**Jesus Christ: the Lamb of God**

**John 1:29**

***"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!***

*Introduction:*

As we find ourselves in the middle of Lent, a time when many Christians deny themselves certain things, giving them up in the hope that it would focus our thoughts on Jesus, we come, over the next few weeks to look at, more closely the nature of Jesus Christ.

Over the next 3 weeks, leading up to Easter we are, DV going to consider Jesus as our Lamb, our Lion and our High Priest.

Quite aptly, this is the lambing season, we see the new born lambs out with their mothers in the fields It is also the time of year when we start to see new life appearing in our garden flowers and in the hedgerows and fields.

When Jesus came to John to be baptised of him and to effectively start his earthly ministry, John said

***"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!***

But the subject of Christ the Lamb, or perhaps a lamb being a sacrifice, did not start with John. But started way back in Genesis.

The first indication we have of a lamb being used as a sacrifice comes in Genesis 22 when Isaac says to his father Abraham

***7-8 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.***

But clearly from this dialogue we pick up that this was not the first time they had or were going to sacrifice, as Isaac thought, a lamb. Isaac was obviously used to the fact.

Then of course we see when the Israelites were in Egypt, when God was about to bring them out from their captivity, God told them to take a lamb and to put its blood on the doorposts for their protection when the angel of death came over the land.(Ex 12) – The Passover Lamb.

Redemption by a lamb was a command that God gave the Israelites right from the beginning.

So when John is confronted by Jesus, this was a natural thing for John to say, because He knew that Jesus was the Son of God who had come to be the redeemer of the world- the Lamb of God, the only one perfect, who could truly accomplish the taking away of the sin of the world.

In Jesus Christ as a lamb there is a two-fold application.

We see the meekness of his character.

***1PE 2:23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.***

And secondly we see the mission of being a fitting sacrifice for our sins.

Jesus Christ as the sacrificial lamb of God is the subject of Isaiah 53.

In v 7,8 we see the very words that the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading on his way home when Philip joined him in Acts 8:32-36.

And in ***v12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.***

We see the direct fulfillment of this in

***Mark 15:27 They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.***

Jesus said

***Luke 22:37 It is written: `And he was numbered with the transgressors' ; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."***

Jesus Christ as suffering lamb of God discussed in Isaiah 53 from several aspects.

**1. The *Extent* of His Suffering.**

He was denied esteem.

Jesus had been doing miraculous things, but they did not believe who he was.

Isaiah writes in v1-3 “Who hath believed our report” and this is what John relates to in

***JN 12:37-38 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?***"

And again in

***John 1:11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.***

Modernists esteem his name but not his deity. In other words they recognise the man, but not that He was God. (John 8:23-24).

Denominationalists esteem his existence but not his will.

a. His prayer in the garden. (John 17:20).

b. His authority. His church. His name.

Denied justice.

***ISA 53:4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.***

The Priests said

***MT 26:65-66 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" "He is worthy of death," they answered.***

Denied Life.

***ISA 53:7-8 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 her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.***

***By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.***

**2. The *Purpose* of His Suffering.**

To atone for our sins.

***ISA 53:5-6 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. 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.***

***ISA 53:8-10 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.***

1. A necessary sacrifice.

***ROM 3:23-26 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.***

1. A willing sacrifice. (cf. 1 Pet. 2:24,25).

***1PETER 2:24-25 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

To atone for *our* sins, not *His*.

1. We turned to our own way.

***We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way;*** (v. 6).

*Our* iniquities separated us from God.

***ISA 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.***

***2JOHN 1:9Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.***

**3. The *Patience* of His Suffering.**

Patiently submitted to Father's will. (vv. 7,8). Throughout his whole earthly ordeal, which none of us can imagine fully, he remained silent, He knew what he must endure and did it patiently, not retaliating

He did it in order to save us.

***HEB 5:8-10 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.***

He did it all without murmuring and complaining.

Patiently submitted to man's injustice. (vv. 8,9; 1 Pet. 2:23)

***ISA 53:8-9 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.***

Peter writes

***1PE 2:23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.***

**4. The *Aftermath* of His Suffering.**

His days prolonged. (v. 10) After he had accomplished our salvation, the Lamb slain, he has taken up his rightful position,

Paul writes

***Rom 6:9-10 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.***

***HEB 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.***

His position exalted.

***ISA 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.***

***Eph 1:19-23That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.***

*Conclusion:*

What is your reaction to the suffering, sacrificial Lamb of God?

The one who came in meekness, never lifting his hand against anyone, coming to be the sacrifice for OUR sins, not His, for did not sin. He was a lamb without spot or blemish, perfect in every way.

Why not react as the eunuch? (Acts 8:36-38)

***AC 8:36-38 As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.***

Jesus himself said “Believe and be baptized”

The meekness of the Lamb of God says “Come boldly to the throne of Grace”

Jesus – The Lamb

Came as a baby, grew up as a man, became a meek lamb in order to carry out His Father’s will, died as our sacrifice. Raised to life and now exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords – FOREVER

Amen.