

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 12-14-14 AM NOTES
"THE LAMB OF GOD"
JOHN 1:29
Ongoing Series, "Connecting Bethlehem and Calvary"

Revelation 13:8b (NIV) "...the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."

Revelation 5:11-12 (NKJV) "¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!'"

I. The Lamb of God Prophesied

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV) "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Genesis 3:21 (NKJV) "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them."

Exodus 12:1-3 (NKJV) "¹ Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² 'This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth *day* of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household.'"

Exodus 12:5a (NKJV) "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year."

1 Peter 1:19 (NKJV) "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) "Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight."

Exodus 12:7 (NKJV) "And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it."

Exodus 12:12-13 (NKJV) "¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the Lord. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt."

Hebrews 9:22b (ESV) "... without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

II. The Lamb of God Identified

Galatians 4:4 (NKJV) "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law."

*Redeemed how I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child and forever I am.*

—Fanny Crosby (1882)

Isaiah 53:6-7 (NKJV) “⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”

“Christ is a Savior. He did not come on earth to be a conqueror, or a philosopher, or a mere teacher of morality. He came to save sinners. He came to do that which man could never do for himself—to do that which money and learning can never obtain—to do that which is essential to man’s real happiness—He came to ‘take away sin.’” —J. C. Ryle

III. The Lamb of God Crucified

Isaiah 53:5-7 (NKJV) “⁵But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”

John 19:30b (NKJV) “It is finished!”

1 Corinthians 5:7b (NKJV) “For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”

Romans 8:1a (NKJV) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...”

IV. The Lamb of God Glorified

Revelation 1:13-17a (NKJV) “¹³and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.”

Revelation 5:8 (NKJV) “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”

Revelation 5:12-14 (NKJV) “¹²saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’ ¹³And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power *be* to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’ ¹⁴Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.”

In a sense, the whole Bible is about the Lamb of God. In the Old Testament, the question is voiced in **Genesis 22:7b (NKJV)** “...where is the lamb...?” In the four Gospels, the emphasis is “Behold the Lamb.” In Revelation, the cry is “Worthy is the Lamb.”

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 12-14-14 AM
“THE LAMB OF GOD”
JOHN 1:29
Ongoing Series, “Connecting Bethlehem and Calvary”

This is the 4th Christmas season that we have focused on a series entitled “Connecting Bethlehem and Calvary”. There is perhaps no better time in the whole year than Christmas to share the gospel with people who do not know Christ. There is an openness around Christmas that we don’t find any other time in the year. I believe that Pastors miss a golden opportunity when they focus only on the birth of Christ instead of focusing on who He is and why He came. The birth of Christ was a means to a great end. We should focus on the fact that the **cross**, not the **manger** is the center of Christianity. At Christmas, in our personal witness, in Sunday School lessons, and in messages from the pulpit we must connect Bethlehem (where He was born) to Calvary (where he made atonement for our sins). No one is saved by Jesus’ birth. Those who are saved are saved because He bore our sins and suffered the wrath those sins deserved on the cross at Calvary.

The manger at Bethlehem was not the beginning of Jesus Christ. There is no better way to trace the Lord Jesus Christ in history before His birth in Bethlehem and then into the future beyond His death and resurrection than through focusing in Scripture on the title, “The Lamb of God”. When it comes to our salvation, there is no more important title given to Christ than, “The Lamb of God”. When we go back to the creation of the world, we see Jesus already in existence as “the Lamb of God”. **Revelation 13:8b (NIV)** refers to Jesus as “... the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.” There is no clearer way to study the history of salvation than to study the history of this one called “the Lamb of God”. When in Heaven, we will worship Him using this title – “The Lamb of God”. **Revelation 5:11-12 (NKJV)** “¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’” We will start our journey of seeing the Lamb of God throughout the Bible by looking at the book of Genesis and conclude with the book of Revelation.

I. The Lamb of God Prophesied

The Father knew that the man and woman He created would sin along with all of their descendents. He also knew that the reconciliation of mankind to Himself would involve the death of His Son. Because He sees the future as clearly as the present and the past (He is not bound by the time dimension as we are) He began from the time that sin came into the world to prepare mankind for the coming of the Lamb of God who would be slain for our sin. Just after God announced the consequences of sin coming into the world, He gave the first prophesy in the Bible in **Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)** “And I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed [descendent]; He [referring to Jesus and the cross] shall bruise your head [a fatal blow], and you shall bruise His heel [the deliverer would suffer in this conquest].” Just after this first prophesy, the Lord gives an illustration, a picture of this provision He would make. Adam and Eve were consumed with shame after their sin and tried to cover themselves with hastily prepared garments of leaves. God in His mercy covers them Himself. **Genesis 3:21 (NKJV)** “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.” In other words an innocent animal was slain (its blood was shed), and its skin used to cover the two sinners and their shame. The first sacrifice was made by God. Though we are not told what the animal was, I do not think we would be off base assuming that it was a lamb. Later when Adam and Eve had two sons (Cain and Abel), Cain did not give an acceptable sacrifice and Abel gave a blood sacrifice from his flock (though not stated, most certainly a lamb). Since God held Cain responsible for bringing an unacceptable sacrifice, we can certainly assume that God had given instructions about the slaying of a Lamb to cover the sin’s they had committed. Both of these accounts show that God is preparing the world for the true Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world.

Later, God called Abraham to Himself to make of him a great nation – the chosen nation through whom the Lamb of God would come. Abraham was instructed by God about the importance of a blood sacrifice. In Genesis 22, we find that Abraham was tested by God as to His willingness to trust God by sacrificing the most precious person in his life, his son Isaac – the son of promise through whom God said that a deliverer would come. Abraham passed the test and was willing to give his son Isaac, but God provided a substitute – a ram, a male lamb. Later the descendents of Abraham went to Egypt in a time of famine. Because of Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph, the Egyptians honored the Israelites and gave them a

portion of Egypt that was prime property in which to settle (the land of Goshen). After a time, Joseph died and another Pharaoh who did not know Joseph came into power and made the Israelites slaves. After 400 years of slavery, God raised up a deliverer named Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. In that deliverance from slavery which pictures our deliverance from the bondage of sin, we see the clearest prophesy in the Old Testament of the Lamb of God. It is found in Exodus 12. The redemption and deliverance of God's people involved the slaying of a lamb. **Exodus 12:1-3 (NKJV)** ¹ "Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² 'This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth *day* of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household.'" Notice several things about this Lamb that is the Lamb of God in prophesy. First, this was a special lamb. Any lamb would not do. **Exodus 12:5a (NKJV)** "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year..." In the later observance of this night called the Passover, we know that the priests thoroughly examined the lamb, even the inside of the eyelids, to insure that it was without blemish. That of course looks forward to the sinless perfection of Jesus Christ, the true Lamb of God. Peter referred to Him in **1 Peter 1:19 (NKJV)** "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Even Jesus' enemy, Pilate said that he found no fault in Jesus. This lamb chosen in Egypt was chosen to die. The Father in an Israelite family would at the prescribed time take the spotless lamb and cut its throat and catch the blood in a basin. We are even told the time that the Lamb was to be slain. **Exodus 12:6 (NKJV)** "Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight." The word "twilight" is literally "between the evenings" or before the sunset. The Jewish historian Josephus said that it took place at 3:00 PM, the exact time that Jesus died on the cross. Second, not only was this a special lamb, it was a saving lamb. **Exodus 12:7 (NKJV)** "And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it." **Exodus 12:12-13 (NKJV)** ¹² "For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the Lord. ¹³ Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt." When the blood was put on the doorposts, the judgment of God would pass over that household. Look at the prophesy and illustration here: When the blood of the spotless lamb was applied, the judgment of God bypassed the blood covered ones. Salvation does not come through the birth and life of Christ; it is purchased by the death (the shed blood) of Christ.

To remember God's deliverance of his people, this time every year was celebrated as the Passover. Over the years between the Exodus and the time of Christ, there were literally hundreds of thousands if not millions of lambs that were slain at Passover. Each one was a picture, a type, a prophesy in picture of the coming deliverer, the Lamb of God. It was during the Passover some 1400 years later that the One of whom that Passover lamb prophesied, shed his blood on an old rugged cross and took the judgment of God that we deserved that we might be set free from bondage and God's judgment of our sins.

Time does not allow us to see how the sacrificial system under the Mosaic Law prophesied of the coming Lamb of God who must die. The sacrificial system illustrated the timeless truth of **Hebrews 9:22b (ESV)** "...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

From the Garden of Eden until the birth of Christ, there were countless pictures, prophesies, and types of the Lamb of God slain for sinners.

II. The Lamb of God Identified

We read in **Galatians 4:4 (NKJV)** "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law". It was prophesied in Micah 5:2 that the Lamb of God, the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. It is interesting that for centuries Jewish priests had been raising lambs for Passover in Bethlehem. The shepherds in their fields outside Bethlehem who learned of Jesus' birth were watching over special lambs that would be sacrificed Passover lambs. In that same city, God's true Lamb that would take away the sin of the world was born.

In John 1, Jesus was beginning His public ministry. The Jews were very familiar with the Lamb of God and since the Passover was approaching, the Passover lamb was on everyone's mind, and it is likely there

were lambs around them being taken for the sacrifice. In the midst of this, John points to Jesus and says in **John 1:29 (NKJV)** "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" He was the Lamb of God; all the other lambs had pointed to Him. He was the substance and they were all the shadows.

In this formal presentation of Jesus to the world, why did John choose to introduce Jesus as the Lamb of God? Why not "the Word of God" or "the promised Messiah", or "the King in the lineage of David"? It was because he went right to the heart of the world's need. As the Lamb of God He took away the sins of the world. John had been proclaiming repentance, and the world needed repentance, but there was a need beyond repentance and it was redemption from the slave market of sin.

Redeemed how I love to proclaim it!

Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;

Redeemed through His infinite mercy,

His child and forever I am.

- Fanny Crosby (1882)

Mankind's greatest need is a substitute to take for us the wrath that our sin brought upon us. Jesus is that substitute pointed to by the prophet Isaiah in **Isaiah 53:6-7 (NKJV)** "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth." Dr. J. C. Ryle said it well: "Christ is a Savior. He did not come on earth to be a conqueror, or a philosopher, or a mere teacher of morality. He came to save sinners. He came to do that which man could never do for himself, - to do that which money and learning can never obtain, - to do that which is essential to man's real happiness, - He came to 'take away sin.'" [J. C. Ryle, "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, Volume Three", Page 56]. John makes it clear that it is not the taking away of the sins of the Jews only, but the sins of the world - Jews and Gentiles. He came to take away the sins of all those who would believe on Him - those from every tongue and tribe and people and nation.

III. The Lamb of God Crucified

The cross was not an afterthought or an accident; it was the heart of God's eternal plan of redemption. The prophet Isaiah gives us perhaps the clearest picture of Jesus, the Lamb of God's death. **Isaiah 53:5-7 (NKJV)** "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth." When Jesus stood before Pilate, he answered him not a word. Why? Because He was taking our place in judgment and we are guilty. There was no shouting for vindication; He took our guilt and bore it to Calvary. As the Lamb of God hung on the cross, He cried out in **John 19:30 (NKJV)** "It is finished!" That refers to a complete payment that has been rendered. It can be translated "paid in full". The final lamb, the true Lamb of God had now paid the required price. No more sacrifices were needed. The Priests could go home; their offering of the sacrifices was completed. The Shepherds who raised the sacrificial lambs could find other work because THE Lamb of God had fulfilled all of the prophecies and types and illustrations. **1 Corinthians 5:7b (NKJV)** "...For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." When His shed blood is applied by faith to our lives, we are set free from the dread of God's judgment and condemnation. **Romans 8:1a (NKJV)** "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..."

We have seen the Lamb of God prophesied, identified, and crucified.

IV. The Lamb of God Glorified

In the book of the Revelation, we see a description of the resurrected, glorified Christ. This is Jesus as He now is. In your perception of the Lord Jesus Christ, don't ever leave Him in the manger; don't leave Him on the cross. He rose from the dead and is now glorified in heaven. The description of Him in Revelation 1 is the Jesus we will worship through eternity! **Revelation 1:13-17a (NKJV)** "and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and

girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.”

But it is interesting that in all of His glory and majesty, He is still worshipped as the Lamb of God! In Revelation 5, we see a preview of what it will be like in Heaven. **Revelation 5:8 (NKJV)** Now when He [Jesus Christ] had taken the scroll [W. A. Criswell describes this scroll as “...the final acts of God, concerning the liberation of this destroyed and cursed and ruined universe”], the four living creatures [Heaven’s praise leaders] and the twenty-four elders [they represent the church] fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” When this takes place, glorious worship of the resurrected Christ takes place, and look at the title by which He is addressed. **Revelation 5:12-14 (NKJV)** “¹² saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!’ ¹³ And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power *be* to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’ ¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.”

CONCLUSION

What a pivotal moment in history when John points to Jesus and says, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”. In a sense, the whole Bible is about the Lamb of God. In the Old Testament, the question is voiced in **Genesis 22:7b (NKJV)** “...where *is* the lamb...?” In the four Gospels the emphasis is “Behold the Lamb”. In Revelation the cry is “Worthy is the Lamb”. I don’t want to wait until I get to heaven to worship Him as the Lamb of God. I want to begin now!

An unknown poet wrote these words that perfectly voice what is on my heart as we head into this Christmas season where the real Jesus is most often missed.

*Tis the church triumphant singing,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Heaven throughout with praises ringing,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Thrones and powers before Him bending,
Incense sweet and voice ascending,
Swell the chorus never ending,
Worthy is the Lamb.*

*Every kindred, tongue and nation,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Join to sing the great salvation,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Loud as mighty thunder roaring,
Floods of mighty waters pouring,
Prostrate at His feet adoring,
Worthy is the Lamb.*

*Harp and songs forever sounding,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Mighty grace o’er sin abounding,
Worthy is the Lamb.
By His blood He dearly bought us,
Wandering from the fold He sought us,
And to glory faithful brought us,
Worthy is the Lamb.*

*Sing with blest anticipation,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Through the veil and tribulation,
Worthy is the Lamb.
Sweetest note all notes excelling,
On the theme forever dwelling,
Still untold, though ever telling,
Worthy is the Lamb.*

Unknown