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John Identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God
John 1: 29-34

John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God DIG: How does John finally answer their question about baptism (John 1:30-31)? What does he mean by calling Jesus the Lamb of God and the Son of God? What proof does he have for these claims? Why did the Holy Spirit descend on Christ like a dove (Yochanan 1:32)?

REFLECT: Yochanan was effective, but remained humble. Humility does not lead to feelings of inferiority or worthlessness. Rather, it seeks to see one's place in God's plan and give preference to the welfare of others over self. Is pride, or has pride, ever been a problem in your life? What area(s) of your life could you show more humility?[292] Of the titles for Jesus given so far (the Word, the Light, the Messiah, the Lamb of God, the Son of God), which means the most to you? What is one "evidence" that has led you to faith in Yeshua?

No one is more careful about the details of time than the apostle **John** is. Starting from these verses and going to **2:11** he tells us, step by step, the story of the first momentous week in the public life of **Jesus**. The events of **the first day** are in **Yochanan 1:19-28**; the story of **the second day** is told here in **1:29-34**; **the third day** is unfolded in **1:35-39**. The three verses **1:40-42** tell the story of **the fourth day**; the events of **the fifth day** are told in **1:43-51**. **The sixth day** is not recorded for some reason. And the events of **the seventh day** of the week are told in **2:1-11**.[293]

On **the second day** of this momentous week in **the Life of Christ**, **Yochanan** publicly pointed out **Yeshua** as **the Meshiach** to whom **he** had given **his** witness. **The Baptizer** went on to tell how **he** had come to know that **Jesus** was **the Anointed One**. Every detail of **his** life pointed toward that grand moment when **he** would pick a figure out of the crowd and say **look:** That's **Him**! **The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him (John 1:29a).** It was **the day** following being questioned by the members of the Great Sanhedrin who were involved in **the**

second stage of interrogation (**to see link click Lg – The Great Sanhedrin**) to see if **Yochanan** was, perhaps, **the Messiah**.

And John said: **Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29b)!** This was no accident. There, before **the Immerser,** stood **the Chosen One** whom all the prophecies in the TaNaKh had foreshadowed. **Yochanan** identified **Yeshua** with the dominant sacrificial animal used in connection with Temple ritual, and particularly with **the sin** offerings (see my commentary on **Exodus Fc – The Sin Offering**), since **He** is **the one who takes away the sin of the world.** On **God's** requiring a human sacrifice for **sins** see **First Corinthians 15:3; Hebrews 7:26-28**, and indeed the entire book of **Hebrews**.

Jesus planned **His** own sacrifice.
It means **He** intentionally planted the tree from which **His** cross would be carved.
It means **Yeshua** willingly placed the iron in the heart of the earth from which the nails would be cast.
It means **He** voluntarily placed **His** Judas in the womb of a woman.
It means **Messiah** was the one who set in motion the political machinery that would send Pontius Pilate to Jerusalem.
And it also means **He** didn't have to do it – but **He** did.[294]

It is useful to see the progressive nature of **the Spirit's** teaching concerning **the Lamb.** First, in **Genesis 4:4** we have **the Lamb** *typified* in the first fruits of the flock slain by Abel in sacrifice. Second, we have **the Lamb** *prophesied* in **Genesis 22:8**, where Abraham said to Isaac: **God will *provide* Himself a lamb**. Third, in **Exodus 12:7**, we have **the lamb** slain and the blood *applied* to the doorframes of their houses. Fourth, in **Isaiah 53:7**, we have **the Lamb** *personified*, learning for the first time that **the Lamb** will be a Man. Fifth, in **John 1:29** we have **the Lamb** *identified*, learning exactly who **He** is. Sixth, in **Revelation 5:6-14**, we have

the Lamb *magnified* by every creature in heaven and under the earth and on the sea. Seventh, in the last chapter of the Bible, we have **the Lamb** *glorified*, seated upon the eternal throne of **God** in **Revelation 22:1**.[295]

Everywhere in the B'rit Chadashah **Yeshua Messiah** is equated with **the** Passover **lamb (First Corinthians 5:7).** The figure of **the lamb** connects **Jesus** with the passage identifying **Christ** as **the Suffering Servant** of **Isaiah 53** (also see **Acts 8:32**)**;** and **His** sacrificial death by execution on a stake is compared with **that of a lamb without a defect or spot (First Peter 1:19 CJB)**, as required by the Torah **(Exodus 12:5, 29:1; Leviticus 1:3** and **10, 9:3, 23:12).** In the book of **Revelation**, **John** referred to **Yeshua** as **the Lamb** nearly thirty times.

There are two concepts of **the Lamb of God** from the TaNaKh. The first is the Passover **lamb** of **Exodus** (see my commentary on **Exodus Bw – Christ and the Passover**), and the other is the suffering **lamb** of **Isaiah** (see my commentary on **Isaiah Jc – He Was Oppressed and Afflicted, Yet He Did Not Open His Mouth**). When **John** called **Jesus the Lamb of God**, **he** identified **Yeshua** with both of these as the Passover **Lamb**. Both **Peter (First Peter 1:18-19)** and **Yochanan** (see my commentary on **Revelation Cf – You Are Worthy To Take the Scroll**) did the same.

Evidently, this confrontation took place in front of others also, for **Yochanan** continued, saying: **This is the one I meant when I** said: **A man who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me (John 1:30). Jesus** came **after John** in that **John** was six months older than **Jesus** in **His** humanity; however, **Jesus** is **before John** in **His** deity. For the third time **(John 1:15, 27) John** declares that **Christ** is preferred before **him**.

I myself did not know Him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that He might be revealed to Isra'el (Yochanan 1:31). John said **he did not know Jesus**. Which seems strange to us because we know **he** and **Yeshua** were relatives **(Luke 1:36)**. John must have at least been acquainted with **Him**. Certainly, their families had mingled. No doubt, Elizabeth had told her son the story of Mary's visit many times. But, what **John** was saying is not that **he** didn't know *who* **Jesus** was, but what **he** didn't know *what* **Jesus** was. It had suddenly been revealed to **him** that **Jesus**, **his** own cousin, was none other than **God's chosen One.**

Then **John** tells of the purpose of **Messiah's baptism**. It was to make **Him** known

to **Isra'el**. It was to prepare a "people" for **Him**. This "people" was prepared by them standing as sinners before **God (Mark 1:5)**, and that is why **John baptized** in the Jordan, which for them was the river of **death**; for, being baptized in the Jordan, they acknowledged that **the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).** Today, however, believers **baptism** demonstrates the **baptized** one has *already* died – died to sin, died with **Christ**. **Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in that order, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Romans 6:3-4)**.[296]

Then Yochanan gave this testimony, saying: **I saw the Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and remain on Him (John 1:32).** Prior to **the baptism of Jesus, the Baptizer** had evidently received a revelation from **God** that when **the Holy Spirit** fell **on the Chosen One**, and remained, that would identify **the Messiah**. When **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** came upon the disciples on the Feast of Weeks, we read **they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them (Acts 2:3). Fire** points to divine *judgment* and because of their **sin** nature, *they* needed the purging **fire** of *judgment*. They were judged guilty of their **sins**. **Yeshua**, however, came to pay that horrible price. So, because they would believe that **Jesus** was **the son of God**, they would be saved. But, there was nothing in **the Chosen One of God** that needed judging, so **the Holy Spirit came down on *Him* like a dove.**[297]

And I myself did not know Him, but the One who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the One who will baptize with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33). The Ruach Ha'Kodesh did not **come down** upon **Him** and then leave again, which we see commonly in the TaNaKh. For example, David would say: **Do not reject me! Do not take your Holy Spirit from me (Psalm 51:11). The Ruach** remained, or *took up residence in* **Him.** This term has to do with the divine side of things and speaks of fellowship. We see the same word in **John 14:10**, where the inspired apostle recorded **Yeshua's** message: **The words I say to you I do not speak on My own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in Me** (*residing in Me*)**, who is doing His work.** So, in **John 15**, where **the Lord Jesus** speaks of the fundamental requirement in bearing spiritual fruit – fellowship with **Him** – **He** says: **They remain in Me, and I in them, the same bear much fruit (Yochanan 15:5a).**

The phrase **with the Holy Spirit** is *en pneumati* in the Greek. Some make a big deal out of the change in adjectives. They say, “Well, you were **baptized *in* the Holy Spirit**, but have you been **baptized *with* the Holy Spirit**?” Or, “You were **baptized *with* the Holy Spirit**, but have you been **baptized *by* the Holy Spirit**.” All this is a smoke screen because the Greek adjective *en* can be translated either **in**, or **by**, or **with (Mark 1:8; Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5, 11:16; 1 Corinthians 12:13)**. Being **baptized in-by-with the Holy Spirit** is a hallmark of salvation (see **Bw – What God Does For Us at the Moment of Faith**).

When **the Ruach Ha’Kodesh** in the form of **a dove**, descended upon **Jesus** that authenticated the previous revelation given to **John**. So, **Yochanan** knew, and could point to **Jesus** and say: **Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.** In **Genesis 4** the sacrifice was offered for *the individual*; in **Exodus 12** the sacrifice was offered for *the household*; in **Leviticus 16** on the annual Day of Atonement the sacrifice was offered for *the nation*; but, here in **John 1:34**, Gentiles are embraced as well as Jews because **the Lamb of God takes away the sin of *the world***.[298]

I have seen and I testify that this is God’s Chosen One (John 1:34). Once again **Yochanan** makes it perfectly clear that **he** had only one purpose. It was to point sinners to **the Messiah**. **He** was nothing and **Christ** was everything. **He** claimed no greatness and no place for **himself**; **he** was only a man who, as it were, drew back the curtain and left **Yeshua** as the only **One** standing in the spotlight on center stage. Call it what you wish: An act of grace. A plan of redemption. A martyr’s sacrifice. But, whatever you call it . . . don’t call it an accident. It was anything but that.[299]