

SERMON: THE HOLY LAMB OF GOD

JOHN 1:29

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Introduction

There had been no prophet in Israel for five long centuries. Now, suddenly a voice is heard in the wilderness-the voice of a prophet. This prophet, John the Baptist, was not concentrating on predicting the distant future, but rather preaching against present sin and evil. His preaching made a great impression upon the people. They were struck, first of all, by his appearance. His outer garments were made of camel's hair and were tied at the waist by a leather strap. They marveled more at the things he said. He was bold in his assertions. He preached sharply against the Pharisees, the Roman officials, and against all who were not living according to the ethical and moral standards of God. His mighty preaching stirred the hearts of many and everyone who heard him felt that a new day had come to Israel, that a real preacher of righteousness, who would tell it like it is, had come on the scene at last. Not only did the prophet condemn sin, but he also gave a practical yet spiritual solution to the problem of sin. The solution was simple: Repent. He preached this same sermon over and over: repent. Amazingly, people came to hear him and yes, many repented.

Jesus came on the scene the day after John was questioned by the religious leaders. They wanted to know who he was and who gave him the authority to preach such challenging messages in the wilderness near the Jordan River. John would not participate in the hypocritical activities of the corrupt religious elite, or the ruling establishment. When John saw Jesus approaching, he declared emphatically that Jesus is the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. John was making it clear that he was not trying to start a new religion or seeking to exalt himself. He was simply pointing people to the Savior, the Son of God.

The people of Israel were familiar with the lambs brought for sacrifice. At Passover, each family had to have a lamb and during the year, two lambs a day were sacrificed at the temple altar. In addition, other lambs were brought for personal sacrifice. Those lambs were brought by people to people, but here is God's Lamb, given as a gift, to all of human kind. Those lambs could not take away sin; they only foreshadowed the Lamb, provided by God, who could take away sin. Those lambs were for Israel alone, but this Lamb would shed His blood for the entire world.

While the Jews were familiar with the sacrificial lambs, they did not connect that concept with the Messiah. They thought of the Messiah as an aggressive political liberator, not a suffering Servant. They had not connected or ignored the meaning of Isaiah 53 as describing the Messiah. Being the son of a priest, John was well aware of the importance of the lamb offered every morning and evening as a whole burnt offering, as

well as the Passover sacrifice and other personal sacrifices. John was declaring that just as a lamb was offered on the altar for sin, so the Lamb provided by God, as a gift, would be offered on a cross for the sin of the world. Think about it. Of all the titles that would have been appropriate to describe Jesus, John the Baptist chose first “Lamb of God.” In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, alone, there are twenty-nine titles of Christ. (Please, don’t get the Johns confused.) Despite this fact, John the Baptist chose first to call Jesus the “Lamb of God.” Let’s reiterate some important points about God’s Holy Lamb.

Exposition

1. The Holy Lamb Was Planned By God.

(1st Peter 1:19-20; Revelation 13:8.)

2. The Holy Lamb Was Provided By God.

(Isaiah 53:4.)

3. The Holy Lamb Is Our Passover.

(Exodus 12:13; Mark 14:23-24.)

4. The Holy Lamb Is Our Perfect Pattern.

(1st Corinthians 15: 20-23; Colossians 3:1.)

5. The Holy Lamb Has Prevailed And Will Prevail Over Evil.

(Revelation 17:14.)

Closing Thoughts

The question in the Old Testament was, “Where is the Lamb?” (Genesis 22:7). In his declaration, John the Baptist answered this question by saying, “Here He is! Look at Him!” John the Apostle added in Revelation 5:12 that if you trust Him, you will have the privilege of singing, “Worthy is the Lamb,” in the heavenly choir. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

End Note:

1. John used the singular form of the word sin rather than the plural. He was referring to the root of sin as a whole, not just the individual sins committed one at a time. By taking care of the root of sin universally, He then takes care of the fruits of sin, which are the individual sins.

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