

**Theme: What Does this Text REVEAL About Jesus? –
“Behold! The Lamb of God!”**

Text: John 1:29-34 (NKJV)

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' ³¹ "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." ³² And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

Right now we are in a season of the church year, Epiphany, that celebrates Jesus being “revealed” to all people. Epiphany is a word that means to “reveal” or “make known.” So, during this Epiphany season we are going to be looking at various accounts from the Gospels and see what each of those texts **reveals** to us about Jesus. Truth be told, this is what I strive to do with every sermon every Sunday: Exploring and answering the question, **“What Does this Text REVEAL About Jesus?”** During this season of Epiphany we’ll be putting that question into even sharper focus, and pray that God’s Holy Spirit, who is the *revealer* of all truth, would bless our study this morning and in the coming weeks.

In our text for today we read the familiar words of John the Baptist crying out as he saw Jesus coming toward him, **“Behold! The Lamb of God!”** (v. 29). These are important words that we need to pay close attention to. In fact, John uses an interjection in the Greek that means “*pay attention!*” (the KJV and NKJV translate this word, **“Behold!”** Most modern translations use the word, **“Look!”** It indicates that something worth paying special attention to, or something very important is about to be said.) What important things do these inspired words from John **reveal** about Jesus (notice he repeated this declaration again the very next day, as we read in our Gospel reading in **John 1:36**)?

First of all, **1) It REVEALS that Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.**

“The Lamb” for the Old Testament believers was one of the most significant—if not the most significant—pictures of who the Messiah, the Savior, was and what He came to do. When John the Baptist saw Jesus and exclaimed to those around him, **“Behold! The Lamb of God”** (v. 29) the people probably had a pretty good idea of the picture John was painting for them because the lamb had been used in their worship services for centuries.

- † Several thousand years earlier when the LORD was freeing the Children of Israel from their slavery in Egypt with the last of His 10 plagues it was a lamb, one **“without blemish”** (**Exodus 12:5**), which God commanded each household to kill, roast, and eat and to spread some of it’s blood on the top and the sides of the doorframe. This was the first Passover. The LORD had told His people, **‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. ‘Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt’** (**Exodus 12:12-13**).
- † A little later on in Israel’s history the LORD also commanded that lambs be used for the daily offering, one in the morning and one in the evening (**Exodus 29:38-41**).

† A lamb, **“a male without blemish” (Leviticus 1:10)**, was to be used for the burnt offering.

† A lamb was to be sacrificed as a sin offering as well **(Leviticus 4:32-35)**.

You can see the picture of Jesus in that Passover lamb and the sacrificial lambs, can't you? On that first Passover those who were covered by the blood of the lamb were saved from the plague of the death of their firstborn. Those who are covered by the blood of Jesus, the **“Lamb of God,”** are saved from an even worse fate: We are saved from sin, death, and even hell itself! The apostle Peter wrote in one of our Scripture readings from earlier, **“Because you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, not with things that pass away, such as silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like a lamb without blemish or spot.²⁰ He was chosen before the foundation of the world but revealed in these last times for your sake” (1 Peter 1:18-20 EHV).** Jesus and the salvation He won for us by His sacrifice as the **“Lamb of God”** has been **“revealed in these last times for you”** through the Word of God!

That brings us to the second thing this text **reveals** to us about Jesus, **“The Lamb of God:”**

2) It reveals that Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for sin.

Not just a sacrifice for sin. Or the sacrifice for some sins. He was the perfect sacrifice for all sins for all time! Christ's sacrifice as the **“Lamb of God”** put to an end the need for any more animal sacrifices. The Old Testament lamb sacrifices that were made for the people's sins pointed ahead and found their fulfillment at the cross in the sacrifice of Jesus, **“The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (v. 29).** The writer of Hebrews states, **“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He [Jesus] entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:12-14).**

This **“Lamb,”** Jesus, did not need to be sacrificed day after day, but once for all time. This **“Lamb,”** Jesus, did not just bear the sins of an individual, but rather **“the sin of the world!” (v. 29).** This **“Lamb,”** Jesus, has taken them all away!

Are you plagued by some sin this morning? Are you burdened by guilt over things you've done, or perhaps by things you haven't done? Lay those sins on Jesus, the spotless **“Lamb of God!”** He has already borne them for you; paid for them and taken them away on the cross! As we just sang in the comforting words of our last hymn,

*I lay my sins on Jesus, The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus To wash my crimson stains
White in His blood most precious Till not a spot remains. (Hymn 652 v. 1 TLH)*

Let's not get the wrong impression about this **“Lamb of God.”** Let's not think that He is weak and helpless just because, as Isaiah prophesied, **“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth” (Isaiah 53:7).** No, that's simply what Jesus came to do. He came to die. He came to be the sacrifice for sin. He came to be the Savior.

But our text also reveals something else very important about this **“Lamb of God:”**

3) It reveals that Jesus is worthy of worship and praise.

He is also, as John the Baptist testified in our text, not just the “**Lamb of God,**” but also the “**Son of God**” (v. 34)! He is the “**Lamb who was slain**” (Revelation 5:12a), but now lives again and rules all things! This **Lamb** is “**Lord of lords and King of kings**” (Revelation 17:14). With His almighty power He can help us in our weakness and rescue us in all our troubles. He is the one who is worthy “**To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!**” (Revelation 5:12b).

Look and see the Jesus **revealed** here in the Bible. Look here and “**Behold! The Lamb of God**”—who takes away your sin and my sin—“**who takes away the sin of the world!**” (v. 29). Amen.