

THE LAMB OF GOD

TEXT: JOHN 1:29-36

INTRODUCTION:

1. The lamb was the principal animal of sacrifice in the Old Testament worship of God, being the offering each morning and each evening according to the law of Moses.
2. Exodus 29:39 says, "The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even."
3. To the Israelites the lamb represented innocence and gentleness. Therefore, the lamb is a perfect picture and type of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
4. In fact, the Lord Jesus is referred to as "the Lamb" 32 times in the New Testament, and here in the first chapter of the Gospel of John we see John the Baptist introducing our Lord as "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36).
5. When John the Baptist said these words, his hearers understood immediately the significance of what he was saying. These people were Israelites, well versed in the Word of God and in the Old Testament sacrificial system.
5. They had a background going back for centuries and so they quickly grasped the wide sweep and vastness of John's words. To them, a lamb was more than an animal, it was the means that God had provided to make atonement for sin and cleansing.
6. And just as the lambs of old had to be roasted on the brazen altar of sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ had to pass through the scorching heat of God's wrath in order to die on the cross for our sins.
7. This week people all over the world will be reminded of our Lord's sacrificial death on the cross, but sadly many of them do not understand the Gospel (cf. I Cor. 15:1-4).

I. THE LAMB OF GOD

1. The word "lamb" is first found in Genesis 22:7.
2. This is a picture and type of Christ. "And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:8).
3. By "type" we mean "a person, thing, or event in the Old Testament, designed to represent or prefigure some person, thing, or event in the

- New Testament” (Fred Hartley Wight, *Devotional Studies of Old Testament Types*).
4. By the way, though the word "lamb" is first found in Genesis 22, we see the Lamb *typified* in the firstlings of the flock slain by Abel in sacrifice back in Genesis 4.
 5. Genesis 4:3-5 says, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."
 6. The next reference to the lamb in Scripture is found in Exodus 12, which also prefigures the cross of Christ. The apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 5:7, "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."
 7. Notice the progression. Exodus 12:3 refers to "a lamb."
 8. In Exodus 12:4, Christ is "the lamb."
 9. In Exodus 12:5, Christ is "your lamb."
 10. After the references to the sacrificial lamb used for the Passover in Exodus 12, there are many references to lambs used for sin offerings throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, I Samuel, II Samuel, and the prophets.
 11. The prophet Isaiah spoke of the lamb of God in his great prophecy in Isaiah 53 (cf. 53:7).
 12. There are several references to Isaiah's prophecy in the New Testament (cf. I Peter 2:24, 25; Acts 8:26-40).
 13. So when we come to the New Testament, and John the Baptist introduces Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), we can easily understand the significance and importance of this identification. There before John the Baptist stood the Lamb of God whom all the sacrifices of Old Testament times had foreshadowed.
 14. The Lamb of God is typified in Exodus 4, prophesied in Genesis 22, His blood applied in Exodus 12, personified in Isaiah 53, and then identified by John the Baptist in John 1. Then finally, in the book of Revelation, we see the Lamb of God magnified and glorified.
 15. In the book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as the Lamb 28 times. He is called "the Lamb that was slain" (5:6, 12), and "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (13:8).

II. FORGIVENESS OF SIN

1. The Lamb of God "taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

2. The Lamb of God "taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) by dying on the cross as our Substitute.
3. First Peter 3:18 says, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
4. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
5. There are many wonderful words in Scripture, which deal with this great theme. One of them is "forgiveness."
6. In Acts 13:38, the apostle Paul said that through Christ "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."
7. First John 1:7 says, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
8. Revelation 1:5 says Christ "washed us from our sins in his own blood" (cf. Rev. 5:9).
9. Another great Bible word is "redemption." First Peter 1:19 says we have been redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
10. Colossians 1:14 says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
11. The term *redemption* means to deliver by paying a price, to free from bondage. The death of Christ is represented in the Bible as the payment of a ransom. Jesus said that he had come to give His life a ransom for many (Matt.20:28; Mark 10:45).
12. Another important doctrinal word is "propitiation." First John 4:10 says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."
13. Propitiation means the turning away of God's wrath by an offering.
14. A similar word is "reconciliation." The Bible teaches that God is propitiated, and the sinner is reconciled on the basis of Christ's death on the cross.
15. Second Corinthians 5:19 says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."
16. Colossians 1:20 says, "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself."
17. Yet another great Bible word is "justification." "Justification is the judicial act of God whereby those who put faith in Christ are declared righteous in His eyes, and free from guilt and punishment" (William Evans, *The Great Doctrines of the Bible*).

18. Romans 5:9 says we are "justified by his blood," and "we shall be saved from wrath through him."
19. All of these great doctrines can be summed up in the word "atonement," which means that the death of Christ and the shedding of His blood atones for man's sin.
20. This brings us to my last point.

III. SALVATION THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

1. In just two weeks the world will observe the 100th anniversary of the wreck of the ocean liner the Titanic.
2. On the night of April 14, 1912, that great ship hit a massive iceberg, took in water, and started to sink.
3. The Titanic left Southampton, England on April 10, 1912 heading for New York City, carrying 2,224 passengers, including some of the wealthiest people in the world.
4. Out of that group, 710 people survived the disaster and were conveyed safely to New York on another ship, but 1,517 people lost their lives.
5. I have read and I have heard many interesting stories about the sinking of the Titanic, but my favorite story concerns a man named John Harper, a Baptist pastor from Scotland.
6. At the time of the sinking of the Titanic, John Harper was 39 years old, and a widower with a six-year-old daughter.
7. He was serving as the pastor of the Walworth Road Baptist Church in London, and he was traveling with his daughter to Chicago to preach for several weeks at the famous Moody Church, where he had been the guest minister the previous fall.
8. When the Titanic hit an iceberg on the night of April 14, 1912, his daughter was put on a lifeboat and survived, but John Harper stayed behind and jumped into the water as the ship began to sink.
9. As the ship started to sink, more than 1,500 passengers jumped or fell into the icy waters. As they gradually drowned or froze to death, John Harper was seen swimming from one passenger to another, pleading with them to accept Christ.
10. Only six of the 1,500 people struggling in the water were later rescued, including a man who later identified himself as Harper's last convert. This young man had climbed up on a piece of debris. Harper, who was struggling in the water near him, shouted out, "Are you saved?"

11. "No," the man replied. Harper then shouted the words from Scripture: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The man did not answer, and a moment later he drifted away on the waves.
12. A few minutes later, the current brought the two men back together. Again Harper asked, "Are you saved?" Once again, the answer was "No."
13. With his dying breath, Harper shouted, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." He then slipped under the waves for the last time.
14. Shortly afterwards the man saw John Harper go down, and there in the middle of the night this man called on the Lord and asked Him to save him. He eventually was rescued and everywhere he went he told people that he was saved out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.
15. Four years later, at a Titanic survivors meeting in Ontario, Canada, this man tearfully gave his testimony recounting how he was John Harper's last convert.
16. The message John Harper preached was the message of salvation: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."
17. The only way to be saved is by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

CONCLUSION:

Charles Haddon Spurgeon often preached at the huge Agricultural Hall in London. One day he was down there testing the acoustics. He thought the building was empty as he cried out, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Little did he know that there was a workman working way up in one of the upper galleries. The man was convicted, went home and got saved that night.