

The Lamb of God

a Meditation for Holy Week

Introduction

The Lamb was a very important animal in Britain in past centuries, as it was in Palestine many centuries ago. It was the backbone of the economy. The Lamb is an important symbol in the scriptures because it is the symbol of sacrifice and salvation. It is the symbol of the Passover which saved the Hebrews from slavery and it is also the animal of sacrifice

Reading 1: Genesis 22: 7 – 13

Reflection:

"God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." What ambiguous words in the English translation! God will provide himself ... God provided the animal to be sacrificed - the lamb to be slain. God provided the means of salvation. Abraham believed that he needed to make amends for his sins and he needed a sacrifice as a means of communion with God. The greatest sacrifice he could make was his only son. He was ready to give him back to God. This Son would be the means of his salvation. But God did not require that. God himself intervened in the situation as he continually intervenes in the affairs of the world. God provides himself for the suffering and the sorrow in the world.

Reading 2: John 1: 29 , - 37

Reflection:

God provided his only Son. John declared Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." In Jesus God intervened, he sent his son as the means of Salvation. As the letter to the Hebrews tells us (9: 9 - 12), it is not possible for animals or even human sacrifice to bring salvation, justice and peace. Only God can do that. But God does require that we follow the "Lamb of God" and the way of sacrifice, to share in the suffering and the sorrow of the world.

Reading 3: 1 Peter 1: 18 – 22

Reflection:

Christ was "destined before the foundation of the world" to be the Lamb of God John talks about the eternal word; Peter speaks about the eternal Christ. The events of Holy Week, the betrayal, suffering and crucifixion of Jesus are not just "the turn of events", but they are God's plan and purpose. Although Jesus struggled in Gethsemane, he knew and did God's will. Through the cross there is salvation, justice and righteousness, made manifest in love and peace with others and with God. As Christ was destined before the foundation of the world and was made manifest at the end of time, so was God's love before the creation of the world made manifest in the cross of suffering and sorrow.

Reading 4: Revelation 5: 6 – 14

Reflection:

‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing.’ The whole of creation praises God and the crucified and risen Christ - the Lamb that was slain, for he has procured our salvation. And not just the salvation of some people; not even the salvation of all people, but the salvation of all creation. That is why it can worship the Lamb of God. God suffers with humanity and he suffers with all creation - the depletion of soils, the pollution of the air, the destruction of the forest, the extinction of species. He suffers and we all suffer. But we who praise the Lamb of God, are also called to follow him, and to sacrifice ourselves for him who sacrifice himself for the salvation of all the world.

Song: Play or sing a song e.g. ‘The Holy Lamb of God’ by the Fisherfolk or: Lamb of God (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFn_fmSaj0)

Prayer:

Almighty God, we bow before you, acknowledging our unworthiness and sin. You sent your only Son as the Lamb of God, to bring us salvation and to show us the way of life, yet we have gone our own ways. You sent your only Son, as the Lamb of God and we have seen his glory, yet while offering him the homage of our lips, we have not given him the loyalty of our lives. We have followed our own pleasures; we have sought our own ends: we have lived in selfishness; we have refused the way of the Cross.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Almighty God, who has loved us with an everlasting love, and given to us in the Lamb that was Slain, we give ourselves to you in love. to glory in the Passion of Christ and to lay our homage at his feet.

May we and all your creation know the salvation that is given to us and Through faith in Christ alone share in the of your new creation. Amen

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