

Behold the Lamb of God

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: John 1:29

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I am going to be speaking today from the first chapter of John's gospel. My subject is, "Behold the Lamb of God." And I will be dealing with several of these verses in John chapter one. If you would like to take your Bible and open it to that chapter, "Behold the Lamb of God."

Now here is my text, John 1 verse 29. "The next day John the Baptist seeth Jesus coming unto him and he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.'"

Now, John the Baptist is called by many writers the last of the Old Testament prophets. You know, the Old Testaments bore witness to Christ. All of the prophets spake of him. And John was the last of these Old Testament prophets.

Isaiah wrote about John in chapter 40. He said, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make his path's straight.' And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

And then Malachi, Malachi the last book in the Old Testament. And in chapter three Malachi wrote about the coming of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, the messenger who came before the Savior, the Messiah. And Malachi said in chapter three verse one, "Behold the Lord says, 'I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me. And the Messiah, the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant. Behold he shall come,' saith the Lord God."

Before the messenger of the covenant, the Messiah comes to his temple. John the Baptist, the messenger, the forerunner, comes and announces the coming king.

And in this first chapter of John, not I'll let you look at a few verses. John the Baptist bore a seven fold witness to the excellency and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, John tells us who he is Who is the Messiah? Who is this Lamb of God?

Look at verse 15. "John bear witness," I am reading from John one verse 15. "John bear witness of him saying, 'This is he of whom I spake, the Lord's coming, prepare ye the way of the Lord. He that cometh after me is preferred before me for he was before me.'"

Now John the Baptist was born six months before Jesus of Nazareth was born and yet he says, "He was before me."

That's right. Actually, he is before all things. John the apostle wrote, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by him."

So John says, "He came after me. He was born after I was born, but he was before me, long before me."

That's what Micah said in chapter five verse two, writing about the birth of the Lord in Bethlehem. He said, "The one born in Bethlehem is the one whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Our Lord is before all things except the Father. All things were made by him.

In Proverbs 8:23... You know, I have told you two or three times on this broadcast to read the eighth chapter of Proverbs. It is all about our Lord who is called the wisdom of God. But he says in Proverbs 8:23, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was."

Yes, John said, "Jesus Christ is before me." He is before the earth. He is before time. He was with God and was God and all things were made by him.

All right. Look at verse 23 now. He is not only, John said, before me, but he says in verse 23, "He is the Lord." He said in verse 23, "I am a voice. I am a voice."

They said, "Who are you?"

He said, "Just a voice, a voice in the wilderness, crying, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.' I am a voice. He is the Lord."

When Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus met the Lord, when he was stricken, smitten blind and fell to the ground and a voice from heaven spake to him and said this, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

And what did Saul ask? He said, "Who art thou, Lord? Who art thou, Lord?"

And the voice said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

He asked, "Who art thou Lord?"

He is God. Jesus and the Father in heaven are one. "I and my Father are one."

I cannot explain the trinity. I am not even going to attempt to. But I know there are three

that bear record in heaven. There is the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the Scripture says, "These three are one." And Christ said, "I and my Father are one."

Isaiah said this. "Unto us a child is born. Unto us a Son is given. And the government is on his shoulders. And his name, now listen. His name, this child born to Mary, his name is wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace."

Christ said, "He that has seen me has seen my Father. I and my Father are one."

And Paul wrote in 1 Timothy three, "Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh."

Call his name Immanuel, God with us. And God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

John said, "He was before me." And then he said, "He is the Lord God."

And then look at verse 27. And he says this Lamb of God, our Redeemer, is superior over all. Listen to what he says in verse 27. "He it is who coming after me is preferred before me whose shoes, whose sandals I am not worthy to unloose. I am not worthy to stoop down and loosen his sandals. He is superior to all, more excellent than every name. God hath given him a name above every name, above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and earth and under the earth and every tongue confess he is the Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Paul declared in Hebrews, "He is more excellent than the angels. He is more excellent and greater than Moses and the prophets and the priests." And listen to the Father. He said, "Unto the angels saith the Father, 'Let all the angels of God worship him,'" All the angels of God worship him.

And unto the Son right there in that same chapter of Hebrews, unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne, oh God, is forever." Yes, he is before all things. He is the Lord and he is superior. That he might have the preeminence.

Now watch this. Verse 32. And he is holiness. Jesus Christ is holiness and righteousness personified. "John bear record," verse 32. Let me read it. "John bear record saying, 'I saw the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit descending from heaven like a dove and he, the Holy Spirit of God, abode on him. For he whom the Father hath sent...'" John chapter three. Listen to this. "For he whom the Father hath sent speaks the very words of God for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him, not limited, but he has the Spirit of the Living God totally, completely."

In fact, the very Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of God is also called the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of holiness. Our Lord is immaculate, immutable, infinite, holiness personified. That's right.

All right. Now look at verse 33. And John says he has all power in heaven and earth. In verse 33 it says John declared this. "Unto whom you see the Spirit descend and remaining on him, he it is, he it is that baptizes with the Holy Ghost."

In other words, he is the giver of life. He is the giver of life. The Son quickeneth whom he will.

The old preachers used to call that the divine crown rights of Christ Jesus. That's his crown rights. He is Lord by divine purpose. God says, "I have set my king on the holy hill of Zion." He is Lord by divine purpose.

And then, secondly, he is Lord by divine decree. God the Father said, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make all your enemies your footstool."

And then he is Lord, sovereign over all, life giver, king of Kings, Lord of Lords, by death. He purchased those crown rights. That's what the old timers used to call it, his crown rights.

He said, "Father, you have given me power over all flesh that I should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given me." As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. That's right. To this end Jesus Christ both died and rose again that he might be Lord, listen, of the dead and the living.

And when he sent his disciples out to preach he said, "Now you go, remembering this. All authority, all power is given to me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore and preach the gospel."

All right. Look at verse 34. John bears witness to Christ Jesus who he is. He says in verse 34, "And I saw and bear record that this is the Son of God."

Now there are many sons of God. John wrote in his epistle, the apostle John wrote over there in 1 John, he said in chapter three, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called sons of God. Now are we sons of God."

So there are many sons of God. But there is only one eternal, omnipotent, only begotten Son of God. That is the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And I saw," John said, "And bear record, this is none other than the Son of God."

Listen to what Paul wrote about him in Hebrews one verse two and three. "God hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son Jesus Christ whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds. He is the brightness of his glory, who is exact image of his person, who upholds all things by the word of his power. When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of God. This is the record. God hath given us eternal life and this life eternal is in his Son, his one and only begotten Son, the Son of his love."

John seeing Jesus coming to him...now here is the seventh witness. Verse 29. I am coming back to verse 29, my text. "John seeing Jesus of Nazareth coming to him and he declared..." He had two disciples, two of his disciples there with him. He declared. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, the Lamb of God." The Son of God, holiness personified before all things, creator, but the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Several years ago a young married man living in this area, in our television area became troubled over his sinful nature. He became troubled over the fact that he didn't know God. He became troubled over the fact that it is appointed unto men once to die and after that the judgment. And he certainly wasn't ready to die and wasn't ready to meet God at the judgment. He was a great and sinful man.

And so he bought him a Bible. He told his wife. He said, "I am going to study this Bible. Somewhere in this Bible it tells a man how he can be saved. And I am going to start on page one and I am going to read this Bible until I find out how a man can be forgiven and come to God."

And so after he had read through Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy the first five books of the Old Testament, the writings of Moses. He came to his wife. He said, "I know now. I know." He said, "Honey, if a man is to come to God, if a man is going to find forgiveness of sins, if a man is going to worship God and God receive him he must have a lamb. He has got to have a lamb. All of these people who came to God brought a lamb and slew the lamb and shed its blood and made an offering to God."

That young man was exactly right. Everybody who comes to God, who is forgiven of God, whom God receives has got to have a lamb. And that is what John is saying about Christ. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

The high priest went into the holy of holies once a year to make atonement, but the Scripture says not without blood, not without blood. You don't come before God without blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission. There is no forgiveness.

Abel had to have a lamb. Abraham, the father of the faithful had to have a lamb. Moses had to have a lamb. Israel had to have a Passover lamb. The high priest had to have a lamb. And let me tell you something. If you are going to deal with God in grace and mercy you have got to have a lamb. I have got to have a lamb. And that is what John is telling us. He is the lamb of God.

This is the message of the entire Bible. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. He is the lamb promised. He is the lamb prophesied. He is the lamb pictured throughout the whole old Testament. And then when God sent the forerunner and the forerunner gave this seven fold witness of who Jesus Christ is he said, primarily, "He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Now let's look at the Old Testament and see how that Lamb of God is revealed. Everybody had a lamb.

Now here is two brothers over in Genesis four. Chapter four verses three and four, two brothers, Cain and Abel. And these two brothers came to worship God. They both built an altar. They both came to worship God. And Cain, the older brother, brought the fruit of the ground. He was a farmer. So he brought all the things that he had grown and raised and brought them to God and presented them as his sacrifice, as his offering to God.

Well, Abel, the younger brother, brought a lamb. He slew the lamb, roasted it with fire, took the blood, put it on the altar and God received his sacrifice. God received his lamb. God received his offering and rejected Cain's offering.

Now then. Why did God accept offering and reject and refuse Cain's offering? He accepted the blood, but he refused the works of the flesh.

And I will tell you why. Abel's offering was by faith. By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. He did what he was told to do. He came through the blood.

Secondly, Abel's offering declared this. "My sins deserve death."

The Scripture says, "The soul that sinneth it will die. The wages of sin is death."

And Abel says, "I agree with that. This lamb is dying, picturing what I should do and that is die for my sins, but he is dying in my place." And so he brought the blood.

Thirdly, Abel was declaring this. "I am looking not to this animal and its blood because an animal's blood won't atone for a man's sin, they are different natures. But I am looking, I am bringing this lamb and looking to the coming Lamb of God who will take away my sin. I am looking to the one whom this Lamb represents by faith."

That is where all these Old Testament people...

And then, fourthly, Abel's offering justified God's judgment against sin. He said, "God, you are right to punish sin. You are right to require death. God must punish sin." And that is what the sacrifice of the lamb is saying. I agree by faith with God's wrath against sin. I ought to die. But I can't die and be saved. So somebody has to die for me. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Well, what about Abraham, the father of the faithful? One day God said, "Abraham, take thy son, thine only son whom thou lovest to mount...to the mount and I will show you." Mount Moriah is where it was. "And you sacrifice there. You sacrifice him as a blood burnt offering to me. And the way you sacrifice these burnt offerings is you put the lamb's body on the altar and you burn it. You roast it. You divide it into four parts and roast it before God and you take the blood with hyssop and you sprinkle it on the altar."

And so Abraham took his son, gathered the wood, got some young men who worked for him to help him and they started a three day journey and finally they came to the base of that mountain, Mount Moriah and Abraham said to the young man with him, said, "You men stay here. The lad and I will go yonder and worship God and we will be back."

Abraham believed that God...if he allowed him to sacrifice Isaac, that he would raise him from the dead because he promised Abraham, "In Isaac thy seed will be called."

So he said, "We'll be back." So he started up the mountain and Isaac was walking along beside him. Isaac was a pretty good sized young man. And he was carrying the wood for the altar and carrying the fire. They had the fire on a stick then with some kind of oil that burned. And the young man said to his father, he said, "Father, here is the wood, here is the fire, where is the lamb?"

Isaac knew, I know, you know, without the shedding of blood there is no remission. With a lamb you don't come to God. And then Abraham uttered those mighty words, "My son, my son, God will provide himself a lamb. God will provide. Jehovah Jireh." That is one of the seven names of our Lord. God will provide. God will see to it. "My son, God will provide himself a lamb."

He is saying three things there. God will provide the lamb. And he did. Jesus Christ is his Son. He sent his Son into the world to redeem us. God provided the lamb. And God will himself be the lamb. God will provide himself the lamb. He is the lamb. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

And then he said, "God will provide for himself a lamb." That lamb died to reconcile God. You see, Christ didn't die, shed his blood toward us. It was toward the Father to pay a debt, to satisfy justice, to honor the law. He died. Every Old Testament sacrifice was before the Lord, unto the Lord. So God provided himself. And that is what happened on that mountain. He raised a knife to slay his son and God said, "Abraham, don't touch the lad."

He looked behind him and there was a ram caught by his horns in the thicket. And Abraham took Isaac off the altar and put the ram in his place. And he died in the stead of Isaac. And that is the way Christ died in our stead.

Now what about the blood in Egypt. Israel was in Egypt, been there 400 years. And God raised up Moses to deliver them from Egypt, but not without blood. There is no redemption without blood. There is no deliverance without blood. You can't go from Egypt to Canaan without the shedding of blood. So God said, "Moses, take a lamb. Take a lamb, the firstling of the flock. It has got to be a young lamb in the prime of life."

Secondly, without spot or blemish. It's got to be perfect. Take that lamb. Set it. Keep it up three or four days to make sure it has got no mark or blemish or disease. And then kill

it. Roast it with fire. Eat the lamb and sprinkle the blood on the door by faith. And when I see the blood I will pass over you.”

Christ Jesus is the firstborn, the firstling of the flock. He was without spot or blemish. He was slain on Calvary or roasted under the wrath of God and we eat his flesh and drink his blood. That’s right. He said, “This is my blood shed for you. Drink ye all of it in type, picture. This is my body broken for you. Take and eat.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood and God said, “By faith you apply it.”

Those Israelites put it on the door by faith. And they went in the house and shut the door and God passed over. And that’s what we do. We receive the blood by faith.

And then in Isaiah 53 it tells us the Lamb is going to be a man. The Lamb is typified. The Lamb is personified as a man, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The transgressions of our sins was upon him. By his stripes we are healed. A man is God’s lamb.

And then the Lamb of God is identified here by John. There he is, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the World. And the Lamb was crucified on the cross. And, my friends, the Lamb is glorified. He is exalted to God’s right hand.

And listen to what the Scripture says. In Revelation five, “And I beheld and low in the midst of the throne stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, omnipotent, hath seven eyes, omniscient, all seeing, seven spirits, omnipresent. And he came and took the book from the right hand of him that sat on the throne and when he had taken the book they all fell down, every voice in heaven sang a new song, ‘Thou art worthy to take the book, to open the seals, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation and made us kings and priests unto our God.’”

Every man coming to God must have a lamb, must have a lamb. Thank God. This sinner has a lamb. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Now if you want this tape, cassette tape, audio tape, “The Lamb of God,” write for it. We’ll mail it to you. There will be another one on the other side, another message I’ll preach next week on the Lord is my shepherd.

All right. Until next week may God bless you everyone.