

Scapegoating And the Innocent Scapegoat

Promise: Jesus' bears and takes away the sin of the world

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-12; 1 Cor. 1:1-9; [John 1:29-42a](#)
(Baptism of Our Lord, 1/8/23)

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" – v. 29

Lead In – One way to understand 'Identity Politics' and 'Woke' ideology is to appreciate the age-old human tendency to deal with guilt and transgressions by scapegoating. Scapegoating involves assigning blame to someone else. It is pointing the finger at an individual or a group and convincing others that they are what's wrong with the world. If we can convince others that we have accurately called out the source of evil, we feel a sense of innocence for having done so. The term today for this is 'Virtue Signaling'. And in Woke Ideology today the blame for everything goes to white, cisgendered, heterosexual males. We are pretty much what is wrong with the world...

I. Humans Are Unavoidably Wired to Be Religious

- A. It is the homo sapiens that build monuments...
- B. We may claim moral relativity, but we betray by...
- C. We never progress beyond the guilt problem...

II. Christianity Is All About the Guilt Problem

- A. All have sinned! I'm what's wrong with the world...
- B. The burden of my sin is too much to bear, I need...
- C. In role reversal with Woke, we first admit our sin...

III. Actually, We Need A Scapegoat In the Worst Way

- A. "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin..."
- B. Translating **αἴρων** (*airon*) Greek for 'taking away'...
- C. Understanding Yom Kippur and Leviticus 16:21-22...

Parting Shot – In our Gospel Lesson it is hard to miss the connection of the Lamb of God taking away our sins and baptism. For Jesus' special identity was revealed to John at Jesus' baptism. John says, "I myself did not know him... The innocent one is the scapegoat who received baptism for the forgiveness of sins. And He forgives our sins by bearing them, atoning for them on the Cross, and then removing them from us permanently. By the gift of baptismal faith we are joined to Christ who takes away our sins, and bestows on us His innocence. This Scapegoat is indeed the innocent One."

Ec 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart.

Ge 3:4-5 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Jg 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Ge 3:7-8 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

Ro 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

John 1:29-42a ESV

Behold, the Lamb of God

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." ³² And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him." ³³ I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

³⁵ The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). ⁴² He brought him to Jesus.

Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death.

Ro 5:19 For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

αἴρων (*airon*) lifted, to bear, to getting rid of, carrying away, remove.

Lv 16:21-22 And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness.

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