

A Discourse

written during the third week

in February 1840.

For the Mount Airiah Congregation

From the text:

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh  
away the sin of the world!"

John 1. 29.

8577 <sup>s</sup>	1.	208	} Hymns
C. M.	2.	209	
L. M.	3.	207	



John 1. 29.

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The Author of this exclamation was one of those remarkable characters of which the history of the world furnishes but a single one. We may say that from the Creation of the world to this time there never had been & from this time to the end of the world there never will be (because from the very nature of the case, there never can be) another just such a man as was John the forerunner of Christ. Himself the subject of Prophecy, as the <sup>morning</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>star</sup> which was to herald the dawning of that light of the Sun of Righteousness which was to enlighten a darkened world. He stands on the isthmus which ~~joins~~ the old and the new dispensation — the link which connects the one undivided indissoluble chain of the Old Testament and the New Testament Church. John occupies <sup>at once</sup> a solitary and



and a sublime position in the grand view of the  
~~Scripture~~ <sup>History of</sup> the Church. Look among the Long list  
of the Prophets both the Greater & the Less and there  
you find none who are as great as was John  
the Baptist. True the hallowed lips of Isaiah were  
touched with a live coal from off the altar of the  
Living God and he spake in words that burned  
his thoughts which breathed — and he spake as he  
was moved by the Holy Ghost — and Jeremiah too,  
was the favoured recipient of the direct teachings  
of the Spirit of God — and Ezekiel the son  
of man with whom God talked in visions of  
holy entrance & delight — and Daniel the special  
favourite of Heaven and who foretold with so  
much exactness the time of the coming of X<sup>t</sup> —  
and Hosea, Amos, Joel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk,  
Zechariah & Malachi — all were distinguished as  
having direct communication with God in pro-  
phetic visions — yet none were so great — none



so highly honoured as was John the Baptist. Four hundred years had now elapsed since the Book of Prophecy was closed, and the last of the Prophets had said in the word of the Lord "Behold I send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come saith the Lord of Hosts." During the long period which had passed shadows clouds and darkness had rested upon the Church of God. The old Dispensation had waxed & waned and its types and shadows had almost become insignificant and unintelligible, amidst all the corruptions, <sup>with</sup> which Idolatry and Ignorance had enveloped her. There were still however some left among the thousands of Israel who had not departed from their Father's God and their Fathers' faith and devout men waited day and night for the Consolation of Israel. And to those







It cannot fail to strike our minds as a remarkable feature in the character of John that while he was thus honoured of Heaven, and while great multitudes were daily surrounding him and wonder & applause were excited on all hands while he had every opportunity & inducement to impose himself upon the credulous populace as "some great one" - while the wonder-loving and superstitious Jews, were already prepared to fan into a flame any latent spark of ambitious vanity that might have slumbered in his heart - by the supposition that he was either Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the Prophets that had risen - and some went so far as to ask him if he were not the Messiah - yet amidst all this John is distinguished by a singleness of purpose just to occupy that singular position and fulfill that remarkable office which he did fill - as the forerunner of Christ - No suggestions of others however flattering to his vanity



could for a moment induce him to swerve, or assume  
a character & station above his own — but he steadily  
"confessed & denied not — but confessed, I am not the  
Christ!" But told his inquisitors "I am the  
voice — yea! nothing but the voice — of one  
crying in the wilderness, Make straight the  
way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Esaias —"  
How rare the humility of John, when to the minds  
of common men he had the opportunity of se-  
curing consequence & influence by assuming  
a character, which considering the credulity  
of the people, could have been sustained so easily!  
And John thus presents not only proof of a great  
mind to be above such artifices, but thus he shews  
the most certain evidence of his Divine mission.

It was no degradation to John either — it cost  
him no effort to mortify his pride when he said  
"I indeed baptize you with water but there standeth  
one among you whom ye know not; He it is who



coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes  
latchet I am not worthy to unloose!" Nor did he  
hesitate to direct his own disciples and all the  
multitude with which he was surrounded to turn  
away their attention from himself & look upon Jesus  
when with a spirit of holy joyful humility he ex-  
claimed "He must increase, but I must decrease!"  
and therefore he bade them "Behold the Lamb  
of God that taketh away the sin of the world!"

Would to God, my hearers, we had somewhat of John's  
spirit! So that we could lose sight of self and forget  
our own merits and claims to notice and be con-  
tent to yield the palm to X<sup>t</sup> & be content with  
Paul to "Know nothing but X<sup>t</sup> & him crucified"  
& feel that we wish to glory in nothing but the  
cross of X<sup>t</sup> Jesus our Lord!" Let us endeavour  
then to cultivate this feeling & to do it effectually  
we will attend to the important point in this text.



1. We inquire How It may be properly styled a Lamb.  
The answer to this question is two-fold. 1. He is a Lamb  
inasmuch as he was a sacrifice offered to atone for  
sin. By attending to the provisions of the Ceremonial  
Law of the Mosaic Dispensation, the analogy may  
easily be traced.

It will be recollected that the sin offering was  
to be a lamb without blemish. And that this  
victim was to be offered for the sins of the  
wicked people. That the Priest should bring the Lamb  
up to the sacred place and there confess over  
him the sins of all the people and laying  
his hands upon him should thus signify  
that their sins were transferred to the Lamb  
and upon this the Lamb was to be slain  
as the victim instead of the offenders them-  
selves. Thus is it with Christ. He is predicted under  
the image of an offering for sin. Messiah was



to be "cut off but not for himself." As a Lamb  
he was offered up as a victim for sin, not  
his own — the just for the unjust — the inno-  
cent for the guilty.

2. He is justly styled a Lamb however from  
the peculiar qualities that meet in his charac-  
ter. The Lamb, it is well-known, is characterized by  
gentleness, <sup>innocency</sup> ~~innocence~~ and ~~submissiveness~~ <sup>patience</sup>. Let us  
look at His gentleness. This we may see in every  
word & action of his life as it is recorded. Whether  
he was surrounded by the great multitude who  
hung with intense delight upon the gracious  
words which proceeded out of his mouth — or  
the bitter enemies who sought to catch something  
out of his lips whereon to base an accusation —  
or by the ferocious mob of brutal persecutors  
who thirsted for his blood and never rested  
until they had crucified him — whether in the humble  
cot of the sons & daughters of affliction & poverty —



in the beloved circle of his own friends, or in  
the hall of Pilate - whether on his heavenly mis-  
sion of mercy - in the desert on the mountain  
on the sea - by day & by night - wearied & hungry  
he was ever the same gentle & benevolent and tender  
hearted Jesus. Hear him, when he beheld the vast  
multitude who had accompanied him to hear  
his wisdom and behold his miracles, and had  
compassion upon them on account of their desti-  
tutions, commanding his disciples to minister to  
their wants as he fed them by a miracle. Behold  
him as he sat by Jacob's well wearied & thirsty  
An abandoned female came up and instead  
of turning from her with contempt he entered into  
conversation with her & speaks to her the words  
of eternal life. See him at the house of Simon  
as he sat at meat - when the poor guilty woman  
enters and begins to anoint him ~~with~~ with precious  
ointment to wash his feet with tears & wipe them



with the hairs of her head. And while the bosom of the self-righteous Pharisee was swelling with indignation at her presumption & he said within himself "This man if he were a Prophet would have known what & what manner of woman this is that toucheth him for she is a sinner!" And he would have spurned her with contempt from him — but what did the gentle Master? He rebuked the overheated zeal of the bigot and, having told him how much more kindly ~~the~~ woman had treated him than he himself had done — he said with the kindness of his own gentle nature — "wherefore I say unto thee her sins which are many are forgiven for she loved much & he said to her "Thy sins are forgiven". And if more is needed — go to the grave of Lazarus & see him weeping from the tenderness of his sympathy & gentleness of his nature — or go to the city of ~~Tram~~ ~~Tram~~ and there as the funeral train of a young man winds slowly & mournfully out of the streets — see Jesus having compassion on his mother



widowed & bereaved of her only son stopping the  
bier & raising the dead & delivering him to the  
astonished mother — or yet more, go with him to  
the judgment-hall & as one who late had solemnly  
vowed to go with him into prison & unto death  
is heard by the innocent prisoner — now with fierce  
& bitter oaths & cursings declaring his ignorance of  
him — see Jesus turning that one silent eloquent  
& melting look on Peter — not of reproach but pity  
more in sorrow than in anger. And to crown  
it all — how did Jesus feel for the Penitent Peter  
& wish to heal his broken heart & contrite spirit —  
when after his resurrection he sent a special  
message to him "Go says he & tell Peter" — And  
lastly to close the accumulation of proof of his  
gentleness — behold him in his conduct towards  
his enemies. When he stood upon the brow  
of a hill that overlooked the great city of



Jerusalem, wherein most of his mighty works were  
done & thought of all their ingratitude & hatred  
& persecutions of him & his Prophecy — when he  
saw the city he burst into a torrent of tears  
and exclaimed in the bitterness of his sorrow  
"Oh Jerusalem! Jerusalem? &c" and on the cross  
when reviled & mocked & derided & pierced  
& scoffed at & smote & insulted — hear him  
"Father forgive them &c" & then after death  
had been conquered & when he was giving  
his commission to his disciples to go &  
publish the glad tidings of the Gospel he  
directed them especially to begin at Jerusalem  
and make the first offer of pardon to his  
enemies & murderers. Matchless gentleness  
Godlike & unparalleled! Well is the emblem  
of a Lamb selected to represent Christ the  
gentle Saviour.



But not only his gentleness — his innocency justifies his  
being called a Saint. — whoever heard of Jesus being  
chargeable with any deviation from the straight  
forward way of duty! when was there ever known a  
human being that maintained a perfectly spotless  
character throughout all his life? Yet Jesus did.  
And he was so predicted of the Prophets — he should  
be the Holy one — the Holy Name — the Holy One of  
Israel — so is he represented by the Evangelists who  
recorded his life as free from any the slightest  
stain of guilt, — so is he spoken of by the apostles  
who said of him that he was without guile neither  
was deceit found in his lips — so testified the  
weak & true serving Pilate "I find no fault in  
him" — so said the wretched traitor Judas "I  
have sinned in that I have betrayed the inno-  
cent blood" — so said his enemies who  
were sent to take him "never man spake like



this man" — Yea so said the Devil, "I know thee who thou art the Holy one of God."

But his Patience proves him a Saint as when reasoning with the blinded & perverse Jews who disputed his word and charged him with blasphemy & attempted to stone him; he bore it with meekness. Or when suffering in the garden & betrayed by Judas — instead of commanding 12 legions of Angels to come to his assistance he even rebuked the fiery zeal of Peter who drew his sword and smote off the ear of Malchus & submitted with patience — and then when buffeted & spit upon & smitten & treated with all manner of insult & mockery, he bore it without a murmur & with no resistance — and then when dying on the cross instead of rescuing himself from his enemies & destroying them with one word of his power — he prayed for them "Father forgive them they know not what they do." He is a Saint.



I remark again, He is the Lamb of God."

He is so in a threefold sense. 1. God appointed him to be the Lamb of sacrifice. From all Eternity it was so appointed. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning. And as He knew what would be the state of the world that He should create — as he knew that man would violate His Holy Law and thus incur His wrath and curse — that he would involve his whole posterity in guilt and ruin and bring them into ruin unless He should interpose He, therefore for His own Glory and by His own Power & moved by His own infinite Love, appointed this spotless Lamb as the victim which was to atone for the sins of this lost and ruined world. Hence it is the Lamb of God. 2. He is the Lamb of God by the repeated expression of His approbation upon him during the period of his human Life. Witness the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at the time of His Baptism.



and witness the repeated expressions of this approbation  
by a voice from Heaven saying "this is my beloved  
son in whom I am well pleased."

But 3. He is the Lamb of God by the fact of God's having  
accepted his atonement as a sufficient satisfaction  
to His violated Law.

Again,

"He taketh away the sin of the world"  
Not by taking it out of the world  
nor by saving every body in the world

General mercy a mistaken notion

But by rendering a satisfaction such as would  
admit of God's forgiving sin consistently with  
his Holiness and Justice.

The victim under the old dispensation was  
a type ~~in~~ confessed over ~~and~~ on it  
if then it was carried off ~~and~~ thus took  
away the sins of the people

So ~~the~~ Our sins were laid on him the



bore them in his own body on the tree  
The Lord hath laid on him  
By his stripes are we healed  
He was bruised for our iniquities  
wounded for our transgressions &c  
He was not guilty — tho' he bore our guilt  
He was not a sinner but a sin-offering  
He takes away sin by the sacrifice of himself  
By imputation —

Again "of the world"

Not of every individual in the world  
This has been supposed to mean thus  
But let us examine it —

If he takes away every man's sin — why does any  
perish? Because it is said they will not believe.  
Sin is the only barrier to belief & so if that is taken away they will believe.  
But was it intended or designed for every body?  
If so, who designed? God well then God's designs



can be nullified by man's will & some of those  
He intended to save will perish.

No the meaning of John is that the Gospel  
dispensation is wider & more extensive  
than that of Moses.

Whereas the Law slain under the latter  
only took away the sins of believing <sup>Israelites</sup>  
then salvation belonged to the Jews — now  
it was to extend to the men of all Nations  
equally — all without distinction not all  
without exception

To conclude

Behold! How?

1. with admiration — wonder of Heavens

2 with Love! Herein is love

3 with Confidence — Believe & be saved

4 with Imitation Let the same mind be



16- With obedience

Behold him now as he is represented to us our Prophet our Priest, our King our friend our Saviour our Advocate & Intercessor with God

He is still held up to us — we have yet opportunity to admire love obey trust & imitate him.

But soon the scene will be changed

In such an hour as ye think not — And every eye shall behold him once more revealed from Heaven ~~again~~ in the clouds of Glory —

They shall look on him whom they have pierced & mourn

Behold the Lord cometh &c

But then you will not be called on to Behold the Lamb of God but they say



of all the Earth - & the dreadful  
sentence will be those mine enemies  
who would not that I sh<sup>d</sup> reign over  
them bring hither & slay them before me

There shall be wailing & gnashing of teeth