**WILLIAM BLAKE**

**“The Lamb”**

“The Lamb” is a religious poem that marvels at the wonders of God’s creation. In the poem, a child addresses a lamb, wondering how it came to exist, before affirming that all existence comes from God. In the humble, gentle figure of the lamb, the speaker sees the beautiful evidence of God’s work. Furthermore, the lamb is not just made by God—it’s an expression of God, as is the speaker. Through the example of the lamb, the speaker suggests that the entire world is in fact an expression of God.

In the first stanza ,the speaker directly addresses a lamb, asking it if it knows who created it, who gave it life and invited it to eat. The lamb is then described in its natural environment, frolicking beside streams and running through fields. Whoever made the lamb also gave it its coat, which is made out of soft white wool. The lamb's gentle noises, according to the speaker, make the surrounding valleys happy. The speaker then asks again: Who made the lamb?

In the second stanza, the speaker excitedly offers to tell the lamb the answer. The creator has the same name as the lamb, and indeed calls himself "Lamb." This creator is gentle and kind, and he was once a small child. The speaker, too, is a child, and both the speaker and the lamb share the name of their creator. The speaker then asks God twice to bless the lamb

The poem is directly addressed to the lamb. Though the lamb of course cannot respond, its very existence is answer enough to the question of “who made” it. The speaker is clearly awed by the lamb. Though the Christian God is often associated with power and might—and even, at times, violence—the lamb is none of these things. It is small, fragile, and innocent. By existing, it proves the delicate beauty of God’s creation, which is why it makes the speaker so joyful.

The poet asks a [rhetorical](https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/rhetorical-question) question, “who made thee,” but everything that follows is presented as evidence that God is the maker. The first stanza depicts the lamb in its natural habitat, a beautiful pastoral scene in which the lamb is free to run around. All that the lamb needs is provided for it, making the lamb a symbol of freedom and uncomplicated joy. This, argues the poem, is God’s intention for all His creatures: that they live happy, joyful lives.

As the first stanza asks the question about the lamb’s existence, the second gives the clear reply. Here, the poem picks up on the symbolism of the lamb. In the Bible, Jesus Christ is given the title “Lamb of God.” So the poem is not just marveling at the lamb itself, but also at the way in which the lamb is God, just as the Bible describes Jesus himself to be God. Both the lamb and the speaker, who is a child, are “called by his name.” That is, in addition to being called “lamb” and whatever the speaker’s name may be, they are both also called “God.” That’s because, ultimately, everything that exists was created by God and nothing is separate from its creator. The poem thus expresses deep trust and faith in God’s work, suggesting that both the child and the lamb are safe in God’s hands. And to emphasize this sense of blissful comfort, the poem ends with the speaker blessing the lamb. By extension, the poem thus blesses all of God’s creation, both praising it and expressing thanks for its existence.

“The Lamb,” taken from the “Innocence” section of Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience, is a kind of hymn to God’s creation. In the figure of the lamb, the poem sees a symbol for all of God’s works. The poem is an expression of the purity of God’s creation, untarnished by the kind of negative influences that Blake introduces in other poems.

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