

LAMB OF GOD

Regularly we hear sermons on the 'The Lamb of God', but the title "The Lamb of God" only occurs in two places in the New Testament, 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."

John 1:36.

" And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"

However, reference to Jesus being connected to the title Lamb appear in Acts 8:32;

"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:"

1 Peter 1:19;

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

Rev 13:8;

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "

Rev 5:6.

" And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

Various animals have been used for sacrifice, bullock, ram and lamb, but the main animal used has always been the Lamb, regularly being associated with the sacrifices and worship in the Tabernacles by the Jewish nation, all according to the instruction of God.

The "lamb" occupies an important position in the many sacrifices. John the Baptist, being a member of a priestly family, would have been very familiar with the fact when he referred to Jesus as the "Lamb of God."

God provided very specific instruction concerning the lamb to be used. The sacrifice has to be a male lamb which was between the first to the third year old. It must not have any physical defects, it had to be perfect and meant they could not use a rejected, ill or rubbish animal. This required the priest checking the lamb before being offered, a damaged lamb, for any reason, could not be accepted as a sacrifice for sin.

The Tabernacle Instructions give the following sacrifices:-

A daily offering at the morning and the evening sacrifice Exodus 29:38-42.

"Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually.

The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even:

And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering.

And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. "

On each Sabbath day Numbers 28:9.

"And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof:"

As part of the feast of the New Moon Numbers 28:11.

"And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot;"

On the Sabbath the number of the offerings was doubled.

During Festival of Trumpets Numbers 29:2.

"And ye shall offer a burnt offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish:"

Tabernacles Numbers 29:13-40.

"And ye shall offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish: "

At Pentecost Leviticus 23:18-20.

" And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD."

The Lamb of the Passover would also occupy a large place in the mind of a devout Jew. When Jesus approached John the Baptist when He commenced His 3 years of ministry, as the Passover was soon to happen, it is possible that John may have been referring to this as well as to other suggested ideas connected with the Lamb.

During the Passover Exodus 12:5.

"Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: "

Other occasions, 1 Chronicles 29:21;

"And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel: "

2 Chronicles 29:21;

"And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the LORD."

Leviticus 9:3;

"And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering; "

Leviticus 14:10-25. An example of the use of the Lamb sacrifice, rules for a man who has become free of leprosy.

"And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil.

And the priest that maketh him clean shall present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:

And the priest shall take one he lamb, and offer him for a trespass offering, and the log of oil, and wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:

And he shall slay the lamb in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering is the priest's, so is the trespass offering: it is most holy:

And the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and the priest shall put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot:

And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand:

And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD:

And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand shall the priest put upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass offering:

And the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD.

And the priest shall offer the sin offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness; and afterward he shall kill the burnt offering:

And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the meat offering upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

And if he be poor, and cannot get so much; then he shall take one lamb for a trespass offering to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat offering, and a log of oil;

And two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin offering, and the other a burnt offering.

And he shall bring them on the eighth day for his cleansing unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.

And the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD:

And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass offering, and the priest shall take some of the blood of the trespass offering, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot: "

The lamb was used as a symbol of Christ. In the symbolical language of Scripture, the lamb has the character of meekness and innocence, Isaiah 11:6;

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."

Isaiah 65:25;

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."

Luke 10:3;

"Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. "

John 21:15.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."

Genesis 4:4;

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"

Exodus 12:3;

"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:"

Exodus 29:38-46;

"Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. "

John 1:36;

"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! "

Rev 13:8.

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "

Christ is called the Lamb of God by John, 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."

John 1:36.

"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"

John is indicating that Jesus was to be the great and final sacrifice, because all the previous sacrifices were only types or indications of this final sacrifice.

Numbers 6:12;

"And he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled. "

Isaiah 53:7;

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. "

1 Cor 5:7.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"

In the Book of Revelation the reference to the Lamb occurs 27 times. However, the word used in the original text of Revelation is different from the word used in the Gospel etc., Acts 8:32

"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:"

1 Peter 1:19

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

The word is "amnos"- "lamb" while in John 21:15

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. "

In Revelation the word has become "arnion," associated with "the sacrificial lamb."

The word "lamb" is associated with God, or divine in Isaiah 53:1ff;

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Rev 5:6

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

Rev 13:8,9,

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear. "

We shall all one day worship the Lamb of God, freely or otherwise. Because "The Lamb" is defined as part "of God," the name "Lamb" is specially set apart for God, this indicates the close relation of our Lord to God, especially following His "payment for sins of Mankind" sacrifice.