come in earth as it is in heaven.*”

Today, the dragon rules in all that man has established in the world. In societies, in governments, in religions, in finances, in buying and selling, there is not one area of man's commerce and interchange that is not under the power of the dragon. He owns the kingdoms of this world.

At the very same time that the warfare is raging in the earth, John sees the Lamb standing upon the Mount of Sion with His Lamb company. Sion speaks of God's rule, God's kingdom. When the dragon has developed to its full potential over man, the Lord Jesus appears with His company of lambs.

This was revealed to John, as he was caught up in the Spirit, about two thousand years ago. Today it is all coming to pass. We are being caught up (raptured) in the Spirit even as we stand with our two feet in the earth, and we behold the awesomeness of what is enfolding in our generation. Every stronghold that man has built by the power of the carnal mind is falling down and crashing heavily in the dust.

When we look with the eyes of the Spirit, we understand that all the warfare in the earth is destroying the strength of the dragon. Indeed it is being destroyed by the fire of wars and violence. Peter explained that the world once perished by water, “*But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment...*” (II Pet.3)

Some wise man once said that “*Evil is self-destruct*” and indeed this is how evil is being destroyed in the world. WHILE EVIL IS TRYING TO DESTROY THE WORLD, EVIL IS DESTROYING ITSELF. GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE SENT HIS SON TO SAVE THE WORLD.

GOD'S LAMBS

After His resurrection, Jesus had dinner with the disciples. “*So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*” (Jn.21: 15-16)

Jesus made a difference between His lambs and His sheep. As we know, a lamb offers himself while a sheep offers his wool. The prophet declared, “*Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.*” (Isa.40: 10-11)

The Lord is very protective of His lambs. They are the ones who are chosen to lay their lives down for the people. They are not volunteers, they were chosen. “*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...*” (Jn.15: 16a) His lambs are rejected of the world and the worldly churches.

“*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*” (Jn.15: 19)

We could never fit in the market place of man's religions; we are rejected for our word. Jesus told us to love one another because the world hates us. Even when we say nothing the world hates us. The

devils recognized Jesus and so the prince of this world recognizes us.

The very first sacrifice that the Lord God received from a man was a lamb. Eve gave birth to two sons. The first was Cain then came his brother Abel. And we read, “*..And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*” (Gen.4: 2) This reveals their very nature; they did the work that they knew to do. Abel was a shepherd at heart.

Abel's sacrifice represented the Lamb who gave His life for the saving of the world. “*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*” (Heb.11: 4)

As we lay on the altar of incense, we offer ourselves as lambs unto the Lord each day. As we die each day to our worldly and religious ambitions, we are as lambs before the Lord. God looks upon our hearts. He looks at how, each day, we choose to follow the Lamb in the way of death-to-self over the way of gain in this world.

ESTHER AND THE BRIDE

One of the most poignant stories of the Bible is the account of Queen Esther. Most everyone is familiar with the verse where she declares, “*I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.*” (Est.4: 16b) Esther had come a long way in her walk with the King. She is a type of the Bride of Christ and also of the Lamb Company who are called to lay their lives down for the people.

As we mature in the Lord, we find ourselves fulfilling the Word that we now see. Jesus came to fulfill the Scriptures and in Him we find that we also fulfill what God had ordained from the beginning. Esther had been chosen and ordained to fulfill something very special. By the Spirit, we see that the story of Esther unfolds the entire plan of God for His church and His creation.

At first we note that beautiful Esther was a replacement for the established queen Vashti. This speaks of God's new order coming in to replace the old. The old queen Vashti represents the church in the world. She is "...arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls..." (Rev.17: 4a)

She has been admired worldwide but the golden cup that she holds in her hand is "...full of abominations and filthiness, of her fornication.." (4b) She has become "Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." (Vs.5) Just as Vashti, she has to be replaced.

When Esther comes on the scene, things are about to change. "*In the THIRD year of his reign, he* (the king) *made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and the princes of the provinces, being before him.*" (Est.1: 3)

The old queen was not invited to this first feast. Only the princes and the nobles and such were invited. The purpose of that first feast was "*When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days.*" (Vs.4)

The riches and glory of the kingdom were revealed only to the princes and nobles and such. It was all part of their preparation for what was about to take place. This first feast speaks of the revelation given to the sons of God (this feast is symbolic and not connected with the three feasts of Israel). Before the old queen is dealt with, the sons have to be made ready. That first feast represents the time when the Lord reveals himself and His glory to the sons. He desires that his servants know the infinite riches of his kingdom. Today, by revelation, we are invited to witness the magnificence and might of His kingdom.

These are not the riches of the world or of the realm of the old queen (the church in the world). People have admired the mighty cathedrals of Europe and

the pompous luxury of the Vatican. The riches of His kingdom are much more precious and astonishing than anything the world has ever known. They are the riches and beauty of God's new spotless and sinless creation. A creation without sin, fears, tears, death and corruption. Because He reveals Himself and His plan to us in such a clear way we have the confidence to stand for the truth and forget our own ambitions in this life.

While the deceiver in the world is being laid bare, the bride is making herself ready. It must be understood that the bride and the sons are NOT two separate companies. We are in the bride when we receive His word and become impregnated with it. Then when this word is made flesh in us, we become this word (give it birth) and we are in the sons.

This truth can only be revealed by the Spirit. Just as in the natural I am the wife of my husband and at the same time I am my father's daughter so in the Spirit, we are the bride of our Husband Christ, we are the sons of our Father God. We submit to our Husband Christ and to His cleansing by the Word. He is the One who brings us to the Father.

"But as many as received him, (the Son) to them gave he power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (Jn.1: 12) This is done by the power of God's Holy Spirit in us. It is not a one shot happening, it is a day by day walk with Him. This will continue until He is fully formed in us. Then He will appear. It will be no longer us but Christ.

John the Baptist declared, "*He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.*" (Jn.3: 30-31)

We cannot decrease unless He increases. When we receive His Word by revelation, we are quickened or made alive and it causes our carnal mind to die and the Christ in us to increase.

ESTHER AND MORDECAI

The story of Esther took place after the fall of the Babylonian Empire. Many of the Jews who had been in captivity were scattered and the powers that be were at work to eliminate them from the face of the earth. The silver Empire of the Medes and Persians was then in full force.

In the book of Daniel, we read about the dream that Nebuchadnezzar could not remember but that the God of Daniel revealed. “*...a great image whose brightness was excellent and whose form was terrible.*” Daniel tells the king that the image stood before him and he describes it having a “*head of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.*” (Dan.2: 32)

Daniel gives the understanding to the king in these words, “*Thou art the head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.*” (Vs.38b-39)

Second only to the Babylonian Empire with the head of gold, the Empire of the Medes and Persians stood as the breast and arms of silver in the earth. The riches of these Ancient kingdoms were beyond compare. The extravagance of their palaces and their courts were unsurpassed, their opulence and glamor without equal.

All these riches were amassed by kings and princes while the people were oppressed with hard labor in servitude to the kings. The “Prince of this World” was certainly at work then as he is now. But the main objective of his plan was always to eradicate the Jewish people from the face of the earth.

The Lord God had set the seed of the serpent (Prince of this world) at enmity with the seed of the woman (true church). Thus at any time, God's chosen people have always been a threat to the kingdoms of this world. This is why the serpent has been furiously intense on getting rid of them.

Esther's family had relocated in a province of Persia where the persecution of Jews was severe. The day came when Esther's parents and family were all killed except for her uncle Mordecai (type of the Holy Spirit) who took the young child as his own daughter and fled with her to Shushan the capital. It was not openly known that Mordecai was a Jew and so he found a place to sit at the gates of the palace.

In process of time, the young and very beautiful Esther became a candidate to be chosen as a replacement for old queen Vashti. As it is with God's lambs, Esther was born with a mission from God and she could not escape. He who knows the end from the beginning has determined a path for each of His chosen. It was so with Esther and it is so for each one who has been elected for His purpose.

When we understand this truth, we are no longer tossed about with everything that seems to go wrong in our lives. We know of a certainty what Paul declared, “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*” (Rom.8: 28)

Esther was well schooled by uncle Mordecai. He is a clear type of God's Holy Spirit who has been teaching us and revealing all truths concerning the Christ, who we are in Him and what is our purpose in this world.

After Esther found her way in the palace, Mordecai coached her for the time when she would be called upon to save her people from utter destruction. As we mature in Christ, we begin to know what our calling to deliver creation from the bondage of corruption really entails.

The day came when Mordecai revealed this to Esther. She did not relish the thought of putting her life in danger, but she knew that she had to do it. God had chosen her for this purpose and had given her an entrance with the king.

The first bride of God was Israel of old. She had a harlot's heart and yearned to be like the nations of this world. Unlike Jesus who would not bow to the devil for the kingdoms of this world, His own church sold herself as a harlot for its glamor and power. Both brides trampled the beauty that God had given them. They sold out to the prince of this world and became rich and famous among the multitudes.

However, His true beloved church has been kept in reserve. Just as Esther, she has hid her identity. She was chosen and reserved in Him and for Him from the foundation of the world. As Esther listened carefully to Mordecai's instructions, so this church follows carefully the instructions of the Holy Spirit.

The king fell in love with the purity and beauty of Esther. And so our King is deeply in love with His bride. Each day He purifies her in the fire of His love. He adorns her with the true gold and silver of His nature.

Esther may have felt inadequate at what Mordecai was requiring of her, but she was the one designated for the job. So she took her stand. She gave herself to the cause and declared boldly, "*If I perish, I perish!*" But her King was ready to receive her. He reached his scepter out to her and soon the true enemy was revealed and his schemes were made known.

The villain Haman was right in the palace, hiding his wicked plot behind false pretenses. And so the dragon has been hiding in the very hearts and minds of humanity. There is much more to glean in the beautiful story of Esther but it is not the purpose of this study. However we know that as Haman was cast out of the palace so the dragon and his power is cast out of our heavens (minds and hearts). Soon he will no longer hold power over our earthen bodies.

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." (Rev.12: 9)

The mission of the sons has been to lay their lives down as lambs among the wolves that they might be delivered from Satan's power and then deliver humanity as they were themselves delivered.

David was rebuked by his brothers for showing up on the scene where Goliath was threatening the armies of Israel, "*David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?*" (I Sam.17: 29) And so Esther approached the king at the risk of losing her own life. As a son of God, she willingly surrendered her life. "*Not my will but thine be done.*"

Jesus, the Lamb of God answered the call. "*He endured the cross for the joy that was set before Him.*" When Jesus came to earth, He desired so much to save His own people but He knew that He was called to do much more. He came as Saviour of the world. He knew that the time would come when He would save His own and much more.

Esther knew she was a Lamb. She knew that she had obtained honor in the eyes and heart of the King for a purpose. And so it is when we mature and begin to understand the heart of our God, we realize that all the beauty that He has given us, all the faith and virtue that He has worked in us has been for a great purpose.

When God gave His only begotten Son out of love for the world, He meant it. God is not relinquishing His beautiful creation to the serpent. He created the serpent to bring the world unto Himself. Father open our blind eyes and establish us strongly in the truth. Give us a heart to follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh IN US, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph.1: 20-21)

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*