



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

*Daily Devotion at Zion + April 25, 2021 AD + **Easter Season***

This Week: Devotion to the Lamb

An eternity, and you still won't see it all.

The City of God will house, we are told, “a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation” (Revelation 7:9). If we cannot number the people, how will we ever see all of the city in which they live? St. John measured it (Revelation 21:15-17), but the numbers he drew were surely mystical numbers that contain an infinity. However far it will stretch on earth, it stretches beyond the bounds of our imaginations. For at the center of that City, which extends from Him as a branch from its vine, stands the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ (Revelation 22:1).

How does that Lamb teach us to pray?

Like the City He has prepared for us, devotion to the Lamb holds more dwelling places for our prayer, praise, and thanksgiving than we can imagine. For the Lamb Himself opens our minds to see the One to whom we pray in a different light. Here is no mighty storm-god riding the clouds, no warrior-goddess with thunderbolts in her hands. Here, in the Lamb, God becomes *sacrifice*, the *meat* and the *blood*, and at the same time, the *gentle one*, His fleece as white as snow. By becoming such a Lamb for us, God opens the way for freedom in our prayer, a freedom born of perfect love, for it is perfect love that casts out fear (1 John 4:18) and loosens the tongue to ask and to adore.

About the Cover Art

“The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb” comes from an altarpiece in the cathedral of Ghent, Belgium, completed in 1432 A.D. by brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck. It portrays the city of God as described by Revelation 21:23: “The city has no need of sun or moon . . . its lamp is the Lamb.” Notice how the “throne” is portrayed as an altar; angels surround it, holding golden censers and images of Christ’s redemption while His blood pours into a chalice. At the altar, we’re at the throne, within the City of God already, rejoicing at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

“I Believe In”: The Lamb and the Communion of Saints

Traditional Christian devotion includes confession of the Apostles Creed, and therefore, confession of faith “in the communion of saints.” What is this “communion of saints”?

The original Greek text reads “the communion of the holies,” and therefore has a multilayered meaning. In addition to the fellowship of believers, it also refers to the union of Christ’s body and blood with the bread and wine at the Supper. The flesh of the Holy One unites with the bread and wine and makes them holy so that they may share that same holiness with those who receive and trust the Supper.

In this way a true communion of saints is made, which does not rest on a supposed holiness of the people and their good behavior, but only on the holiness of Christ, given to them in His own body and blood. He truly is the Lamb of the Passover feast, sacrificed to be our meat and drink, feeding the people of God for eternal life and filling the eternal City with rejoicing.

Daily Readings for the Week of May 2 (Easter 5)

S	Wisdom 7:22-8:1 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 Matthew 7:7-14	Th	Wisdom 14:27-15:3 Romans 14:1-12 Luke 8:26-39
M	Wisdom 9:1, 7-18 Colossians 3:18-4:18 Luke 7:36-50	F	Wisdom 16:15-17:1 Romans 14:13-23 Luke 8:40-56
T	Wisdom 10:1-21 Romans 12:1-21 Luke 8:1-15	Sa	Wisdom 19:1-8, 18-22 Romans 15:1-13 Luke 9:1-17
W	Wisdom 13:1-9 Romans 13:1-14 Luke 8:16-25		

These readings correspond to pages 1106-1139 in Volume I of For All the Saints. To acquire For All the Saints or other devotionals, please contact the church office.

Holding the Image of God: How the Lamb Helps Prayer By Helping Us Know God

Those who have not seen their loved ones over the past year know how different communication via the internet or telephone is from in-person contact. Seeing and touching a person makes communication different from a simple voice or printed words.

In a similar way, the Lamb gives flesh to God and makes Him present for us. “He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” (Colossians 1:15). Knowing the Lamb is more than just seeing a picture of Him. Wherever we trust in Him, He is present, and His experience as the sacrifice for our sins on the cross makes that presence personal and friendly.

Here, then, are some ways in which the Lamb shapes our prayer to God:

1. **Boldness and Confidence.** To see God in the Lamb who was slain is to know that you are praying for the One who suffered pain and died for you. With such extravagant commitment and love for you, why would you not be bold to pray to Him?
2. **Freedom and Self-Forgetfulness.** Children absolutely sure of their parents’ love seldom pause to consider if their requests or behaviors are acceptable or silly: they simply speak up! Knowing the Lamb frees you for similar prayer: bring it all before this slain Lamb, whether noble or foolish, decent or horrifying—lay it all upon the Sacrifice.
3. **Humility and Gratitude.** To meet God and find Him a Lamb with the wounds of sacrifice is to discover the Gift beyond all telling. Let that Lamb spark in you humility before this amazingly kind God and raise up thanksgiving and praise for His commitment.
4. **Hope.** When we know the Lamb, we know the One whom we will see in the City of God. To pray to Him is to pray towards that future, asking for it and setting our hope on it.