

Behold the Lamb of God!

Written by Dr. Harold R. Carpenter - Last Updated Sunday, 07 August 2011 17:50



Dr. Harold & Myrna Carpenter

TEXT:John 1:29

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29, NASB).

INTRODUCTION:

Aesop's Fables have been very popular with children all over the world. Aesop was a Greek, who lived in the 6th century B.C. He is said to have been an ugly, deformed man with a sharp mind, who told many stories. Aesop's stories were witty and generally had a moral. Even though the stories are 24 centuries old, they are still relevant today and some of our most frequently quoted sayings come from them. One of these is "*The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*."

A Wolf found great difficulty in getting at the sheep owing to the vigilance of the shepherd and his dogs. But one day it found the skin of a sheep that had been flayed and thrown aside, so it put it on over its own pelt and strolled down among the sheep. The Lamb that belonged to the sheep, whose skin the Wolf was wearing, began to follow the Wolf in the Sheep's clothing; ...so, leading the Lamb a little apart, he soon made a meal of her, and for some time he succeeded in deceiving the sheep, and enjoying hearty meals. Appearances are deceptive.

This morning I would like to turn the tables and talk about "*A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing!*" I am sure that you immediately recognize the play on words and know that I am going to speak about the Lamb of God who took upon himself the form of sinful man (the wolf in our story).

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As we remember again this glorious story of God becoming man, I would like us to do so from a somewhat different perspective. I want us to consider the Lamb on Mount Moriah.

I. A RAM IN A BUSH ON MOUNT MORIAH

A. A Promise made and a Promise kept

1. God promises Abraham a seed:

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Gen 12:1-3, NASB).

1. Not just "any seed" but "The Seed":

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as {referring} to many, but {rather} to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ (Gal 3:16, NASB).

1. The Promise reaffirmed:

1 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless. 2 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly." 3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. 7 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting

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covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." 9 "God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 10 "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a {servant} who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. 13 "A {servant} who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 "But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant." 15 "Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah {shall be} her name. 16 "I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be {a mother of} nations; kings of peoples will come from her." 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear {a child?}" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" 19 But God said, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him (Genesis 17:1-19, NASB).

1. The Promise kept:

1 Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised. 2 So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him (Gen 21:1-2, NASB).

B. A test of faith

1. Give me your son, "**your only son**":

1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." (Gen 22:1-2, NASB).

2. Show me your love.
3. Show me your faith.

C. A lamb provided on Moriah

1. A place called Moriah, which means "Chosen by God":

a. Moriah was an elongated ridge running North and South, bordered by the Kidron Valley on the East and the Hagai Valley on the West.

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b. This was the home of Melchizedek (Gen. 14).

c. It was to Mount Moriah that God sent Abraham to sacrifice his son (Gen. 22).

d. It was at Mount Moriah that Jacob saw the heaven opened and a ladder reaching unto heaven with angels ascending and descending and caused him to exclaim, **"...How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven"** (Genesis 28:17, NASB).

e. David purchased this site from Ornan and built an altar here (1 Chron. 21:25).

f. Solomon built God's House here which God filled with His Glory (1 Kings 8:11).

2. A sorrowful journey

a. God's test of Abraham:

2 And He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you" (Genesis 22:2, NASB).

1. He saddled his donkey.

2. He took fire wood.

3. He took fire.

4. He took a knife.

5. But most important of all, he took his son!

c. Abraham's faith:

1. He expected that both he and his son would return:

5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship and return to you" (Genesis 22:5, NASB).

1. A worried son's question:

7 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" (Genesis 22:7, NASB).

2. Abraham must have believed that God would resurrect his son from the dead if it were necessary!

3. A victorious return

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beersheba (Genesis 22:19, NASB).

a. Abraham believed in God's provision:

8 And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering,

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my son"
Abraham:

(Genesis 22:8, NASB). b. God's Promise renewed to

15 Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice" (Genesis 22:15-18, NASB).

II. THE LAMB IN THE TEMPLE ON MOUNT MORAH

A. 2000 years of "Living By Faith":

B. Abraham's example served as a pattern for the many.

C. Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem just as Abraham brought Isaac:

22 And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (Luke 2:22, NASB). D.

Simeon was living in Jerusalem waiting for God to fulfill His Promise:

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 "Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; 30 For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, 31 Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Thy people Israel" (Luke 2:25-32). E.
Anna was living in the temple waiting for God to fulfill His Promise:

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. 38 And at that very moment she came up and [began] giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:36-38).

III. THE LAMB ON A TREE ON MOUNT MORIAH

A. A Lamb is required at the Exodus:

1 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 "This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. 3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a

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lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. 4 'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons [in them;] according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. 5 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight

(Exodus 12:1-6, NASB).

B. A Lamb is required by the Law:

1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "When a person sins and acts unfaithfully against the Lord, and deceives his companion in regard to a deposit or a security entrusted [to him], or through robbery, or [if] he has extorted from his companion, 3 or has found what was lost and lied about it and sworn falsely, so that he sins in regard to any one of the things a man may do; 4 then it shall be, when he sins and becomes guilty, that he shall restore what he took by robbery, or what he got by extortion, or the deposit which was entrusted to him, or the lost thing which he found, 5 or anything about which he swore falsely; he shall make restitution for it in full, and add to it one-fifth more. He shall give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day [he presents] his guilt offering. 6 "Then he shall bring to the priest his guilt offering to the Lord, a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation, for a guilt offering, 7 and the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord; and he shall be forgiven for any one of the things which he may have done to incur guilt"

(Leviticus 6:1-7, NASB).

C. The Lamb is offered on Golgotha (a skull-like prominence on the Northern slope of Mount Moriah):

33 And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots; 36 and sitting down, they [began] to keep watch over Him there. 37 And they put up above His head the charge against Him which read,

THE JEWS"

"THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF

(Matthew 27:33-37,

NASB)

54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:33-37,54, NASB). D. The Lamb is risen!

5 And the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. 6 "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. 7 "And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you

(Matthew 28:5-7).

IV. THE LAMB ON THE THRONE ON MOUNT MORIAH

A. Ezekiel's vision of the Lamb upon the throne in Jerusalem:

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1 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east; 2 and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 And [it was] like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions [were]like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. 5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. 6 Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me. 7 And He said to me, "Son of man, [this is] the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever...

(Ezekiel 43:1-7, NASB).

B. Zechariah's vision of the Lamb upon the throne in Jerusalem:

1 Behold, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. 2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. 5 And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will come, [and] all the holy ones with Him! 6 And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7 For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. 8 And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

9 And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be [the only] one, and His name [the only] one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse,

for Jerusalem will dwell in security

(Zechariah 14:1-11, NASB).

C. John's vision of the Lamb upon the throne in Jerusalem:

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I [saw]the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a

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thousand years

(Revelation 20:4-6, NASB).

CONCLUSION:

1. Christmas is about God's great gift of His Son as a sacrificial Lamb. On that day nearly 2000 years ago John the Baptist lifted up his eyes and declared, **"...Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world"** (John 1:29, NASB).

2. The greatest gift you can receive at this season is the gift of God's salvation.
3. The greatest gift you can give at this season is the gift of your heart to God.
4. Will you make the Christmas story a reality in your heart and life this morning?
5. I invite you to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior this morning.

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This is the outline of the Christmas sermon Dr. Harold Carpenter preached 22 December 2002. Dr. Carpenter and his wife served as missionaries for twenty years. Dr. Carpenter also taught missions for twenty years at Central Bible College. He now serves as Pastor of Fair Grove Assembly of God, Fair Grove MO.

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