

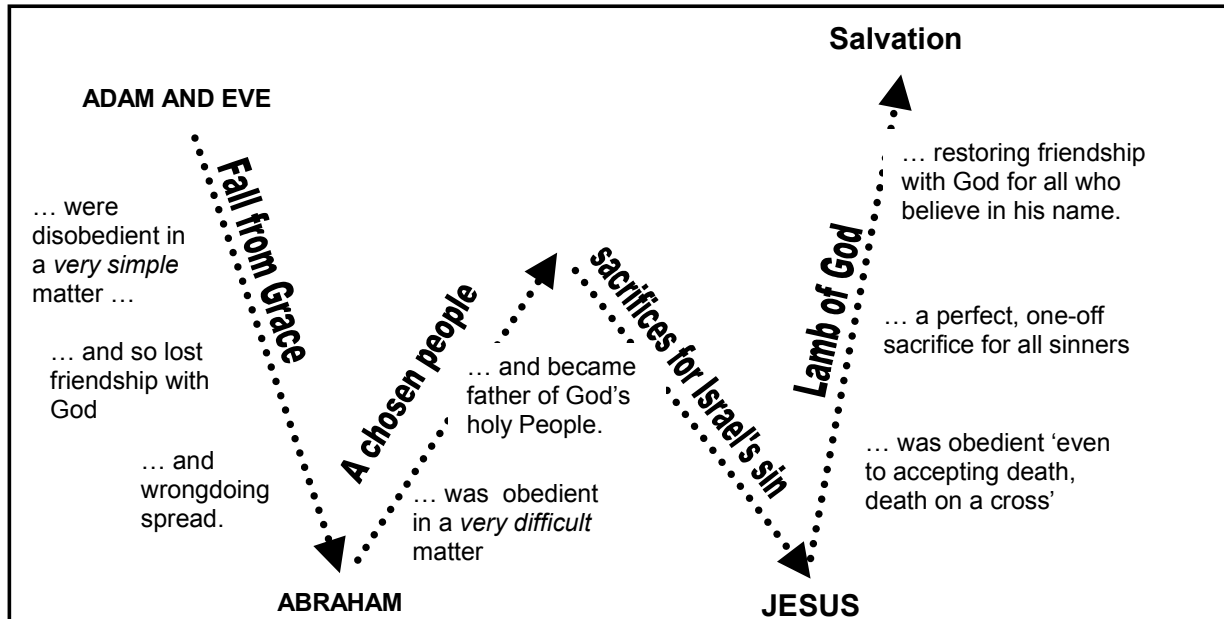
# Abraham, Isaac and Jesus' sacrifice

*GOD PROVIDES his only Son to be the sacrifice. He fulfils the Old Testament Law of sacrificing lambs to God by offering the perfect sacrifice of his only Son, Jesus.*

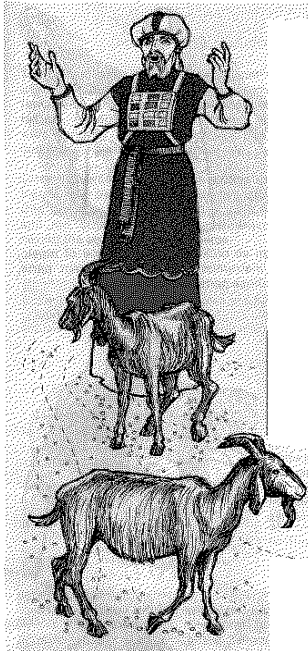
The ram caught in the bush was God's gift so that Abraham did not have to give up, sacrifice, his son to God. In the fullness of

time God gave up his only Son to be the sacrifice that takes away our sins. Instead of a ram for a son, Isaac, God now gives his own Son as the Lamb of God; this gift shows the great love God has for us.

Below is a way of linking Abraham's sacrifice and that of Jesus on the cross.



## Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement



ONCE A YEAR, when the Temple in Israel still stood, the High Priest made an offering to God for himself and for all the people of Israel. The offering was made to 'cover up' their sins. To do this, he went into a most sacred part of the Temple, the Holy of Holies.

Two goats were brought to the Temple. One was sacrificed as a gift to God. The other goat, called the *scapegoat*, was driven off into the wilderness after the High Priest had confessed the sins of the nation over the goat's head. The people believed the goat carried their sins away.

The New Testament writer of *Hebrews* put these words down ...

*"TO SUIT US, the ideal high priest would have to be holy, uncontaminated, beyond the influence of sinners ... one who would not need to offer sacrifices every day, as the other high priests do for their own sins and then for those of the people, because he has done this once and for all BY OFFERING HIMSELF ..."*  
(Hebrews 7:26-27)

## The Lamb of God

FOR THE early Hebrew people, who kept flocks of sheep and goats, a lamb brought to mind something pure, innocent – as good a gift as possible to offer God.

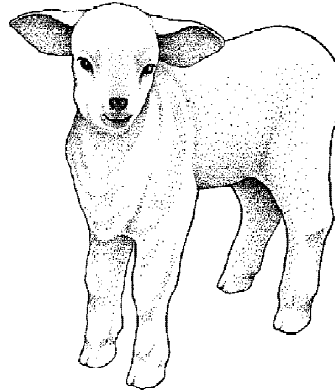
Christ is ‘the pure and innocent one’, without spot or stain of sin.

He is ‘the gift God gives to us’ (he is truly God).

He is ‘the gift God accepts from us’ (he is truly man).

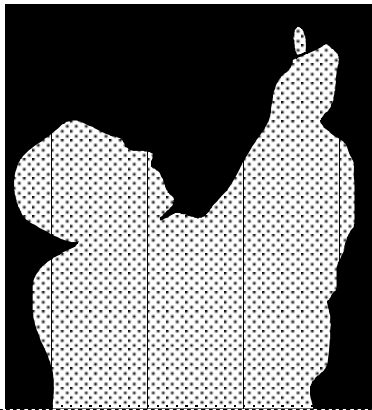
Jesus is the ‘Lamb of God’. He is the PERFECT, ABSOLUTE, PURE GIFT.

If we are to be included in this sacrifice, then we have to be identified with him. We have to be one with him. We have to be



part of this sacrifice that makes things right. We do that by our baptism. We are united in Jesus Christ by taking part in the Mass and receiving his Body and Blood in Holy Communion. We become part of that peace, the bond, which is sharing in the kingdom of God.

**“This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the World ...”**



AT COMMUNION in the Mass we say with the priest:

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace.*

### To do

- 1 Think of the sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary alongside Abraham’s sacrifice.

In the sacrifice of Jesus, who represents  
a) Isaac? b) the Ram? c) Abraham?

- 2 Why is Jesus spoken of as ‘the Lamb of God’?
- 3 The picture beside shows a lamb holding a cross. What do you think this picture is meant to symbolise?

