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THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB

Jesus had many disciples following his earthly ministry whom he had personally called. Although there are numerous apostles named even in the Book of Acts, it is only those whom Jesus personally called that are referred to as "Apostles of the Lamb." They are listed in Matthew 10:2-4 as Peter, Andrew, James, John, Matthew, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, James Alphaeus (James the Less), Thaddeus, Simon Zelotes (Canaanite), and Judas Iscariot.

Revelation 21:9-21 describes the New Jerusalem for Jesus' bride. It has twelve foundations and twelve gates, one for each foundation. Each of the twelve gates bore the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel from the Old Covenant (Testament). Each of the twelve foundations bore a name of one of the "Apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:14.)

Who are these Apostles of the Lamb for whom the foundations of New Jerusalem are named? Clearly the eleven apostles remaining after Jesus' death and resurrection have their names there, but what about the twelfth?

Judas Iscariot clearly disqualified himself. Jesus even called Judas a "devil." Judas was the only non-Galilean of the group. It seems clear that he lacked the spiritual qualification of the other eleven, so he was given the job of serving as treasurer for the group. His name will not be on a foundation of the future New Jerusalem.

Acts 1:23-26 shows us that "the eleven" felt it expedient to choose a twelfth from among Jesus various other disciples because surely Jesus intended for there to be twelve of them just as there were twelve tribes. They discussed various candidates and after praying narrowed it down to two particular ones, Barsabas and Matthias. They could not agree on which one to choose, so they prayed, asking the Lord to show them who it should be. They then cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, so the eleven Apostles of the Lamb declared Matthias to be number twelve. Therefore, Matthias became counted as an Apostle of the Lamb, although the scriptures do not say that he was personally called by Jesus himself.

About three or four years later Saul of Tarsus was called personally by Jesus to apostleship as he travelled to Damascus. There is no scripture to indicate that he was an Apostle of the Lamb, but his accomplishments were far greater than many of the apostles that we never hear of again.

It will be a personal matter of curiosity to me when I arrive in New Jerusalem someday. Will I see Matthias's name on a foundation with the other eleven? Like Thomas, I will "wait and see." I Corinthians 15:6 indicates it will be Matthias.