

The Gospel of John

1:35-51

I John Repeating His Testimony Concerning Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:35-46)

- A. John the Baptist repeated his testimony, concerning Christ, the next day, therefore giving a strong witness to the Lord's coming as the little lamb with the little dove. To say it once might lead to misinterpretation but by repeating his word about Jesus, the testimony is established, according to the principle of two or three witnesses. (Deut.17:6, 19:15; Mtt.18:16) Since there was only John as a witness, he needed to repeat his testimony to establish it
- B. John's established testimony was so clear and strong that the two disciples who were with heard him and followed Jesus. John's recommending ministry had the following positive results: (1) the disciples of John became the followers of Jesus. (2) These new followers of Jesus became the new recommenders of Jesus, first to their relatives (vv.40-41) and then to their friends and acquaintances (vv.45-46). (3) They declared that Jesus was the messiah, the Christ, that Jesus fulfilled the law and the prophets and when words failed them, they simply said, "Come and see." (vv.41, 45-46) (4) Their recommendations were used by God to bring forth stones for God's building. (vv.42, 51; Gen.28:11-12, 18-19; 1Peter 2:4-5)

II The Lamb Plus the Dove Produces Stones for the Building (John 1:29, 36, 32-33, 42, 51)

- A. Andrew, one of the original followers of Jesus, went to his brother Simon and brought him to the Lord and the Lord changed his name to Peter. The stone here denotes a work of transformation that brings forth material for God's building (1Cor.3:12). In one chapter we have a Lamb, a dove, and the stone, all of which are figures. What is the meaning of these figures? The meaning is that the Lamb plus the dove produces stones. Redemption plus regeneration and transformation produces stones for God's building. Christ is the Redeemer with the Spirit as the regenerating, transforming, and uniting power. The Spirit of Christ will regenerate, transform, and unite us to God and to one another. We must have the vision that all we need is to be transformed and built together as the very house that God desires.

III The Son of Man as the Ladder Connecting Heaven & Earth and the Base of God's House (John 1:51)

- A. In the first chapter of John we see that first we come to Christ as the Son of God and then we become the stones that Christ builds up for God's eternal habitation. Here in John 1, we have the pattern repeated twice. First, Simon comes to Christ and Christ changes his name, signifying that Christ is transforming Simon into a stone for building.
- B. Then, we have Nathanael, who declares that Jesus is the Son of God. Nathanael recognized Him as the Son of God and addressed Him as such (v.49), but Christ said to Nathanael that He was the Son of Man, who possesses the human nature. To reveal God (v.18) and to bring of God to man, He is the only begotten Son of God. To build God's habitation on earth among men, He is the Son of Man.
- C. Jesus immediately follows up Nathanael's declaration by promising that this new follower would see greater things, i.e., that he would see the heavens open and angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. These "greater things" mean that upon this complete revelation (Christ as the Son of God & the Son Man), Christ will build up the living stones into the house for God, Bethel. God's building particularly needs the humanity of Christ. In eternity past (v.1) Christ had only divinity, but in eternity future (v.51) Christ, the Son of God and the Son of Man, will have both divinity and humanity forever.
- D. This is the fulfillment of Jacob's dream (Gen.28:11-22). Christ as the Son of Man with His humanity, is the ladder set up on the earth, leading to heaven, keeping heaven open to earth and joining earth to heaven for the house of God, Bethel. Jacob poured oil (a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the ultimate expression of the Triune God reaching man) upon the stone (a symbol of the transformed man) that it might be the house of God. Here in this chapter are the Spirit (v.32) and the stone (v.42) for the building of the house of God with Christ in His humanity as the building material.
- E. John 1 starts with the Word and ends with Bethel, the house of God. There is a long way between verse 1 and verse 51. In this one chapter, we can see the beginning, the Word, God, creation, life, light, the many children of God brought forth in life, the flesh, the tabernacle, grace, reality, the full declaration of God, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and the dove which regenerates, anoints, transforms, unites, and builds; we can see a stone, a ladder, an open heaven and, eventually, the house of God.