

“The Beasts Beloved” or “Conversion of Kind”

Part One

The Cross and Manifestation of Kind

From the cross of His own crucifixion, the Lamb of God, slain and poured out in love, was yet alone in a world of people who were of another nature. His nature of selfless giving was a foreign and hidden mystery to the nature of all selfish mankind. Jesus was alone because He was the only one who had God’s nature inside of Him. We can hear His heart in John 12:24 when He said, “Except a seed fall into the ground and die it will be alone, but if it die it will bring forth more after its kind”. In John 12:24 Jesus gives us a glimpse into His heart and desire to have those after His own kind... those who would share in His Lamb nature.

A crisis happens at the Cross. This confrontation with the utter reduction and selfless giving of God’s nature exposes the selfishness that motivates human kind. This contrast is meant to work for the ultimate good, for it is here that a heart might truly turn away from self and unto Christ in His Lamb nature. Jesus came, not to condemn a world of selfish human kind, but to crucify them and bring them into His divine nature (John 3:16, II Peter 1:4).

At the Cross, God’s kind is appearing and manifesting in His core essence – a Lamb in the midst of wolves as they devour the sacrifice. But as death works in Him (the Lamb), Life comes into us. Once Lamb Life gets inside of us, we have the potential to be transformed in our innermost nature. If Christ is formed in us, then His nature will bring true conversion so that it will no longer be “I” but “Christ” who lives within (Galatians 2:20, 4:19).

The preaching of the Cross is foolishness in the eyes of those who have left the Lamb for the wisdom and power of this world, but it is God’s way to those who believe in the power of a crucified Christ to save us from our selfish core nature and replace it with His eternal Spirit of selfless giving (I Cor. 1:18-25).

A conversion of Kind is not a conversion of faith or doctrinal beliefs. True conversion brings forth a new nature, a new Kind of being that is altogether different than what we were before. Saying a prayer will not do that. Trying harder and acting different will not be that. Only the slain Lamb in the power of His death can bring His nature forth in us.

Webster’s definition of conversion includes this: “the act or process of changing from one form to another”. Sermons can inspire us, ministry can motivate us, fellowship can encourage us, but only a Crucified Christ can change our nature deep inside.

An Example of Conversion of Kind

A perfect example of this “conversion of kind” can be found in the Apostle Paul. Before he became a vessel of Christ Crucified, he was Saul of Tarsus, a man filled with a spirit of slaughter and violence against God’s flock: *“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” (Acts 9:1-2). “I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death” (Acts 22:4-5).* Saul of Tarsus was a strong man, a beast. He breathed out slaughter and consumed others by the force of his nature. He was a devourer clothed in self-righteousness and pride as he condemned Stephen to death. He was like a wolf devouring the sheep of God’s flock. What a contrast he must have experienced between his pride and strength compared to the defenseless lamb he was persecuting as he beheld Christ in Stephen (Acts 7:59-60). Interestingly enough, after Saul’s conversion, this same man who once handed his own brethren over to death would have himself accursed from God for their salvation (Romans 9:1-3). Now here is an example of true conversion, and the evidence of his conversion is found in his innermost nature being after another kind. Paul’s beastly attitudes of slaughter and power are now replaced with a nature of sacrifice, the Lamb within (Romans 9:1-3).

Paul’s writings testify of how he personally and continually opened to the deep inward power of the Crucified Christ. History itself confirms that this man was transformed from a vessel of pride and slaughter to a vessel of that would bear the very nature of the Lamb and be offered daily for others (II Cor. 4:10). I wonder if Paul ever forgot the days when he was part of those who breathed slaughter and persecuted the lambs of God’s flock? I believe Paul saw to his core what he was apart from Christ, and it seared into his being a determination to never let go of the Christ whose Crucified nature brought him out of his beast nature into Lamb nature and kind (I Cor. 2:2). The churches of his time beheld in Paul the very same person who had been hunting and killing them was now ministering to them (Acts 9:20-21). The question those early Christians must have been asking was, “How is it possible for this beast to become a priest?” The answer to that question can only be found in a slaughtered Lamb, the crucified Christ and that is why Paul determined to know nothing else but Christ and Him Crucified (I Cor. 2:2). Paul knew that the only way he could reemerge back into public was to do so in weakness, in the very nature of the Crucified Messiah he once persecuted. He no longer came in his own strength and wisdom, but in the weakness and foolishness of the Lamb of God. He was no longer the “Saul of high stature” but the man named “Paul” who relied on the Lamb of God inside of him to be his life (Gal. 2:20). Here, in Paul, we find the story of a beast who became converted to a vessel of the Lamb. ***Gal 1:23 “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed”. Gal 1:24 “And they glorified God in me”.***

The Division of Kind

Throughout the scriptures there is a division of kinds differentiating lambs from goats or beasts (Matthew 25:31-33, Revelation 13). This division is based on the NATURE of the creature and not its outward appearance or deeds. For example, a goat has outward similarities to a lamb, but inwardly its nature is selfish like a beast, not sacrificial like a lamb. The human vessel of the Apostle Paul was the same human vessel of Saul of Tarsus. Even though this man outwardly looked like the same person, inwardly his nature had changed. If someone knew him before and only looked upon his outward appearance after conversion they might think of Paul as a beast instead of someone who has been crucified with Christ and now has the nature of Christ within. Please consider these things as we now approach a scene in the very throne room of God.

A View into the Throne Room of God

Rev 4:4 ***“Round about the throne** were four and twenty seats: upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.”*

Rev 4:6 ***“And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.”***

In Revelation chapter four the Spirit takes the Apostle John into the eternal throne of God. In so many ways this spiritual view of God's throne room must have shocked John to his core. God's order is not man's order and would be considered foolish and weak to all of human kind. The things John saw would shock most of us if we really were confronted with what they truly signify.

At first glance the One on the throne is not clearly seen, but His worshippers are. A main thing that John noticed was the proximity of these worshippers to the throne. Revelation 4:4 shows that around the throne there were twenty-four elders sitting on their own thrones with gold crowns on their heads. These elders are close to the enthroned One, and they are worshipping Him, but there are some who are even closer to the Lamb than the elders. Revelation 4:6 tells us that in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four **beasts** full of eyes before and behind. **What are BEASTS doing in this holy place?** These beasts are as close as they could possibly be, because they are IN the midst of the throne. How amazing that a beast could surpass a crowned elder in its relationship with the enthroned One! Before we further discuss that point let us look closer at the One on the throne.

As this view into the throne room of God progresses, so does the clarity of the image of the One Who is on the throne. By Revelation 5:6 John sees clearly Who it is that is exalted *“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne was a Lamb as it had been slain”*. God's enthroned

King is not big and strong, but a premature-sized slaughtered lamb. Therefore, these who are worshipping God's enthroned King are worshipping a little slaughtered lamb. That may seem like utter foolishness to most, but to someone who once breathed out slaughter and was filled with selfishness and pride (a beast)... this little slain Lamb ALONE gave them LIFE, HIS NATURE, and redemption to the very core of their being. A beast could not exist in the atmosphere of the Lamb unless it had experienced and embraced the depths of conversion that this slaughtered Lamb gives. To a converted beast, there is NOTHING ELSE to consider or do except be ONE WITH THE LAMB. The elders still had time for crowns and thrones and ministry as a part of their identity, even in the presence of the slain Lamb. But these converted beasts had ONE THING ONLY that defined their complete existence... and that was the One Who was slain and was now their very LIFE. A beast KNOWS the danger, the terror, and depths of darkness involved in continuing in his old nature. He CLEAVES with purpose of heart to the Lamb with an embrace that will accept nothing short of oneness, I in you and you in me (Acts 17:28, John 14:20). There is no other place for the beast to worship from except IN the Lamb. To stand even a few feet away from the throne might give place for that old nature to operate separate from the Lamb Himself. The beasts are in the midst of the throne and from that place of oneness they worship the Lamb with every fiber of their being. These beasts have experienced transformation of kind. They are still called "beasts", but their nature is now Lamb.

The Elders Are Affected

Rev 4:9 "And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,"

Rev 4:10 "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne."

When the elders saw these converted beasts living in such depths of oneness with the Lamb, they fell off their thrones, cast off their crowns and started entering into communing oneness with the slaughtered little lamb. This is evidenced in Revelation 5:6 where the elders no longer appear round about the throne but in the midst of it with the beasts, "*And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain*". The position of their heart is the true change, as seen in the passion and depth of reaction in falling off thrones and casting off crowns. These elders are smitten with the true depths of oneness unto nature change that the slain Lamb died to bring us into. These elders see even the things of God as dung compared to entering into a oneness with the Lamb that can change our core nature from self to Christ (Phil. 3:8). I believe these elders were not just beholding what these beasts had with the Lamb, but what the Lamb had with these beasts, for in them the Lamb was receiving one after His kind (John 12:24). Hence the next verse: Revelation 4:11 "Thou are worthy to receive... (one after your kind)... for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created". *(continued next month)*