

What does this mean? "**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**" John 1:29.

Jewish anti-missionaries are deceiving Christians and Messianics with their deceptive, incomplete handling of this and other Scriptures. They totally reject the Apostolic Scriptures (NT) and claim that Yeshua was only a deluded human being that foolishly got himself crucified. You and I know that none of this is true! We know that Yeshua was fully God and fully human, that His crucifixion was deliberate and planned from the Creation of the world to pay for our sins, and that the Apostolic Scriptures are true, also. They do admit that Yeshua was a good, Torah observant person, but they have great hatred for the Apostle Paul, who according to them, departed somewhat from Yeshua's teachings and founded Christianity, the religion that has persecuted the Jewish people since the time of Constantine, giving them a legitimate grudge.

So, what do you think this passage meant to John, who said it? And what did it mean to those around him who heard it? Their minds probably would think of Leviticus and the sin and trespass offerings. Since most Jews in Yeshua's day had the Torah memorized, they would have had no problem scanning their memory for information. Do you know of any place in the Tanakh where a **male** lamb (Yeshua is the male Lamb of God) is sacrificed as a sin offering? I do find a male lamb used for a trespass offering in Lev 14:12, for the cleansing of a leper, which is similar but not the same. Otherwise, I cannot find any. What I do find consistently is a goat sacrificed as a sin offering, sometimes a bull, and a **female** lamb or goat for a sin or trespass offering. "*If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally...he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish...(or) if he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish.*" Lev. 4:27-32 and Lev. 5:6. "*And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering.*" Both a bull and two goats are used on Yom Kippur, and at other special times as well, including during the Millennium, or Kingdom Age, as we understand Ezekiel 40 – 48 to be.

Another question that might come into their thinking, and ours, is, does the blood of goats or bulls actually take away sin? Up to Ye-

shua's time, the answer would be "No," since animal blood only made "atonement," a temporary "ransom by means of a substitute" to cover their sins shown by the fact that the

Yom Kippur sacrifices had to be repeated every year at the mo'ed, or appointed time on the 10th day of Tishrei. The answer for us is Hebrews 10:4: "*For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*" But they had only the Tanakh (O.T.). Is there anything in the Tanakh that would tell them how their sins could actually be "taken away" forever? Those who were born-from-Above, indwelt by the Spirit and look-

ing forward to the coming of The Messiah, would have the confidence that The Messiah would make "full payment" for their sins and take them all away forever. They would remember and correctly understand Isaiah 53:5-7: "*But he (Messiah) was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*" Jewish writers in Tanakh time after Isaiah, who had read his book, understood two aspects of the Messiah, one suffering and one reigning. They saw Isaiah 53 as speaking of "Messiah Ben Yoseph," the suffering Messiah, and "Messiah Ben David" as the King Messiah in other passages. They could not figure out how to reconcile these two. Writers since Yeshua try to avoid these writings and conclusions.

Two other Promises by God would also come to mind. Psalm 103:12: "*As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.*" Micah 7:19: "*You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.*" Both of these indicate a confidence that sins would be "taken away" somehow by God Himself. With Isaiah 53 and many other passages, the Tanakh-time Believer would be looking forward to the arrival of this Son of YHVH, so dramatically portrayed in Psalm 2, as every Believer lives by Trust in God's statements and delights in the Torah.

Another question is, usually sin in the singular refers to the sin nature, while sins in the plural refers to the deeds committed. Applying

The Lamb of God

by Roger Walkwitz

that to the verses above, this Lamb of God actually takes away the sin nature of the world, the kosmos, the system by which cultures or civilizations operate. We understand from context that the Lamb of God refers to Yeshua, who will shed his blood to fully pay for sin and sins, which is **propitiation**, not atonement. Would John and companions have understood this as well? Our sin nature does not leave us until we leave this world, even though the payment for its removal has been paid in full. Those born-from-Above also have the new nature, the Spirit, to counteract the old.

Reviewing the Tanakh carefully, John and companions would have to conclude that Messiah Yeshua's payment was not related to the Levitical system of Temple sacrifices, since a male lamb is never sacrificed for sin in this system. Would they then make a connection to the Melchizekek priesthood as that which would officiate the sin offering of this "Lamb of God"? We know of course that Yeshua's blood was not brought into the Holy of Holies at the Temple in Jerusalem and sprinkled on the Mercy Seat and before the Ark of the Covenant like the blood of a bull and a goat were on Yom Kippur. His blood was brought into the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle in heaven! John and others might have guessed at this, but we do not know from the text.

Then there is the problem of **human sacrifice** brought up by these Jewish anti-missionaries, claiming that God would never accept Yeshua as a sacrifice for sin. They conveniently forget a number of things in their desire to deceive. God built into His Torah everything needed, including authorization for the death of Yeshua, who was totally devoted to his Father and voluntarily took our sin curse upon himself. Leviticus 27:29: *"No one devoted, who is to be devoted for destruction from mankind, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death."* This "devoted for destruction" is the same curse put on Jericho. Joshua 6:17: *"And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction."* Achan violated this and was put to death together with all his family. Joshua 7:24-25: *"And Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver and the cloak and the bar of gold, and his sons and daughters and his oxen and donkeys and sheep and his tent and all that he had.... They burned them with fire and stoned them with stones."*

This is surely a "human sacrifice" required by God, not in the Tabernacle and not offici-

ated by the priests, but the death of Achan and family satisfied the anger of God against Israel for this sin of violating His command, which sin was put on the whole nation of Israel until the sinner was found and executed. There is another case where this Leviticus 27 command was implemented. Judges 11:30: *"And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, 'If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whatever comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.'" He might have been thinking of his dog, but certainly not his daughter! However, this is what happened, the result of an immature person and foolish vow. Judges 11:34-35: "Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah. And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. She was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. And as soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, 'Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow.'" Judges 11:39: "And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow that he had made."* To me this is the clear meaning of the text regardless if some commentaries say she remained a virgin the rest of her life instead of being executed. This is also a clear warning that vows to YHVH must be paid, whether foolish or not!!

Finally, what about the "binding of Isaac"? In Genesis 22, God is going to test Abraham, and Isaac, Abraham's **only** son. Will Abraham really obey God and sacrifice his **only son** (God's words!) Isaac? Yes, he will! The two travel to Mt Moriah, Isaac willingly submits to being bound, and just as Abraham is ready to plunge his knife into Isaac, "the angel of YHVH" (Yeshua?) stops him, Isaac is unbound and a ram caught in a thicket nearby is sacrificed instead. Because of full obedience, Abraham is promised even more blessings. Jewish writers say that "because Abraham and Isaac were fully willing for the sacrifice, God credits them with having actually done the sacrifice, and therefore, the blood of Isaac and his ashes (burnt offering) are sufficient to pay for sins." This is not true, however, but does show that even unbelieving Jewish teachers recognize that this binding of Isaac was done for a deep purpose. We see it as a preview of the "Lamb of God who will take away the sin of the world," with no rescue for Yeshua, God's

only Son who took on humanity to do the Father's will. Hebrews 10:5-7: *"When Messiah came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a Body have you prepared for me.... Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God'"* Now consider this: John 8:56: *"Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad."* Yeshua had told Abraham of "His Day" either before or after the "binding of Isaac," so that Abraham and Isaac now fully understood what Yeshua's death, burial, resurrection and ascension would accomplish for the salvation of the world, and the terrible cost for both Father and Son! Hebrews 11:19: *"Abraham reckoned that God was able to raise Isaac even from the dead; from where indeed he obtained him in a parable."*