

Behold, the Lamb of God

John 1: 29

It seems that many have forgotten the reason we observe Christmas. December 25 has been designated as the day to remember and celebrate our Savior's entry into this world. Without His birth, death and burial, there would be no resurrection, and we would still be in our sins.

The Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, all tell the story of Jesus' life but with different focuses. Matthew sees Jesus as the King of Kings, and Mark views Him as a Suffering Servant. Luke focuses on Jesus' humanity, referring to Him as the Son of Man, and John focuses on His deity as the Son of God.

I love the Gospel according to John, not just because it was one of my mother's favorite books to read, but because of the great love John had for Jesus. John's gospel account differs significantly from the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

In John chapter one, the Pharisees interrogated John regarding his authority to baptize. However, John didn't just baptize, he preached. He had one message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John's purpose was to prepare the way for Jesus' ministry, and he didn't deviate from that purpose.

After answering a number of questions posed by the Pharisees, John sees Jesus approaching and declares, "**Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world**"(John 1:29). John then realized that his purpose had been fulfilled. Now his ministry would decrease and Jesus' ministry would increase.

Throughout the Bible God used animal sacrifices to temporarily cover sins, a foreshadowing of things to come. Once sin entered into the world, the shedding of blood was required! Hebrews 9:2 tells us that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. However, Jesus' sacrifice would be complete and permanent. The only blood that could atone for the sins of the world was the uncontaminated blood of Jesus, the perfect Lamb of God. There would be no need for another.

While celebrating Christmas, receiving and giving gifts, let's keep in mind that Jesus entered into this world humbly. There was no palace, servants or great wealth, yet He is the greatest gift we could ever receive. All you have to do is accept His gift by faith (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9) and "Behold, the Lamb of God!"

Merry Christmas!

Elder Shirley Freeman
Daughters of Zion Women's Ministries