

as he cried out, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world!"

The New Testament in the words of Jesus Himself makes very clear the fact that Christ had come as a fulfillment of all that had been spoken in the Old Testament. "If ye had believed Moses, ye should have believed me; for he wrote of me." "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

Those who lived during the time Jesus was on the earth had the opportunity of seeing Him, seeing evidences of His being all that He claimed to be. But *the Way* was the same then as before He came; it was a simple matter of believing what God said, and coming to Him in the way He set forth. "I am *the way, the truth, the life*, no man cometh unto the Father but by me," Jesus said. He made it clear that He was the long-awaited 'Lamb of God', promised as far back as the Garden of Eden, believed by Abel and a host of others in the stream of history.

Now we live in the time after Christ's life and death on the earth. We have the written record which points us to the Cross and Christ's death as having taken place *for us*, in place of our being punished, just as thoroughly as the Jew's lambs were killed that the firstborn of the household could live.

And in the future? We are told that one day we shall hear names read out of 'The Lamb's Book of Life' . . . a book with the names of those who have believed God: believed what He said, not just that He exists. It is still the 'Lamb' that is used to indicate Christ, the Messiah. And in the last chapter of the Bible we are told that there is in heaven "a pure river of the water of life,

clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. . . . And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and they shall see His face. . . ."

Oh, it all ties together through the centuries, right into eternity. There *is* a way to be in communication with God now, because of 'The Lamb', and we *are* able to have a certainty for the future.

What about the other line on the little sketch? That one comes from Cain's insistence upon approaching in his own way, devised in his own imagination as a very acceptable way, based on what he had done. I have put many lines branching off that main line. It seems to me a perfect way of quickly picturing the 'many ways to heaven' thought up by man, all of which have one thing in common: the feeling that we can bring some religious or moral good work, some humanistic work, and on that basis be acceptable to God. Examine the ideas of men, and you will find that they do have this common denominator. This, according to the Bible is an evidence of denying the truth of what God has said. Man has been given free choice from the beginning. He is not a puppet, and no one will force him to believe, or act upon anything he does not want to. However, consequences of his belief and actions are set forth. The choice is always his.

This is brief, as far as giving all the wonders of the teaching of the Bible. But it helps to show that it is not a collection of stories and proverbs, but excitingly gives one message through the centuries: not a musty, dry message that has nothing to do with today, but one that provides the facts and the hope that man needs.



Adam and Eve talked to God "in the cool of the day" we are told. They had direct communication with Him, and they were given His teaching by direct word of mouth. He communicated to them; they heard, and accepted what He said with their minds.

God told Adam that the fruit of the trees of the whole area they had to live and roam in was theirs to "freely eat"... except for the fruit of one tree, "The day you eat that, you shall die." It was real fruit, though of what kind we do not know. The test was one of belief or trust in what God had *said*. Adam and Eve were not troubled as to whether God existed. It is no tremendous step to take to believe that a person exists. Are you very pleased if you speak to a child, or anyone over whom you have some authority, and give a statement of fact, coupled with a command, and they say, "Oh, I believe you exist"?

No, it was not the *existence* of God that was involved, it was believing what He *said* to be true, or false: to call Him truthful, or a liar.

When Satan, who had formerly been Lucifer, an angel—in fact, the most beautiful of all the angels, created before man—had revolted against God, because he wanted to be equal with Him and had been cast out of heaven, along with the other angels who rebelled against God, his one great driving purpose was to destroy God's creation.

His temptation of Eve was in the realm of casting doubts on her simple acceptance of what God had said. "Hath God said?" he



questioned. "Hath God said . . . ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

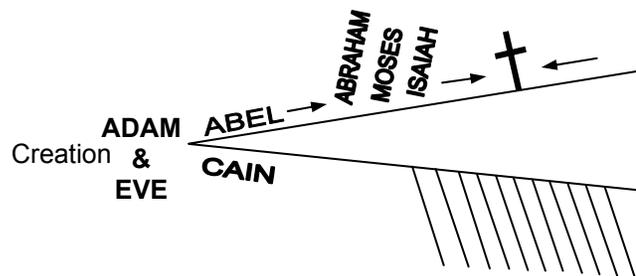
Eve repeated what God had said to them, ending with, "God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Doubt was already a hideous little seed planted in her mind.

Satan's comeback to that was a flat denial: "Ye shall *not* surely die. For God knows that in the day ye eat, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Now it is Satan's word against God's. Satan has accused God of wanting to keep Adam and Eve in ignorance. He dangles the temptation of superior knowledge before her eyes. He tempts Eve with his own desire, to be equal with God.

Now there is a clear choice. Eve may believe God, in which case she would not eat, because she would not want the result she would then believe to be inevitable. Or she may believe Satan, and eat, to obtain the result she believes to be certain. Eating of the fruit was a direct demonstration of believing Satan rather than God.

Now we come to Cain and Abel. They



would clearly have been instructed by their parents as to how to approach God in worship. For though the result of Adam and Eve's disobedience and unbelief was immediate spiritual death, or separation

from God, and the commencement of physical death, in all the abnormalities of the physical world which then came into being, they were never left without a way to come back into communication with God. They were told immediately of One who would be coming, someone who would be born of a woman who would have victory over the 'serpent' or Satan. We also know that they knew something of coming to God with a lamb, used as a sacrifice. Abel brought a lamb. Cain brought vegetables and fruit he had raised, and offered these. Why was Abel's sacrifice acceptable, and Cain's not? It seems to me clear, especially from the rest of the Bible, because it all hangs together. Cain came in defiance, saying something of this sort: "My fruits are good enough, / have raised them. God must accept me because of these very good works I've brought to Him." Abel came believing what God had said, that the worship must be with a lamb. It was simply believing God, coming in God's way. This is biblical faith.

That is the very simple difference between these two lines, and if there were time, we could go through the whole Bible and see the exciting tie-up in detail.

All through the Old Testament communication and worship took place with a lamb being presented. Noah worshipped with a lamb, Abraham brought the lamb, Moses told the children of Israel to prepare the lamb at the time of the passover.

One night the angel of death was to pass over Egypt striking the firstborn of every family, to force Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go. The Israelite families had to select a perfect lamb, put it aside to see if it developed a blemish, then kill it, take some of the blood, and place it on the door posts. When the angel saw the blood, he would

pass over that household and the firstborn would live. At that time it demonstrated belief and trust in God's word through Moses. It also, however, perfectly pictured the One who was coming, whose death would give life—forever.

All through the Old Testament, however, the lamb was used in looking forward to a future moment, in belief, that someone was coming who would be the Lamb. I have placed an arrow on Abel's line, simply pointing to the cross, indicating that *all* who lived before the coming of Christ, became children of God, in communication with Him, through belief in the coming One. It was the coming death of Christ that cleansed them from sin's guilt before God, and the lambs were only a picture of that which would one day take place.

Isaiah the Jewish prophet spoke of the One who was coming, in these words: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: . . . Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: . . . But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: . . . he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth: . . . he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

This clear picture of what the promised Messiah was going to do, was written 700 years before He came. This was the One looked forward to in all the references to 'lambs' in the Old Testament.

And then when Christ was born, the long awaited One, where was the place of His birth? A stable. So perfect for the birth of a *lamb*! The picture was perfectly carried out. John the Baptist called Him 'the lamb'