

What Does God See from His Throne when He Opens His Eyes?

Today we went to Mass with two Protestants. As we walked in the door — there it was, as big as life — a CRUCIFIX with the Body of Our Lord hanging over the altar. I knew what the Protestants were thinking — I used to think the same — "CATHOLICS ARE WRONG, JESUS IS NO LONGER ON THE CROSS, HE HAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD AND IS IN HEAVEN." Of course they think Catholics are wrong to keep Jesus on the cross as though he had not risen and ascended into heaven.



Are they right? Well, YES and NO. Jesus DID rise and ascend into heaven and He IS glorified at the right hand of the Father and we are mystically seated there with him (1 Pet 3:22, Eph 2:6). *BUT* the Catholic Church is ALSO correct to show Jesus on the Cross — not only to remind us of His suffering and death and to show what happens during the Mass — but because in a mystical way He IS STILL on the Cross.

God the Father sits on His throne in heaven. And what does God see from his throne every time he "opens his eyes"? He sees Jesus on the Cross! Really? Yeah, really!

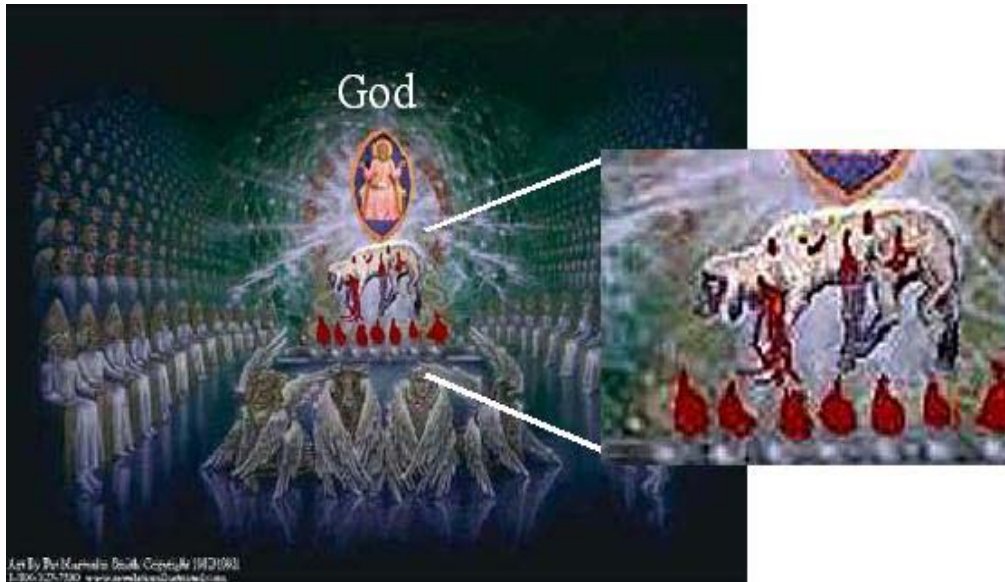


Jesus is our Passover Lamb (1 Cor 5:7). In the Old Testament the lambs were slain on Passover to save the Israelites from death. The lamb was held over the altar, his neck was slashed with a knife and the blood was drained onto the altar.

This is why we have an altar in the Catholic Church! The altar represents the Cross (among other things). An Altar is where a Sacrifice takes place! Jesus was slain as our Passover Lamb to save us from eternal death and to appease the wrath of God. That sacrifice is re-represented at the Mass (see my talk [Defending the Eucharist!](#)).

Take a look at Revelation 5:5 and ask yourself — what John is telling us? It reads,

Between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain . . ."



Who IS the slain Lamb that is still standing? Jesus is the Lamb! Standing on a altar before the throne of God the Father is a Lamb still bearing the wounds of slaughter. Jesus is that Lamb and he still bears the wounds of His sacrifice. That is what God sees when He "opens his eyes" – Jesus the sacrifice — Jesus on the altar — Jesus on the Cross.

But wasn't Jesus crucified once and for all, never to sacrificed for sins again? Yes, of course! In *space and time* Jesus was crucified once and for all in AD 30.

In God's eyes — in eternity which is not limited by space and time — Jesus was crucified before the foundations of the world (*see endnote 1*) and in "eternity future" He is still seen by the Father as a slain lamb on the alter in heaven, as the crucified Lord on the Cross. All salvation past, present and future is based on this one historical event.

In the Mass, Jesus is NOT re-crucified, but we partake in a mystical way in the re-representation of the ONE ETERNAL SACRIFICE which is ever before the eyes of the Father (*see Endnote 3*).

I used to say "Jesus WAS our sacrifice. He cannot be crucified again on Catholic altars, so Catholics are wrong!" But the Bible says, Yes, he WAS our sacrifice, but he also IS our Sacrifice. Look at what John says in his first epistle:

"[Jesus] is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (RSV-Catholic Edition).

The Protestant NIV renders this " He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins."

The Greek word for IS (*eimi*) is in the present tense. Today, *right now* He IS our propitiation, our sacrifice. After His resurrection with His new spiritual body Jesus still has the wounds of his crucifixion (Jn 20:27). He has a body in heaven and still bears the wounds of the Sacrifice. He is presented before God as slain sacrifice — yet now alive.



So, what does God see when He "opens his eyes"? He sees Jesus on the Cross! If this is what God sees in heaven, then it is certainly proper for us to show Jesus on a Cross to remind us what he did for us — and to see what God sees every day and has from eternity. So Catholic are right after all.

Suprise! Surprise!



By the way, once a Baptist said to me, "You are wrong, Jesus is no longer on the cross, He is in heaven." It happend to be Christmas and I noticed they had a Manger Scene (creche) on their table. I said, "Why do you have Jesus in the manger? He is no longer in the manger — he is in heaven.

"And oh," I said, "isn't that a cute statue of Mary! I thought you Protestants considered statues to be idols? Why do you have a statue of Mary in your house?"

Endnote 1: There are two ways to translate this verse, but either way it comes out making the point. The best Protestant translations of Revelation 13:8 read: "All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world" (NIV - New International Version).

"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (NKJV - New King James Version).

Endnote 2: Pictures: 1) Crucifix; 2) Passover Lamb slain by the modern day Samaritans; 3) Image of Jesus the Passover Lamb sacrificed on an altar before the Throne of God (could not make out the name of the author, but it can be seen at <http://biblia.com/bible/rev45.htm>; 4) Caravaggio's famous painting "Incredulity of St. Thomas."; 5) Creche scene.

Endnote 3: Catechism paragraph 1367: "The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: 'The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.' 'And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner. . . this sacrifice is truly propitiatory'."