

The Progressive Revelation of the Doctrine of the Lamb of God (Part 2)

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Date: 20 June 2012

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[0:00] This is what we started last time. I did not copy any more of the full notes, the Exodus studies.

Some of you have them. I'll try to remember next time, just in case you don't have it, you weren't here when we started the study. I think I gave those out the second session of this study in Exodus, the full outline.

And I'll make sure I get some copies of that and make sure they're available for you next time. But you do have part of it, part that we're going to be looking at or finishing up tonight, something we started last week.

As we have been considering an interesting topic or an interesting subject, and that is, in the broader view, this whole idea of progressive revelation.

Throughout God's Word, and you can identify a number of things that this applies to, throughout God's Word, He has been unfolding various aspects of His plan.

[1:11] The plan of redemption itself, and that's kind of the broad, probably the broadest category we could think of, that God has been gradually unfolding throughout Scripture.

Because about everything else we might mention or might identify in Scripture that seems to be progressively being revealed, falls under the category of redemption.

Because that's what the Bible is all about. It's God's redemptive plan. And as He has been working that plan, and unfolding, gradually revealing to us the various aspects of it.

The church would be another, I think, excellent example of progressive revelation, though maybe not in the purest sense. Because really the church remains a mystery throughout the Old Testament.

Though there are some allusions to the church in the Old Testament. It's not an Old Testament thing. It's something, a part of God's overall redemptive plan that is not revealed really until after Christ and the birth of the church in the New Testament.

[2:20] But still there is a gradual unfolding of that truth. And the one we're looking at is what I would call the doctrine of the Lamb. And I think it is doctrine in that the Lamb is so significant in God's overall plan of redemption.

And He has been, as we've already studied, starting in Genesis, running all the way through the Old Testament, on into the New, really past, even beyond the revelation that we have now.

The Lamb has been gradually unfolding. The doctrine of the Lamb has been gradually revealed to us. And so that's what we've been looking at. And we've already seen a number of things.

I might just sort of review real quickly as we get where we left off. Progressive revelation, we started with the precept of the Lamb.

This is where God first reveals this truth about the significance of the Lamb. And it started there in the, really, at the beginning of the Bible.

[3:34] Not Genesis chapter 1 or 2, but Genesis chapter 3. And we've already looked at that. And it concerns Adam and Eve and their sin in the garden and how God provided a remedy for their sin, which was the sacrifice of innocent blood.

And it was, I think, a lamb because it's consistent with the rest of Scripture. So we have the precept taught. Even though it's not given to us in word, full-blown truth, we don't really get it until we get into the New Testament.

And we have this statement, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. That precept, that truth is first taught or revealed to us in Genesis chapter 3.

Then, second, we have the priority of the Lamb. Another step in the progressive revelation. God showed that the Lamb and the shedding of its blood was significant in Adam and Eve.

But then He clearly states the priority of the Lamb when we get to Cain and Abel. And you remember the story about Cain and Abel.

[4:50] And God had respect for Abel's sacrifice. And He had no respect, no regard whatsoever for Cain's. And the reason was that Cain's offering was a bloodless offering.

Abel's was a blood offering. And both of these young men knew that because they'd been taught by their parents. And their parents had been taught by God.

And so Cain refused to do that. And what he offered, basically, was the equivalent of a works offering, a works kind of salvation for sin.

Or a works sacrifice for sin. And God would not respect that, never will respect that. All right, then, we move from the precept and priority to the provision of the Lamb.

And this is revealed to us through Abraham and Isaac. And you remember that story. We covered all of this last week. But just very quickly, just to remind us, it gets kind of up to speed.

[5:52] Because, after all, this is a progression. God is building upon a truth. And then when you get to Abraham and Isaac, and Abraham and Isaac are walking up the side of Mount Moriah, God has commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, to offer him as a blood sacrifice to him.

Isaac doesn't know it at the time. But Abraham knows it. And so they're walking up to the top of Mount Moriah. By the way, where was Jesus crucified?

On the top of Mount Moriah. Interesting. Anyway, and so there they are. And Isaac asked the question, you know, Hey, Dad, I know we're going to sacrifice to the Lord, but there's one thing missing here.

And that's the animal for the sacrifice. And Abraham, of course, said God would provide. And he did provide that day. It wasn't Isaac. It was a ram whose horns had been caught in a thicket.

God provided. It was never God's intention for Abraham to sacrifice to kill his son. God had multiple things going on here.

[7:01] But I think primarily, in the broader scheme of things, this is one more step in the progression of revealing God's plan of redemption through the shed blood of the innocent lamb, the lamb that is slain.

So we have the provision of the lamb. And by the way, the provision included much more than just the lamb or the ram for that day.

God's provision there for Abraham and Isaac was a foreshadowing of the provision he would make one day. And that would be, of course, the lamb of God, the Lord Jesus.

We're kind of jumping ahead. Number four, we have the power of the lamb. And here, really, for the first time, we have the emphasis placed not on the lamb, but on the blood.

So that's a progression in the revelation. God's getting more specific. In fact, he's getting more specific in another way because the first few steps in the revelation involve single people or a couple of people, God's original family.

[8:12] But then when we get to Egypt and God's people in Egypt, then suddenly the lamb, the significance of the lamb, broadens to a whole group of people, God's chosen people.

But the emphasis here is on the blood, not so much the lamb. And the blood, of course, was used as they splashed that blood on the doorways to their homes, every Israelite home.

And when the destroyer came, he passed over those homes. God said, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And so they were delivered from Egypt.

So there's the power of the blood, the power to deliver in the sense of salvation. All right, so we've looked at that. And then number five, I think we've got this far, didn't we?

Also, the preaching of the lamb. And the preaching of the lamb is really the sermon that has been preached, had been preached all the way through the Old Testament by the high priest.

[9:23] The high priest every year in performance of his service on the Day of Atonement would take the lamb and the lamb would be shed.

His life would be, he would be slain, rather. And his blood would be poured out and the blood would be taken into the Holy of Holies, which signified the very presence of God.

And that blood would be sprinkled on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Under that mercy seat, we had the tablets of stone, the Ten Commandments, the commandments of God that had all been broken.

And so the blood was spread over that and God would see the blood and he would forgive Israel of their sins for a year.

And that would have to be repeated year after year. Now, the point is that I'm making here is that this is the value of the sacrificial system that we have recorded for us, described for us in the Old Testament.

[10:30] We don't have this placed in the Old Testament so that we would perform these rituals today. We have it in the Old Testament because it's God preaching, revealing, proclaiming the significance of the lamb that would one day come.

And so then everything the high priest did was a foreshadowing of the true, of the real, the Lord Jesus Christ who would come and shed his blood once and for all.

And so every time that high priest performed his duty and walked into the Holy of Holies, he was preaching to us, to people, this is what God is going to do.

All right, now we're ready for number six. And that is the person of the lamb. And this is another kind of significant step in the progressive revelation of the doctrine of the lamb.

It started with the lamb and the emphasis was on the lamb. Then when we got to Abraham and Isaac, the emphasis shifted to the blood of the lamb. But now when we get up here to Isaiah chapter 53, the emphasis now is not on an animal but on a person.

[11:45] And so in the gradual unfolding of the doctrine of the lamb, now we are told through the prophet Isaiah that the lamb is not an animal, it's a person, a real person.

And we get that from Isaiah 53, which is a description of the suffering servant. And this is what it says.

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace for our peace was upon him. The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us.

I'm kind of skipping a few verses here if you're following along. Anyway, this all goes together. And he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep for its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

For the transgressions of my people he was stricken. That is, he was put to death. All right, so this is the lamb of God. Isaiah is revealing the lamb.

[12:47] He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. And the lamb here is not like the lambs back there in Egypt, where every Israelite family would take the lamb and kill the lamb and cook it, well, shed its blood, and then cook it and eat it.

Really, all the way through until we get to this point, the lamb is an animal. Throughout their high priestly duty, the sacrificial system, it's an animal. But in Isaiah, he's prophesying the lamb is really a person.

Now, we know the identity of that person, right? And that person is Jesus. That is the lamb. How do we know that, by the way? Well, Isaiah didn't tell us, did he?

Not in specific terms. We don't have anything said about the name of this person. In fact, those scholars who really like to pick apart things and don't want to see the supernatural in anything, don't want to see the prophetic in anything, they have identified the lamb here.

Indeed, the entire serpent is not a person who would one day come, but as the nation Israel itself. But this is not the point that Isaiah is making.

[14:03] He's pointing to a person. He, he would do thus and such. And our iniquities would be laid upon him. The lamb is a person.

And so, this is a giant step in the revelation. But how do we know that's Jesus? Well, John the Baptist, in John chapter 1, verse 29, you remember that story as well.

There's John the Baptist preaching a, comes out of the wilderness preaching. And his sermon is basically, at one point, repent. And, now, by the way, John the Baptist did not have a different message than the message Jesus preached when he first started preaching.

It was the same message when all the disciples started preaching. It was always repent and turn to God. So, here's John the Baptist. You know, he's, he's been out there in the desert or the wilderness somewhere.

And he's got pretty strange clothing on. And he has quite a strange diet. You know, locusts and wild honey. And I'm sure he looked pretty strange. Probably didn't smell too good either.

[15:11] I don't know. Maybe I'm jumping to some conclusions there. And he's preaching. And then he's baptizing. It's the baptism of repentance. And one day, lo and behold, he looks up.

And who's coming? But Jesus. And this is what John the Baptist said. He said that, the Bible says, the next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. And he said, behold, he said, look, look right over there.

And he's pointing to this man, the Lamb of God. The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. That is a direct connection with a number of things in the Old Testament.

But specifically to Isaiah's prophecy when he said, for the transgressions of my people, he was stricken. Or when he said that our iniquities were laid upon him.

So here's John the Baptist saying, here's that Lamb. The Lamb of God. And by the way, he said the Lamb. Not a Lamb.

[16:14] Thousands of lambs had been slain and their blood had been shed. All throughout the, you know, couple thousand years throughout the Old Testament. Thousands of lambs died, of course, in Egypt when God's people were commanded for every household to kill a lamb.

So a lot of lambs had been killed up at this point. But John the Baptist did not refer to a lamb. It's not just another one that's come along. This is the Lamb. The Lamb of God.

Jesus is the one and only Lamb of God. And so, also, you might notice that John did not say, behold the Lamb of God that covers the sin of the world.

And covered, that's basically what the revelation had been up to this point throughout the sacrificial system. That basically the Lamb's blood was a covering for sin.

But he said that the Lamb of God takes away sin. The sin. He takes it away. Aren't you glad?

[17:20] He takes it completely away. Just cover it. He, you know, like to cover over it. He takes it away. So, now, let's put all these together and we've got a couple more to go.

So, through Adam and Eve, God reveals the precept of the doctrine of the Lamb. The very truth.

Through Cain and Abel, they're two boys.

God reveals the priority of the Lamb. Through Abraham and Isaac, God reveals the provision of the Lamb. That is, he's going to provide the Lamb. He said to those in, or rather, Abel, they, he provided his own Lamb.

Lamb of his flock. But here, God's going to provide the Lamb. And then, through Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, God reveals the power of the Lamb. And it's in the blood of the Lamb.

Through the high priests, all throughout the Old Testament, God reveals the preaching of the Lamb.

Again, this sermon's been preached over and over again throughout the Old Testament. And then, through Isaiah the prophet, God reveals the person of the Lamb.

[18:33] And now, we're ready for number seven. The praise of the Lamb. In fact, if you want to, you can look at Revelation chapter 5 and verse 1.

Revelation 5 and verse 1. This is a fairly familiar portion of Revelation.

John is the one doing the speaking here. He's written this down, recorded it down as God gave him the revelation. And this is what John said. I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

That is, him is capital letters. That's God the Father. Who sat on the throne. A scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice.

By the way, there's an emphasis on strong angel. And that's significant when you get to the next thing. Or get to what he said. Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals.

[19:46] So, it's not going to take somebody strong. It's going to take somebody worthy to open this seal. And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or even to look at it.

So, I wept much. John wept much. This is kind of the title deed for God's redeemed people. And who can open it? And so, he wept.

There was nobody. He couldn't find anybody. Because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll or to look at it. But one of the elders said to me, Do not weep. Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.

And I looked and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders stood, what? A lamb. A lamb. A lamb.

A lamb as though it had been slain. Having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, set out into all the earth.

[20:48] Now, there's a lot here that we don't have time to cover here tonight. Then he came and took the scroll out of the right hand of him who sat upon the throne. Now, when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the lamb, each having a

harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

We're about to have a big worship service. Here's what's about to happen. And they sang a new song, saying, You are worthy. You are worthy.

And we'll just stop right there. But really, we could go on throughout the chapter. You're going to see over and over. Worthy is the lamb.

Worthy is the lamb. And why is he worthy of praise? Well, Revelation 5.12. I do read that. The same with a loud voice. Worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.

All right, so this is the praise of the lamb. Now, one more. Then we'll move on. The position. The position of the lamb.

[22:07] Revelation 21 and verse 23. Turn to that. You're still in Revelation. Still have it open. Revelation 21.

And in fact, let me start with verse 22. By the way, throughout the first part of Revelation 21, John has been describing heaven.

And he said this. He said, And I saw no temple in the city. For its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb.

There's the Lamb again. Capital L. That's a person. That's the Lord Jesus, second person of the Trinity. And it said, It has no need of sun or moon to shine on it.

For the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. There's the Lamb again. Reference to the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk.

[23:08] Skipping down there a little bit. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. They will bring unto it the glory and the honor of the nations.

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His servants will worship Him. That's His position. He is the Lord of glory.

This is the Lamb. This is the full consummation of it. So here is all there. The full revelation of the Lamb. The victim. The Lamb has been a victim all the way through.

The Lamb slain. The victim now has become the victor. And the crucified. The Lamb of God was crucified. He's become crowned.

He's the crowned king. King of kings. The servant. Isaiah's suffering servant. The Lamb of God. And He was a servant throughout most of the scripture.

[24:12] He's been revealed as the servant. He's now become the Savior. And one day, we shall see the Lamb ruling and reigning throughout all of eternity and forever and ever.

Without any end. So there's the progression of the revelation of the doctrine of the Lamb. And that should bless your heart.

And it's interesting. You know, if you look through scripture, I'll just do your own little word study. Because I have not referenced all of the scriptures that deal with the Lamb of God and the blood and the sacrifice of the Lord of glory.

There are a lot of scriptures that deal with that. Just take that word and just study it and follow it all the way through scripture. You can take the blood, the significance of the blood in relation to redemption, to sacrifice, atonement for sin.

You can follow that all the way through the scripture. I know you've heard about W.A. Criswell, famous pastor at First Baptist Dallas. Many years ago, he's with the Lord now, of course.

[25:23] He's been dead for a number of years. Pastored First Baptist Dallas, I think, pretty close to 50 years there at Dallas. Tremendous preacher.

And back in his heyday there at Dallas, First Baptist Dallas, they had a New Year's Eve service. And it was a preaching service. And they've been doing this for a number of years. And they had such a turnout in years past that they moved this special New Year's kind of service to a coliseum nearby or a large place like that.

And it was packed out. And Dr. Criswell preached through the entire Bible. Through the entire Bible. It didn't get done until the early hours of the next morning.

And he preached the scarlet thread that runs throughout the scripture. The blood of Jesus that runs throughout the scripture.

[26:29] He preached all those scriptures. And he spent hours to preach the entire Bible. Can you imagine?