

## The Lamb of God<sup>1</sup>

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

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March 10, 2024

Text: Old Testament: Exodus 12:1-12  
New Testament: Luke 22:14-23

Purpose: God instituted something unique and special for the Hebrews enslaved in Egypt. Today we know that special holiday as Passover. God said they were to take a lamb and put its blood on the doorpost to protect them from the judgement of the LORD that came and took the life of all firstborn in Egypt. Those under the blood were covered, those not under the protection of the blood died. Jesus was described as the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. Today, all that receive Jesus as their savior, they are covered under the blood and are no longer under condemnation.

Fifteen minutes into a flight, the pilot announced: "Ladies and gentlemen, one of our engines has failed. There is nothing to worry about. Our flight will take an hour longer than scheduled, but we still have three engines left."



Thirty minutes later the pilot announced: "One more engine has failed and the flight will take an additional two hours. But don't worry, we can fly just fine on two engines."

An hour later the pilot announced: "One more engine has failed and our arrival will be delayed another three hours. But don't worry, we still have one engine left."

The guy in seat 17A turned to me and said, "If we lose one more engine, we'll be up here all day!"<sup>2</sup>

Today we come to the fourth week in a seven-part series named, *The Greatest Week in History*. I feel it is very appropriate and right to focus our time during the season known as Lent on what Jesus taught, who He was, the history behind the symbolism of Jesus death on Calvary, and how all of that is relevant to us today.



One of the criticisms of the church today, and throughout history, is that it doesn't seem relevant to what people are experiencing today. How could the death of someone on a Roman Cross, two thousand years ago, on an obscure rock outcropping, outside Jerusalem remotely have anything to do with me – in America – in Kinston – in 2024?

To help us get a context for what Jesus went through, and why, we need to go back to several Old Testament passages of scripture and find foreshadowing's of the Lamb of God.

The offspring of Jacob were twelve sons. This family nucleus settled in the Delta region of the Nile River known as Goshen. What started out as a small clan of 70 members, grew into over a million over a 400 year period. Through the years, the

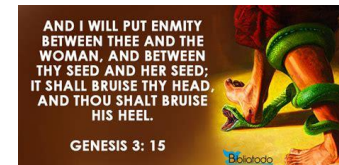


Pharaohs of Egypt became fearful of this growing strong people and systematically began to enslave the children of Jacob.



Slavery in Ancient Egypt

Year after year, the people cried unto God to set them free. And year after year, they continued to make bricks out of mud and serve the people of Egypt. In bondage they served unwillingly. The Lord finally heard their cries and Moses was sent to set the people free.



Before we look at Exodus, we need to go further back into the Old Testament. God had a plan of salvation right from the beginning.

In Genesis 3:15, God reminded Adam and Eve that the seed of woman would crush the heel of Satan, while Satan would only bruise His heel. While Satan may have bruised Jesus, His death on the cross sealed the fate of Satan.

This morning, I want to focus on Jesus as the **Lamb of God**. The scripture describes Jesus as the lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Even before God began to construct creation, He made provision for the sins of fallen mankind. The Lamb of the Old Testament points to the Lamb of God in the New Testament. All of the symbols, promises and prophecies are all fulfilled by Jesus. When we examine several passages of scriptures, we see that Mary's little lamb was the promised Lamb of God, sent to save people from their sins.



## The Lamb on the Mountain – Genesis 22

Genesis 22 begins with God's instructions for Abraham to take his son, the son of promise to the mountain of Moriah. In verse 2, God tells him to "*sacrifice him there as a burnt offering...*"



Early the next morning, Abraham set off to the mountain with his son. The journey took three days. I can't imagine what must have been going through his mind during this trip! Verse 6 tells us that Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac. In verse 7, young Isaac asks his dad a haunting question, "*The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?*" I love how Abraham answers his son in verse 8: "*God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.*"

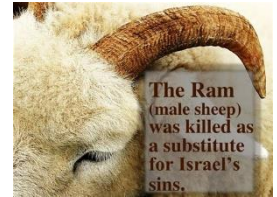
Abraham then builds the altar, arranges the wood and ties his only son to the altar. As he reached out his hand to slay his cherished child, the Angel of the Lord speaks in verse 12: "*Do not lay a hand on the boy...do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.*" Abraham then looks up and sees a ram that is caught in the thicket. He then substituted the ram for his son and sacrificed the ram in his place. From that point on, Abraham called that place, "*Jehovah-Jireh,*" which means, "*The Lord will provide.*"

Let me point out some truths from this passage:

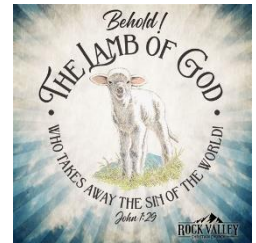
**Truth 1: Mount Moriah is where the Temple was eventually built.** Scholars tell us that it was in close proximity to where Jesus was crucified as the final sacrifice.



**Truth 2: God "himself" provided the lamb.** The word "himself" is significant. God "himself" sent his lamb to die for the sins of the world. The sacrifice came from Him. It was no accident that the ram was in the thicket. God provided the sacrifice. Just as Abraham was willing to offer his only son, so too, God himself provided the sacrifice of His one and only son on our behalf.



**Truth 3: The ram was a substitute offering.** Jesus died in our place, as our substitute, when He paid the price for our sins. The ram points to the "Lamb of God." Verse 8 shows us Abraham's faith that God would provide a "lamb." Verse 13 tells us it was a ram, which is a male sheep. Abraham's statement was really prophetic, foretelling a day when the Lamb of God would be sacrificed on the altar of Calvary. The ram served as a substitute sacrifice, but only the sinless, stainless Lamb of God can effectively wipe out our sins once for all.



As we continue to examine several other scriptures this morning, I want to frame our thoughts on the question Isaac asked, "**Where is the lamb?**"

## The Lamb in the Passover – Exodus 12

As God progressively reveals Himself through the pages of Scripture, we read in Leviticus 22:19 that sacrificial animals had to be free from all defects.

In Exodus 12, the passage of scripture we read earlier, we encounter a new way in which the Lord is instructing the people of Israel how God is working out His plan of salvation.

As I said earlier, for 400 years the Hebrews had lived in harsh, difficult conditions until God raised up a leader named Moses. He goes before Pharaoh with a message from God: “Let my people go!” But Pharaoh says “No.”



So God devises a plan that will cause Pharaoh to beg the Jews to leave his land. He sends a series of terrible judgments (called Plagues) on Egypt. Although the first nine inflicted severe suffering upon the people, Pharaoh hardened his heart against God. The tenth plague would get his attention. At midnight on a certain night, the Lord would go through the land of Egypt and every firstborn son would die immediately.



But God would spare the Israelites - if they followed His instructions. When the blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the doorpost of each Jewish home, God would see the blood and would literally “pass over” that house. But if God didn’t see the blood, he would take the life of the firstborn

in judgment. It was the blood of the lamb that saved the people of God that night. Every year since then, for 3500 years, the Jews have observed a Passover celebration as a solemn reminder of God’s amazing deliverance in Egypt.

The similarities between the *Passover Lamb* in Exodus and Jesus Christ, the *Lamb of God* on the cross of Calvary are worth sharing.

**Similarity 1: The first requirement was that it must be a lamb.** Exodus 12:3 says that each man is to “take a lamb” for his own household. It couldn’t be a bull or a dove, which were sometimes used in other Old Testament sacrifices. God was very particular--it was to be a lamb and only a lamb. Nothing else would do. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, Paul refers to Christ as our “*Passover Lamb, who was sacrificed for us.*”



**Similarity 2: It must be a male.** Exodus 12:5 states that “*the animals you choose must be year-old males.*” Jesus fulfilled this in that he was the son born of the Virgin Mary.

**Similarity 3: It must be a year-old lamb.** Verse 5 continues by saying that the lamb must be in its prime, neither too young nor too old. Jesus was in the prime of his life when he died as our sacrifice on the cross.

**Similarity 4: It must be without blemish.** The Hebrew text in verse 5 uses a phrase that means “*without defect.*” This means that the Jewish men would have to carefully inspect their lambs to make sure there were no open sores, no patches of bare skin, no infections, no diseases, no

blotches or blemishes, no sickness of any kind. This prevented a man from offering a lame or inferior creature while keeping the best for himself.

- 1 Peter 1:19 speaks of Jesus Christ as being “a lamb without blemish or defect.”
- Hebrews 4:14-16 emphasizes that though Christ was tempted in every way that we are, He was without sin.
- When Pontius Pilate finished examining Jesus, he declared in John 19:6, “I find no fault in him.”



**Similarity 5: It must have no broken bones.** Exodus 12:46 states that the Passover lambs must have no broken bones. It was the custom of the Romans to break the legs of those being crucified in order to hasten their death. John 19:32-36 tells us that the Roman soldiers did not break Jesus’ legs because he was already dead. Verse 36 points out that this happened to fulfill the Scripture that says, “*Not one of his bones will be broken.*” Although the verse that is quoted is Psalm 34:20, the ultimate reference goes back to Exodus 12.

**Similarity 6: It must be offered at twilight.** That was the time just before it turns dark.

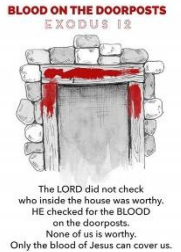


The New Testament tells us that Jesus was nailed to the Cross at the “*third hour,*” meaning 9:00 a.m., since the Jews reckoned time in 24-hour periods beginning at 6:00 a.m. Matthew 27:45 tells us that there was darkness from the sixth hour until the ninth hour, or from 12 noon to 3:00

p.m. Shortly thereafter Jesus uttered his final words and died. His body was then taken down from the cross before sundown. Thus, Jesus died at twilight, the time Passover lambs were being sacrificed throughout Israel.

**Similarity 7: The blood must be applied.**

Verse 7 states that after the lamb had been slaughtered and the blood drained, the father was to put some of the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe. The blood would be the sign that the family had sacrificed a lamb as the Lord had commanded in verse 13: “*The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.*”



The lamb alone could not save an Israelite. Not even a dead lamb could save. Not even the blood in the basin could save. Only the blood sprinkled on the doorpost could spare the people from the terrible judgment of God. That night, LORD went by every home in Egypt, but “Passed Over” every home in Goshen, where the Israelites lived, where the blood was over the doorway. From Pharaoh’s palace to the



lowest household in Egypt came loud wailing and screaming. It was quite different for the Israelites. Exodus 11:7 tells us that it was so quiet in their homes that not even a dog barked.

That evening, after the LORD passed through Egypt, Pharaoh sent word that the Israelites were free to leave. He begged them to leave before everyone died (Exodus 12:33). That is why God told the Jews to eat the Passover in haste.

Leave your belt on and your shoes on your feet because God knew that they would be leaving quickly.



Jesus Christ is our only hope of salvation. He is God's Lamb offered for the sins of the world. However, Jesus' blood saves only when it is applied to our lives. For those who reject the blood, even the Lamb of God cannot save them. If you want to experience freedom from bondage and avoid the sure judgment of God, the Lamb's blood must be applied over the door of your heart.

### The Lamb in Prophecy – Isaiah 53

If we go back to Isaac's question was, "*Where is the Lamb?*" The answer to that question was given in stages, as God's redemptive history unfolded through the chapters of Scripture.



The **first part** of the answer was that the sacrifice was caught in the thicket.

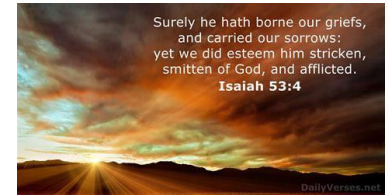
The **second part** of the answer is expanded in the Passover, as we see God establishing the necessity of the substitutionary blood sacrifice.

Let us look at the prophet Isaiah to get a more detailed description of the Lamb and a more complete answer to Isaac's question.

If you turn to Isaiah 53, you will read in incredible detail how the Lamb of God was to be sacrificed. How the Lamb

of God was slaughtered, if you will. We don't have time to explore all of Isaiah 53 today and explore the depths of this incredible predictive prophecy but I encourage you to study it for yourself. We should be studying this passage of scripture in the next few weeks on Wednesday nights.

There is no way to read this passage and not see that the Lord's Lamb is the great divine Substitute for the evil of the human heart. Isaiah 53:4-5 says:



*"Surely he took our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed."*  
What a beautiful picture of His work on the Cross.



Verse 7 says: *"He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is silent, so he did not open His mouth."*

Scripture preserves carefully the sinlessness of Jesus. He was without sin, but he bore the sins of others. That is why he did it in silence. He had no interest in defending himself, so he never spoke up. He was led to death as a Passover lamb. I'm told that when cows are about to be slaughtered, they get real nervous and start bellowing. Sheep on the other hand, are silent.

Writing over 500 years before Christ, Isaiah answers Isaac's question of *"Where's the Lamb?"*

This promised Messiah of Israel was to be the Lamb of God, a suffering servant, who would be pierced for our transgressions and would be our sin-bearer.

### **The Lamb in the Manger – Luke 2**

Jesus' entry into the world came in an unusual place, and the birth announcement was giving to some unusual guests. An angel gave the first announcement of the Messiah's birth to some anonymous shepherds. No one paid much attention to these guys who smelled like sheep. They didn't have refined social skills. They couldn't bring expensive gifts. They were regular guys who had a part in the greatest drama in history.



Warren Wiersbe points out that it is quite possible that these shepherds were caring for the flocks that provided sacrifices for the temple services. Imagine that if you will. Here

we have men who are caring for lambs who are being prepared to die in the temple. Then, the angel comes and tells them the good news about Jesus, the baby lamb, who will one day take away the sins of the world. The shepherds spent their lives caring for lambs and now they have the privilege of meeting the Lamb of God who will die in their place and care for them for eternity.

When they heard the great news, Luke 2:16 says that they *"hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger."* They were overjoyed! They didn't waste any time. Once they saw the Lamb of God, verse 17 says that *"they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child."* They didn't keep the news to themselves. They told everyone they came in contact with about the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.



There's no way of knowing whether they made the connection between Mary's little lamb and their sheep that were prepared for sacrifice. We don't know if they recognized the newborn boy as the ultimate Passover Lamb. What we do know is that they went to see and left praising God.

### **Lessons from the Lamb – Luke 22**

Our passage of scripture from Luke 22 ties it all together for Jesus' disciples. Jesus is the Lamb of God and the Lord's Supper is a remembrance of what was done in Egypt long ago. In Jesus Christ we have a new covenant.



Let me see if I can pull all these passages together with some application for us today.

**Lesson 1: Jesus Christ is God's lamb.** He is the only person who meets all the qualifications. He fulfills every detail of the Old Testament picture. No other person in history meets the requirements.



After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to be dedicated. While there, Simeon took Jesus in his arms and blessed Him, saying that Jesus would cause the rising and falling of many in Israel, indicating that while some would follow him, others would bitterly oppose Him. Then he added a special word for Mary in Luke 2:35: *“And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”*

This was an early reference to the kind of death Jesus would die. From the very beginning he was marked out as God’s sacrificial lamb. He was born to die! Although Mary did not know all the details, from the earliest days she knew that suffering was Jesus’ future. That’s why many of our greatest artists, when painting Mary and the Christ child, have portrayed her with a sense of sorrow and heaviness on her face, as if she can see the form of a cross on the horizon.

Since the lamb must die in order for the blood to provide salvation, Jesus must someday die and his blood must be shed. This is the fate and appointed destiny of the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world.

**Lesson 2: There is no salvation without sacrifice.** Hebrews 9:22 reminds us that *“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”* A living lamb may

be cute and cuddly, but it saves no one. Unless the lamb dies, his blood does no good. In God’s economy, only shed blood can forgive sin. As the great Lamb of God, Jesus had to go to the Cross in order to save the world.

I have read that sheep seem to have a “death wish.” They do things that put them in danger. That is why shepherds have

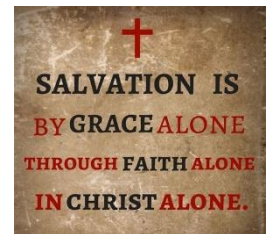


to work hard to keep the sheep from hurting themselves and to protect them from dying. The Lamb of God came to die. Jesus knew from the very beginning the purpose God had intended. It was to die. He was born not just to be born and have us focus only on the baby Jesus at Christmas. He came to give His life a ransom for many. He was the lamb of substitution. The babe in the manger was marked from the beginning as the Passover sacrifice. As a result, 1 Peter 1:19 declares that we are *“not redeemed by perishable things...but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”*

**Lesson 3: Even Jesus cannot save you without faith.**

Abraham had faith that God would supply a substitute. In the Passover we learn that it is blood that saves, when it is applied. Isaiah predicts how the Messiah would suffer and die in our place. The Shepherds responded and then told others about the One who can take away sins forever. Attending Spilman Memorial Baptist Church doesn’t save you. When God looks down from heaven, the only thing that matters is that God sees the blood of the Lamb applied to the doorposts of your heart.

**Lesson 4: When you know the Lamb, you’ll follow Him.** At the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry, John the Baptist calls out to Him and said in John 1:29: *“Look the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament pictures and prophecies. He is the Passover Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. John was so convinced of this that he said it again the very next day





when he saw Jesus in John 1:36: *“Look, the lamb of God!”* Verse 37 says that when two men heard this proclamation, they decided to follow Jesus. I want you to realize, when you know the truth about the Lamb, you will follow Him!

It’s interesting that while Jesus is referred to as the Lamb of God, He is also our shepherd and we are referred to as sheep. Isaiah 53:6 says, *“We all like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*

I don’t know a lot about sheep. I do understand from what I have read, that sheep are slow, stupid, and dumb. Someone once asked what was dumber than a sheep, the answer was “Two sheep.” I know I’m a lot like a dumb sheep at times. We all are.



A second characteristic of sheep is that sheep are natural followers. You and I were created to follow the Good Shepherd. Because we’re not too bright morally and spiritually, we tend to go astray. We need to stay close to and follow the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

### **Lesson 5: If you refuse God’s lamb, there is no other plan of salvation.**

Let us consider two men in Egypt on the afternoon before that fateful night. One is a good, moral Egyptian, the other an immoral, dishonest Israelite. Somehow the two men have become friends, despite their many cultural differences. As they chatted, the Israelite described in some detail his plans to kill a lamb and put the blood on the

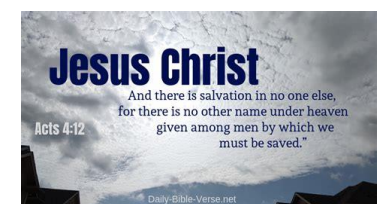


doorpost. Only he sees no purpose in this strange thing. Why should he waste a perfectly good lamb (his best one) on such a useless endeavor?

Later that afternoon the Israelite keeps putting off killing his best lamb. His wife pleads and begs, "Sweetheart, it’s time. Don’t wait too long." When the appointed hour comes, he kills the lamb but not with any enthusiasm. He doesn’t take the blood and put it on the doorpost. 10:30 comes and goes, then 11:00 and the dear wife is fearful her husband will put it off too long. Their four children, including the firstborn son who looks so much like his father, gather round the table. 11:30 and still the man delays. 11:45 and still the man has not done it. His wife weeps before him. "How can you risk the life of your oldest son like this?" Grudgingly, the man takes the hyssop and applies the blood to the doorpost. His wife smiles because her family is safe. Midnight comes and goes and nothing happens. Not a sound is heard. Not even a dog barks.

But in Egypt there is wild screaming, shrieks, wailing, women crying, and fathers shouting. Death! Everywhere, death! Firstborn sons dying in their sleep. Firstborn cattle dead in their stalls. Not a family is left untouched by death. In the home of the good and moral Egyptian man, sudden terror and then wailing. Their 15-year-old, the heir to the family business, their hope for the future, their comfort in old age, has suddenly stopped breathing. He dies so suddenly they don’t even have time to say good-bye.

Why did he die? Because there was no blood on the door!



But what if the Egyptian had put blood on his door and the Israelite had not? Then the roles would be reversed. It's the blood of the Lamb that makes the difference. For those who reject the blood, God has no other plan of salvation. Acts 4:12 puts it this way: *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

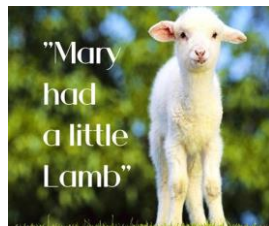
### Where's the Lamb?

Isaac asks the question, *"Where's the Lamb?"* He's the substitute sacrifice.

He's the Passover Lamb. He's the prophesied redeemer. He's Mary's little lamb lying in the manger. He's the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world by dying a cruel death on the cross.

The Book of Revelation refers to Jesus as the *"Lamb"* 30 different times. The Lamb will one day return but first He had to die. And you must apply His blood to the doorposts of your heart. That is, you must trust in the blood for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you must follow Him.

Where will you find such a lamb? Look to the Cross! Gaze upon the bloody body of the Son of God! Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! Jesus is the Lamb you need. He is God's Lamb for your sin. He is Mary's Little Lamb...



Mary had the little Lamb, who lived before His birth; Self-existent Son of God, from Heaven He came to Earth. (Micah 5:2)

Mary had the little Lamb; see Him in yonder stall-Virgin-born Son of God, to save man from the Fall. (Isaiah 7:14)

Mary had the little Lamb, obedient Son of God; Everywhere the Father led, His feet were sure to trod. (John 6:38)

Mary had the little Lamb, crucified on the tree The rejected Son of God, He died to set men free. (1 Peter 1:18)

Mary had the little Lamb-men placed Him in the grave, Thinking they were done with Him; to death He was no slave! (Matthew 28:6)

Mary had the little Lamb, ascended now is He; All work on Earth is ended, our Advocate to be. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Mary had the little Lamb-mystery to behold! From the Lamb of Calvary, a Lion will unfold. (Revelation 5:5,6)

When the Day Star comes again, of this be very sure: It won't be Lamb-like silence, but with the Lion's roar. (Psalm 2:12; Rev. 19:11-16)

## On Thin Ice

Two boys were ice skating on the river one day. The weather was getting warmer, and the thaw had begun. The old river man warned the boys of the danger, but one insisted, "Let me make just one more round." And with this he glided out on the ice covered river. Soon he reached the middle of the stream where the ice was thinner and it gave way.<sup>3</sup>



He cried, "Help, help!" But it was too late. He was gone.

How many have said, "Just one more round in sin, but that was the last one."

Some of you are on thin ice this morning. You have not fully turned your heart and life over to Jesus Christ. I want you to know that the only way to be saved is to listen to the Lamb's own words in John 3:3: *"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of heaven unless he is born again."*

Jesus promised you a way - it's now up to you to listen to Him. Do you realize that you're on thin ice? Hear the warnings and run to the shelter of the Cross - where God provided a lamb for you.

## LET US PRAY

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Sermon Outline from Sermon by Brian Bill, "The Lamb"

<sup>2</sup> Micky's Funnies, A Flight Funny, Feb. 8, 2024

<sup>3</sup> Illustration – Sermon Central – Evie Megenson – accessed 3/8/2013