

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

John the Baptist said: 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.'
(John 1: 29)

The Lamb of God. Behold the Lamb of God. The Fish of God. Behold the Fish of God. Sounds very strange doesn't it? The Fish of God. But the Lamb of God simply rolls off our tongues. We have heard it before. We are used to it. But I want you to add a few things. From the Christmas story, Jesus as a child is "laid in a manger." Mangers are troughs where the food for the sheep is placed so they can eat. This is done in a stable, in a place of safety. So the infant Jesus is placed in the place where the flock is fed. And later he will leave himself to us as bread for our journey. Food for the lambs from one who is one of us, who is himself a lamb.

Think Kosher. It is something we associate with the Jewish people. It means that when certain animals are to become food for ordinary people they are sent to the butcher and they are slaughtered in a certain way. They are slaughtered in a way that all of the animal's blood will drain from the body for the Jews do not eat blood, the nectar of life. So the lambs slain at Passover are all slain in kosher fashion so that the blood will all drain out.

Now remember John the Evangelist describing the Centurion piercing Jesus' side with his lance and "immediately there flows out blood and water." All the blood leaves the body of Jesus. That means that He is dead. It also means that He is kosher, the Kosher Lamb, the perfect lamb of sacrifice. And in John's gospel Jesus is presented as dying on the cross at the very time that the Passover lambs are being slain by the priests for Passover preparation. Jesus therefore is The Lamb of God offered in sacrifice. The New Passover, from sin to grace and from death to life. Does Lamb of God make a little better sense now? That is the question of the week.