

“On The Lamb”

Scriptural Text:

The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30This is he of whom I said, “After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.” 31I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel.’ 32And John testified, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” 34And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.’*

35 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, ‘Look, here is the Lamb of God!’ 37The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, ‘What are you looking for?’ They said to him, ‘Rabbi’ (which translated means Teacher), ‘where are you staying?’ 39He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o’clock in the afternoon. 40One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41He first found his brother Simon and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated Anointed*). 42He brought Simon* to Jesus, who looked at him and said, ‘You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas’ (which is translated Peter*).

Preached by Rev Wayne F Schmidt
The Second Sunday after The Epiphany
Salem Lutheran Church
Orlando Florida

Sermon:

My eldest daughter Jesse when she was a little tike word this...(shown was a head piece of a lamb’s costume in the form of a bonnet with little ears atop)... for her Kindergarten’s Christmas Program. As cute as this is... Jesse didn’t think it was. One of the longest, the saddest, the most disappointed, the “want to make you cry too” faces I have captured on film is of my Jesse, with this atop her head. You see, she didn’t want to be a lamb. She wanted to be an angel!

“ Behold, the lamb of God
who takes away the sin of the world”

When Jesus first heard John direct those words towards him: What thoughts ran through his head? What feeling raced in his heart? What was his inner reaction? This, the Last of the Old Testament Prophets (John the baptized) did not proclaim him as did the Messianic Prophet Isaiah. He did not identify him as “ Immanuel” (God with Us). He did not behold him as “The Light that shines in

the Darkness” He did not greet his as: :Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, □ Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace...or any of those names which we associate with the ancient heralds of Christmas.

“Behold the lamb of God...”

When Jesus heard those words, it was not visions of “ Sugar plums” that danced in his head, but that of bloody sacrifice. Once in the morning and again in the evening...day in day out, without fail, lambs were sacrificed on the altars of the Temple for the sins of the people. These blood sacrifices were part of the rituals of atonement -- sinner seeking to become reconciled with God.

We don’t like to see ourselves as sinners. We don’t like to think about God as demanding blood for sin. We forget that a price has to be paid for sin. We forget_in this age that God is a RIGHTEOUS God...and that sin, any and all sin, makes him ANGRY! We forget that God is pure HOLY and that the unholy cannot simply enter into his holy Presence.

Yet, the Old Testament sacrificial system wasn’t enough! Jesus, like the writer of Hebrews in Chapter 10 knew if it HAD been enough ... they wouldn’t have had to continue making blood sacrifices morning and evening, day after day, year after year, century after century. God’s people needed a LASTING Sacrifice! God’s people needed it to be made for them. And Jesus, the Lamb of God. through the sacrifice of his innocent life would once and for all time establish “ ...a new covenant in my blood”

“Behold the Lamb of God”

When Jesus heard those words of John heralding him -- it was nearing the Passover. The Passover ...when all in Israel gathered to remember the great and mighty act of God -- their deliverance from bondage in Egypt The Passover... when the Angel of Death came and swept throughout all the land killing the firstborn male of every household. The Passover... yet when seeing blood of a lamb smeared upon their doorpost and lintel, the Angel of death “passed over” them. It was by the blood these lambs that they came to be saved. These lambs -- which were to be the first born, male, and without flaw or blemish.

“Behold the Lamb of God”

Jesus well knew to deliver God’s people from the bondage to sin,

death and the power of the devil...another lamb's blood was needed that the Angel of Eternal Death might "pass over" us

"Behold the Lamb of God"

When Jesus heard those words of John heralding him - his mind might have turned to what we know as the 22nd chapter of Genesis.

To Abraham-- who was commanded by God to do the unthinkable -- to offer his son as a sacrifice To Abraham -- who took stones and built an altar there, who took wood he had brought and laid it atop, -- who took a rope and bound his son's hands atop the altar, atop the wood -- who took a knife up to slay his son.

"Abraham! Abraham!...Do not lay a hand on the boy," a voice said from above. "I know ... you have not withheld from me. your son, your only son." There God provided for the sacrifice: a substitute for Isaac. A ram caught in a thicket.

"Behold the Lamb of God"

(holding up the little lamb bonnet with its cute ears lined in pick satin)

Jesse worn this hat not because she wanted to but for the sake of Mrs. Duck and her classmates. They needed her to fulfill the role in the Christmas pageant

Jesus knew on Mount Calvary -- atop the wood of the cross, when bound by the nails which knifed through his body, there would be no voice from heaven. Jesus knew there would be no substitute. Jesus knew he was the substitute... for us, for the children of Abraham, for the children of this world.

"I was but a gentle lamb led to the slaughter"

Jeremiah 11:19

Jesus by his suffering and death, willingly and lovingly bore the sins of us, that we might be forgiven, redeemed -- forever.

Blessed be, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Amen.