

Introductory

This material is exclusive to John. The synoptics all have accounts of the Baptism of Jesus. John doesn't. This text does not appear in the TLH one-year lectionary. The text appointed for Advent 4 in that lectionary is John 1:19-28, which immediately precedes, but does not include this. This is the appointed reading for Epiphany 2A in the LW three-year series.

My current congregation was accustomed to observing Life Sunday in January. National Sanctity of Human Life Day has generally been declared by some Presidents since Reagan, to be the third Sunday in January, close to January 22, and the day has been called Life Sunday by Lutherans for Life for several years. You have seen the materials they send out.

On this day, we will celebrate the Second Sunday after Epiphany, and I will be preaching from this text. Last week we had a Lutherans for Life bulletin insert and included the unborn et al in our prayers. I no longer try to work life issues into the sermon. Instead, I work life issues into the sermon when the text talks about life issues, which happens quite often.

The problem with Life Sunday is firstly, that you aren't preaching on the appointed text for the day. What text are you using, and why? I have heard those sermons, and they tend to lean towards the Law – which is very easy – and not much Gospel, as if there are no sinners in the crowd that day. Do you suppose there may even be a person who has aborted a baby?

We don't do LWML Sunday, and what text would you use for that Sunday? Mary and Martha, of course. What I do is that when the text focuses on women, which happens quite often, then I talk about women and perhaps give a PSA to our LWML group. We'll put in an insert and have a prayer for women's groups, but we don't do LWML Sunday, et al.

During the Epiphany Season we can and should use words like "manifest" and "revealed" a lot. Maybe even deliberate for the hearer exactly what is being "revealed" each week. Here we see John B reviewing that the identity of Jesus was revealed at His Baptism by the dove, as well as by the voice from the sky as the Son of God by none other than God the Father.

We see that Jesus is revealed as the Christ to Andrew through the proclamation of Him by John B. We see the same thing revealed to Peter when Andrew brings him to Jesus. Later on, we see Jesus revealed to be the Christ by His many and various miracles. The lessons for the season will include a lot of these miracles, each of which reveals something new.

Textual Notes

29. John A has just related to us how the religious leaders were asking John B about himself, and now he says of John B that "Τῇ ἐπαύριον βλέπει τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτόν – the next day he sees Jesus coming towards him" The verb "βλέπει – he sees" chosen by John, is the word for "to see" used to describe what we might call the perception of sight.

That meaning of that word is most clearly seen earlier in John (9:15), where the man who had been unable to see – he was blind – is then made able to see. When John sees Jesus with his eyes, John declares of the approaching Jesus, "Ἴδε ὁ Ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου – behold, the Lamb of God, Who is carrying the sins of the world."

The first word in the sentence is a different verb for sight "ὁράω – to see," and in John it means more than just seeing; In John there are connotations of perceiving, but also having some comprehension of what you're looking at. It also has connotations of "direction of thought to the object" (biblehub.com). John is inviting them to direct their attention to Jesus.

LSB #431 teaches us, "not all the blood of beasts On Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or wash away the stain." The OT believer would have agreed with Isaac Watts on that one. The idea that the blood of a mere animal could somehow make atonement for human sin was not an OT concept, but a pagan idea, and the pagans did it all the time.

When John, the astute OT scholar, calls Jesus "the lamb of God," the other astute OT scholars would have understood the meaning of that term. When an OT believer brought sacrifice to Temple, he said words similar to the Confession of Sins found in the hymnal as he handed the animal over to the priest. They connected sacrifice to sin. See Edersheim.

The OT believer would have also agreed with Watts that, "Christ, the heavenly Lamb Takes all our sins away A sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they." To be sure, not all OT believers completely understood the LCMS doctrine of Atonement, and you could say the same thing for NT believers today, but that doesn't mean it wasn't there for all to see.

We note that "αἴρων – taking" is the present participle of a verb that is used to speak of the picking up of a thing or things so as to carry that thing or things. The perfect tense means past action with results enduring to the present and into the future. John B is here portraying Jesus as one who is carrying sins on His person, and a lot of sins are being carried by Him.

How many? He is carrying the sins of " τοῦ κόσμου – the world," the noun used by John to describe mankind in his fallen state. John says a lot about the world, and he has already said that when Jesus came into the world – the one He created – they rejected Him. John also likes irony and how ironic that He would be, Him carrying The World's sins on His back.

One of my people read something that caused her to ask a question, which in turn caused me to talk to my Sunday morning Adult Bible Class about Justification. I began by actually writing the word "Justification" on the whiteboard, and then explained the term. Then I wrote the words "Objective" and "Subjective" under that word and explained their meaning.

I guess we're not supposed to use big words like that because people are too – what's the word – simple – and yet most of the adults, if not all of them, seemed to pick up on them. In fact, I was so heartened by their ability that later during that same class I answered another question by writing "The Perspicuity of Scripture" on the board, and they seemed to get it.

30. By now, John has preached a lot of sermons and baptized a multitude of souls, and it would appear that some of those people had hung around. He says, "οὗτός ἐστιν ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εἶπον," we might say "this is the One I've been talking about," and it is. John was good, but John was only the warm-up band for Jesus, and nobody knew that more than John.

There's an example in that which ought to be noted and emulated by Shepherds and by sheep; It's not about the Pastor, it's about Jesus. It is possible for the Pastor to make it about the Pastor. It is also possible for the people to make it about the Pastor, and people do that all the time. Do people really allow a Pastor the power to make them stop coming to church?

So, you don't like your Pastor. So what? The other side of that coin is making too much of the Pastor, perhaps even fawning over him. That's fine for a while, but there's always a backlash; there are always people who are more than happy to tell you that he's not that good, and in fact I don't like him personally, and his sermons are mumble-jumble to me.

It seems axiomatic in the LCMS that you don't change churches because of the Pastor, but it happens. It happens more often in some places and less often in others. Around here, people in the Quad Cities will change churches seemingly at the drop of a hat, and it's more common in the Iowa QC than Illinois. In my Clinton Circuit, people really tend to stay put.

As far as the Pastor making it about the Pastor, that's easy. We cover ourselves with a robe for a reason, and I suppose you uncover yourself for a reason. The same can be said of the covering of ourselves with the pulpit. We are human, and we have egos, and those egos have to be kept in check, and John is a – if not the – poster boy for that particular exercise.

If we look back at some of those identified as coming out to John – Pharisees and Sadducees, tax collectors, soldiers, Priests, Levites — it was a lot of people from a wide demographic. Apparently, John had not been to the workshop where it was hammered into him that people like to go to church with people like them, so shoot for the homogeneous demographic.

That's not just a white thing either.

Of Jesus, John B here says "Ὅπισω μου ἔρχεται ἀνὴρ ὃς ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν – after me comes a man who existed before me, because before me, He was." A lot of people knew about the circumstances surrounding the birth of John B. Not so many knew about how Jesus came about. Mary knew for a certainty, and Joseph knew, but who else?

That all changed at the public coming out of Jesus; we saw it last week when He was baptized, and all the commotion that took place at that event; the visual of the dove coming down and lighting on him, the audio of the voice from the sky. At that point, people would have been able to connect at least some dots. Certainly, Satan now knows His identity.

By his words, we see that by the time of this text John B had connected all the dots. However, he also must have marveled at the spectacle of His Baptism. For sure, he knew that he was older than Jesus, and yet he speaks of the one who existed before him. He does that because He knows and understands what John A has said at the beginning of this book.

John A likes his double entendre, a sentence or phrase with a double meaning. The example I use around here is the billboard that used to be common “Nothing Runs Like a Deere,” and an image of a green snowmobile et al. The one I just learned from the Internet – but I can’t use it from the pulpit, is the character Master Bates from Dickens’ novel *Oliver Twist*.

When he quotes John B saying that Jesus was “before” Him, it also means – double entendre – Jesus was standing in front of him. The last word in the sentence, “was,” in the imperfect form of the verb of being; Jesus has been from the beginning, He currently is, and by implication He ever will be. Only two of those three things can be said about John and us.

31. The previous verse and this one remind us why we are forced to learn Greek before you are even allowed to set foot into a seminary classroom. You can’t really see the “see” and “see” in that verse unless you know Greek. It doesn’t come out in the translations. Nor in this verse do the words for “know” come out, but they are clear in the original Greek.

We might explain the difference in meaning as – on the one hand – to know about a thing so as to be aware of it and – on the other hand – to understand that thing and something about what the thing means. You can know about the Golden Gate bridge, but do you understand how a suspension bridge works? You know Aaron Rodgers, but do you really?

John B is very well aware of the identity of Jesus, and he has been since before he was born. The question of how well the two relatives knew each other growing up is open. John lived in Hebron, and Jesus lived in Nazareth, but did they see each other at Temple when their families went up for festival? Did they have family reunions and the like? We don’t know.

The families of John and Jesus were said by Luke to be related, and he uses a very nonspecific term to describe the exact relationship. We know that Mary and Elizabeth met, and one can hardly imagine that the two of them went their separate ways after that and never spoke again. Would you not at least look one another up every now and then?

Speaking of the person he so obviously knows, John says, “καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν – but I did not understand Him.” The verb is “οἶδα – to understand,” and most of the translations have John B saying, “I did not know Him,” or something like that, which makes it sound like the two had never met, but they have, but the Baptism was for John a real eye-opener.

So, John has connected most of the dots, He has proclaimed Jesus, but when he saw what he saw and heard what he heard – think about if you had heard and seen those things. He reveals an understanding of his role in handling what he knows about Jesus, “ἀλλ’ ἵνα φανερωθῇ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ – but in order to reveal to Israel” the identity of Jesus as the Christ.

It is “διὰ τοῦτο ἦλθον ἐγὼ ἐν ὕδατι βαπτίζων – because of this I came baptizing with water,” the reason and rationale for the work of John. John is here saying that even he did not have

a firm grasp on Jesus as Messiah until it was revealed to him – to them as well – at the Baptism of Jesus, which had just happened. Later – when in prison – he would have doubts.

The preposition " διὰ," followed by a noun in the accusative case is used by way of explanation to tell *why* somebody does what he does. The reason *why* John comes into the wilderness, and the reason *why* he preaches what he preaches, the reason *why* he baptizes people with water is to make Jesus known to the people of Israel, and He is doing just that!

It is nothing profound for John to say what he says. You could even make the case that we get to know people better all the time. Your wife knows you better than she did when you got married, and that scares you. You make a friend, and with time – if the friendship grows – you will get to know your friend better. No, Aaron Rodgers and I are not friends – yet.

In fact, this is a common theme in the Gospels; the disciples of Jesus are continually struggling, throughout their three years with Jesus, to get their heads around exactly who Jesus is and what that means. Two thousand years later, generation after generation have learned to know Jesus. We can often build on knowledge that has been gained in the past.

But it doesn't stop here. There was the Baptism, and the subsequent words and acts of Jesus – beginning with changing the water to wine – will cause Him to be revealed to "Israel." He is sent to all Israel, not only to Judah, and Jesus will use that same terminology several times – notably when He says that He was sent to the "lost house of Israel," and so are they.

Noteworthy because ten of the twelve tribes had been victims of genocide several hundreds of years earlier at the hand mostly of King Sennacherib and Assyria. Some of those ten tribes were forcibly made to emigrate and immigrate to pagan lands, where they intermarried with non-Israelites, and they lost their identity as a people. It used to happen all the time.

It happened all the time, and nobody batted an eye. The Assyrians also emigrated some of those foreigners and immigrated them into northern Palestine, where they also intermarried with the locals. Some of them became the Samaritans. Meanwhile, down south, God spared Judah – the messianic seed – by sending an army of angels to destroy the Assyrian army.

Genocide has been a part of human history since the beginning, and the idea that you would do that is to us abhorrent because we are Christians. It is abhorrent to the non-Christian westerner because the Christians have taught them as much, and we are salt, and it doesn't matter how many dark-skinned people the Germans take in. They still did what they did.

I'm not sure exactly what I would call author Jared Diamond – a historical sociologist? – but he writes about some very fascinating things, and he's a very good writer. In *The World Until Yesterday*, he talks about traditional primitive societies and compares and contrasts them with modern society, by which he means – they *always* mean – the Christian west.

He's a smart guy, but he's an atheist – not exactly the thinking man's religion, but we digress – and sometimes he says really silly things. We know, he said, that we and the Chimps split

up 65,000,000 years ago, but it wasn't until about 11,000 years ago that we learned to use tools, take metal and stone out of the ground and make things. That's a silly thing to say.

When he says that, what he's really saying is that we have absolutely no evidence for the existence of life until about 11,000 years ago. Most scientists would look at that – I do – and say that humanity is probably about 11,000 years old. We would also say that there's no scientific evidence for the earth being any older than that, because there actually isn't.

Genocide was and is common in primitive – non-Christian – societies primarily as a practical matter; if you kill or enslave every man, woman, and child of that group of people, you will never have to worry about them being a foe again. Christianity has not totally eliminated genocide, it still happens, and when it does it is condemned by all Christians.

Take the attempted genocide of Judaism, for example, which is condemned universally by the Christian west. Even the Germans condemn what they did, and they will be forever stained by it. America will likewise be forever stained by the south's slavery. The perpetrators of the Holocaust were – well, Germany was not by then a very Christian place.

To baptize means to wash with water, and it seems redundant to talk about baptizing "with water." By noting water where it does not need to be noted, he emphasizes what the water means. The most obvious meaning is the cleansing associated with water. Not so obvious is how water is associated with birth and with the sustaining of the life that has been birthed.

32. John A then relates how John B "ἐμαρτύρησεν Ἰωάννης – bore witness" by his words. Earlier (v. 19), John A had used the cognate noun of that verb to say what John B is about to say, "αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ Ἰωάννου – this is the testimony of John." It was a common word, a legal term, whose base meaning is to bear witness, mostly in a courtroom.

We note here that those words are the etymological source of our word "martyr," and we further note that John B will in short order be martyred by Herod. We finally note once more the penchant of John A for double entendre; John B testifies to the truth, including the truth about Herod and his brother's wife, and for his troubles he is executed (martyred).

That word was a legal term for one who was standing before a judge in a courtroom articulating what he knows to be true. As noted above, John B has known Jesus since the two of them were in their respective mothers' wombs, and on a human level would have noted that Jesus was different, and is able to testify to that, and then there was the Baptism.

On a divine level, John is a prophet sent by God, and so he speaks the truth (testifies) to what God says in His Word. Here John is functioning as an actual eyewitness to events that have occurred in his presence. He talks about how he had "beheld" several things; most notably how the Spirit descended as a dove from heaven, and that it remained on Jesus.

Yet another word for "to see," the verb θεάομαι also puts the focus on the perception of sight. Here the witness is telling what he has seen, as we might put it, "with my own two

eyes.” The verb is in the perfect tense; John has seen what he has seen, and the seeing what he had seen had changed the way he understood Jesus and seeing will continue to do that.

33. John B repeats what he has said two verses previous, “οὐκ ᾔδειν αὐτόν – I have not known Him,” and then the emphatic “ἀλλ’ ὁ πέμψας με βαπτίζειν ἐν ὕδατι ἐκεῖνός μοι εἶπεν – but (the one) sending me to baptize with water, this (one) said to me,” claiming that God the Father had been the sender of Him out into the country to do what he was now doing.

John A had already said as much earlier (1:6), and we hold that nobody should preach or administer the Sacraments unless he has been called. John B notes that The Sender had told him way back then that he would “Εφ’ ὃν ἂν ἴδῃς τὸ Πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον καὶ μένον ἐπ’ αὐτόν – see the Holy Spirit descend and remain upon Him,” and that would identify Him.

The word for “ᾔδω – to see,” directs the thought to the object, connoting mere perception, not understanding. When John B sees that, he will understand “οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ – this is the One baptizing with the Holy Spirit.” Later on, post-resurrection, Jesus would institute Christian Baptism, which includes the giving of the Holy Spirit.

34. He uses two verbs in the perfect tense to describe what had taken place; “κἀγὼ ἐώρακα, καὶ μεμαρτύρηκα ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ – and I have seen, and I have born witness that He is the Son of God.” The first verb is the familiar “ὀράω – to see” and the second is the also familiar “μαρτυρέω – to bear witness” Both are past events with enduring results.

Put those two verbs together like that, and you have a man saying that he saw something with his own eyes, he understood what he was seeing, he can tell you about it, and he does. When you go to a sporting event or a school play or when you witness an accident with your own eyes, and you also understand the meaning of what you see, you can talk about it.

35. Shifting gears now, John A tells us what happened; “Τῇ ἐπαύριον πάλιν εἰστήκει ὁ Ἰωάννης καὶ ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ δύο – the next day, John was standing with two of his disciples.” A lot of people know that Jesus had disciples, but not many know that John had disciples as well. This is one of several times that mention is made of John B's disciples.

The disciples of John are those who believed and agreed with the things that he is teaching. The word is going out of fashion, but you can still hear people who have been taught particular things by somebody referred to as a “disciple” of, for example, Belichick. One of the two disciples of John B is later (40) identified as “Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.”

And what was John teaching? He is teaching that Jesus is the Christ. For them to transition to becoming disciples of Jesus, like Andrew and others did, especially given John B's deferential posture towards Jesus, seems very natural. Why would you continue to follow the one who proclaims Jesus to be the Christ when you can follow that very Jesus the Christ?

36. While standing with two of his disciples, John saw Jesus as He walked, and declared to them “Ἴδε ὁ Ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ – See the Lamb of God” or better, “Look! The Lamb of God.” We don’t use the word “behold,” except in church, and I’m not sure people know what it means. You can explain the meaning of the word “behold,” or just translate it as “look.”

The location where they were standing and Jesus was walking are not stated, but down in v. 43 the author tells us that the day after this, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. Probably the location of the standing and walking is Bethany Beyond the Jordan, or somewhere close to that. Andrew was there because he was a follower of John, and Peter was his brother.

37. Powerful words from John, and the second time he has called Jesus “the Lamb of God.” Those words are enough to cause his two disciples to become followers of Jesus. Recalling John's self-stated purpose, to point people to Jesus, that act on the part of those two is exactly what he has been working towards; he should become lesser while Jesus becomes greater.

The two occurrences of that term – the Lamb of God – here are the only two in the NT. Paul thinks of Jesus as the Passover Lamb (1C 5:7), and the OT speaks of the lamb in places like Jeremiah 11:19 and Isaiah 53:7, where the Prophet speaks of “a lamb led to slaughter,” speaking of the Christ. The idea is that the lamb sheds blood in a sacrificial manner.

When John A tells us that these two disciples of John B “ἠκολούθησαν τῷ Ἰησοῦ – followed Jesus,” he means that they did just that. It also means that they moved up from just disciple to Apostle. The verb here, “ἀκολουθέω – to follow,” is used of Apostles, but not of non-Apostles in the NT. To compare and contrast, John’s disciples are not said to “follow” him.

38. You wonder if Jesus has eyes in the back of His head, or if it was head on a swivel, but at any rate He turns around, sees them following Him, and asks them “Τί ζητεῖτε – for what are you looking?” We note here how Jesus refused to end a sentence with a preposition, and the verb is in the present tense; those two men are currently looking for something.

They answer that query “οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ Ῥαββεί – they said to Him ‘Rabbi,’” a term reserved for the most respected of teachers “(ὃ λέγεται μεθερμηνευόμενον Διδάσκαλε – which means “teacher”) and then they query Him, “ποῦ μένεις – Where are you staying?” They are seeking Him, and they desire to follow Him, and so where can we find you?

Barnes puts it like this at biblehub.com.

Where dwellest thou? - This question they probably asked him in order to signify their wish to be with him and to be instructed by him. They desired more fully to listen to him than they could now by the wayside. They were unwilling to interrupt him in his traveling.

39. Indeed, that is exactly what happens next. Jesus invites them “Ἔρχεσθε καὶ ὄψεσθε – come and see.” The verb for seeing has connotations of not only seeing with the eyes but having some sort of comprehension of what you see. They respond, “ἦλθαν οὖν καὶ εἶδαν ποῦ μένει – they went and saw where He was staying,” and they stayed until 4:00 p.m.

40. John A now focuses in on one of the two, “Ἦν Ἀνδρέας ὁ ἀδελφὸς Σίμωνος Πέτρου – he was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.” The verb of being, placed at the beginning of the sentence calls our attention to Andrew and to his identity as Peter’s brother. The first person to whom Andrew speaks about the Christ, having met the Christ, is a relative.

Andrew knew about the Christ “ἀκουσάντων παρὰ Ἰωάννου καὶ ἀκολουθησάντων αὐτῷ – hearing from John and following Him.” That’s the way it always works. The Word is the vehicle for passing on The Faith from John to Andrew, and it will be the means by which The Faith is passed on to Peter, and on and on, and that’s the way Christianity spreads.

I will often compare and contrast that way of spreading with other ways. Mohammed tried spreading his religion with words, and it didn’t take, so he switched tactics to things that did work. Christianity does not spread by violence and war. Many state religions are imposed on citizens, and Eastern religions tend to focus more on self and less on words from others.

41. The author continues that emphasis by telling us that “εὕρισκει οὗτος πρῶτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἴδιον Σίμωνα – first he finds his own brother Simon.” Again, the verb is placed at the beginning of the sentence, and he included the adverb “first” and the adjective “own.” It is not unusual, but is very normal, for somebody like Andrew to do what he does here.

When a person gets religion, that person will often tell his relatives. I have with my own eyes seen that happen on several occasions; that a person becomes a Christian, or has a personal spiritual revival, or finds a new church, and he’ll tell his relatives. Of course, you do. Whether or not the relative buys into it or not, now that’s a different question, isn’t it.

Andrew heard from John, and believed, “καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ Εὕρηκαμεν τὸν Μεσσίαν (ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον Χριστός) – and he says to him, ‘I have found the Messiah (meaning the Christ).’” The verb is in the perfect tense; again speaking of a past act with results enduring to the present and future, an apt description of what happens when one finds the Messiah.

For his Greek speaking readers, John translates the Hebrew "Messiah" into the Greek "Christ," which translates into "anointed," but whose meaning has developed over time — as words have a wont to do — into something with a much deeper meaning than just that. Today, when you use the word “Christ” it is almost always with the word “Jesus.”

And as is the wont of new converts, Andrew thinks that he and the other disciple have "found" Jesus. They were making no movement, but were standing, and Jesus is walking. They did not know Who Jesus was until John B proclaimed it to them. It was specifically at the hearing of the Word of God that the two began to follow Jesus. So Who found whom?

Not long after this (3), John A records that theological discussion between Nicodemus and Jesus, and Jesus uses the birthing metaphor to describe conversion. Being born is a very passive act. Later on (15), he records the vines and branches metaphor, and He concludes that thought by stating bluntly to them all "You did not choose me, but I chose you."

Synergism is a constant temptation for Christians, who want to resolve the age-old "cur alli non alli — why some, not others" by saying that it's because I decided to follow Jesus, which

makes sense and is very appealing especially to Americans, but it is false, and the Bible is abundantly clear on that point, and Christianity still contains its share of paradox.

42. Now it's Peter's turn to be a passive recipient of God's active grace at the hand of the active believer, his brother Andrew, "ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν – he led him to Jesus," to His physical presence and "ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν Σὺ εἶ Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου – looking at him, Jesus said, 'you are Simon, son of John,'" and then He gives him a new name.

He says "σὺ κληθήσῃ Κηφᾶς (ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται Πέτρος) – you will be called 'Cephas,' which means 'Peter.'" A lot of people have a lot to say about those names. Barnes says,

the stone, or rock, is a symbol of firmness and steadiness of character - a trait in Peter's character after the ascension of Jesus that was very remarkable. Before the death of Jesus he was rash, headlong, variable; and it is one proof of the omniscience of Jesus that he saw that Peter "would" possess a character that would be expressed appropriately by the word "stone" or "rock." The word "Jonas" is a Hebrew word, whose original signification is a "dove." It may be that Jesus had respect to that when he gave Simon the name Peter. "You now bear a name emblematic of timidity and inconstancy. You shall be called by a name denoting firmness and constancy."

Rev. Steven L. Anderson
Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church
Grand Mound, Iowa