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Sacrifice--The Historical Formula for World Restoration

God's original intent was to have one unified world, in which individuals, families, tribes, and nations live together in harmony. Our existing world is not the fulfillment of God's ideal, there is disunity everywhere. There are two ideologies, Communism and Democracy, fighting for supremacy; and on an individual level, man's inner good desires fight with his sluggish physical body for the accomplishment of every task. Why does such a divided world exist from the individual level up to the national?

God is absolute good, and if all men were to be one with this God there could be no divisions. If God is not the author of evil or division, the important thing for man is to discover the source of disharmony and overcome it.

Hence, the most important thing is to find the individual with his inner desires and his external expression or body, both centered on God and His will. With one such individual, God can show the way for all men to restore their individual natures to God. The way to God and the way to evil are very different: self-sacrifice versus self-indulgence. The good or God-centered person wants to give himself out to others while the evil selfish person wants to dominate or control others. The history of evil is the history of man's sacrifice of others to achieve his own ends. The history of Communism is a prime example of this.

God has been showing man a different pathway. His first task was to find the one individual who was completely on His side. God can use this man as an example for the rest of the world. The first thing that God wanted to show through this man was to love

God and through this love become one with God. The second thing that God wanted to show was that this man must sacrifice himself for the world.

To truly love God, man must go backwards: he must withdraw from the world, nation, family, and his material self. This man, because he sacrificed most, will receive the most love from God. Then, spiritually one in love with God, he moves out of himself, family, society, and nation.

To really love your neighbor you cannot put yourself before him. God sacrifices most those whom He loves most. Evil works the opposite: Satan strikes others to protect himself and his position. But God sacrifices His own for others.

This one individual who can be the pattern for all others is the Messiah. He comes not for a particular nation but for all nations, He comes to show his own nation the way to set the pattern first on an individual level, then a family, then a societal and finally a national level. As nations come together, finally the world will be one world of harmony.

Now you know what God needs. I want to speak of how God's providence has been working for this goal. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve should have become one being centered upon God's love. When they did not do this, but fell away from His goodness, He sent them from the Garden. Adam and Eve felt sadness. But so did God. Our ancestors left God's presence shedding tears of sadness when they should have shed tears of gladness. They left with no hope of returning to Him, and so their sorrow was great. Also God had almost no hope of regaining His beloved son and daughter. His pain as parent was far greater than theirs. But He could not step in to save them directly.

This would have been contrary to His law of creation.

If there had been another son or daughter who had not fallen away from God, but had asked God to save the fallen brother and sister, God could have immediately saved fallen Adam and Eve. But the fact that God had the deep parental longing to save His children, formed the basis for the historical providence of restoration.

To save Cain, there must be an unselfish Abel to ask for his brother's salvation. To stand in the Abel position one must be able to receive God's love. To receive God's love one must come out of selfishness and evil. Then, to save the struggling brother, Abel must sacrifice. This is the law of God's will.

Adam and Eve left God shedding tears of sadness. But they should have become one being centered on God's love. Then they would have been able to cry tears of joy and function as the central example of God's will for all their descendants. They then would have been the Messiah and there would have been no need for a saviour.

Hence, these three steps we will see repeated throughout history:

1. Man must come away from evil and be in the position to receive God's love,
2. Man must shed tears for God and His sorrow, and
3. Man must shed tears for his fallen brother and make sacrifices for his brother's salvation.

This pattern we see in Noah's time. Noah had first to separate himself from evil and merit receiving God's love. He did this by constructing an ark for a long period. During this time he received much persecution from the villagers. He looked crazy. He was building the ark on a mountain and in a desert.

But Noah was adamant. He told the people judgment was coming. Why did God make such a command? Because God wanted people to see a new example in Noah. Noah went out early in the morning and came home late at night and had no time for his family. His wife didn't understand why he needed to do this and she began criticizing him. As soon as she started this, the children felt free to criticize. How great must have been the pain in Noah's heart to have a family who didn't understand him. No one bothered to prepare his lunch or fix his clothes, instead, they laughed at him. Noah bore the persecution of the villagers, but the persecution of his family was far more difficult to endure.

The more persecution Noah received, the more steadfast became his heart. He was separated from selfishness and evil. If he had resented those who persecuted him and rejected them, God's will could not have been done. He had to sacrifice to save those who persecuted him. Noah had to stand in the position of unfallen brother, Abel, and ask God to forgive those who were still fallen, persecuting him. Noah had to deny himself completely in order to advance God's will.

Abraham had the same task. God ordered him to leave the land of his forefathers and go to a land which God would show him. Abraham had no guarantee, but he left his homeland on faith and wandered from place to place like a gypsy. God led Abraham to many strange places and put him under great difficulty. Like Noah, if he had resisted he would have held up God's providence. But Abraham never protested. He always thought of others. Thus, in direct proportion to his pain and suffering, could God's love come to him; and God could promise to multiply his descendants to the number of the stars.

This path of sacrifice was the path Moses followed. Moses lived for 40 years in the splendor of Pharaoh's palace, but remaining loyal to the Hebrews, he came out of Pharaoh's palace when he saw the suffering of the Hebrews. The Egyptian whom Moses killed represented his killing of evil. Seeing this act, the Hebrews should have recognized his faith in God and they should have had faith in him. Moses was taking the position of unfallen brother petitioning God to save the fallen. But the Hebrews didn't have faith in him, they caused him to be expelled to the desert of Midian where he had to sacrifice even harder so God's will could be accomplished.

This pattern is visible in the time of Jesus. John the Baptist lived in the wilderness for 30 years. He had left home and relatives thinking only of God's desire to save man. John was concentrating on the Messiah's coming. He was looking toward the Messiah's love. John was to witness directly to this love. Living as he did by begging food he received great sympathy from God.

Jesus' life revealed the same pattern of sacrifice. The Jewish people waited for 2000 years for the coming of the Messiah. The churches also had been waiting for his coming. If these two groups could have recognized him and become one with him, God's will could have been done. These two groups should have worked according to the will of the Messiah. The Hebrews should have been separated from others and stood on the same basis as the Messiah. The Jews had to become the nation to receive God's love and be the example just the way Jesus was the individual example. By forming one nation around Jesus, Hebrews would have sacrificed their nation for the rest of the world. But because the Jews did not receive Jesus, he himself had to sacrifice for the fallen brother. All people at this time were in the position of fallen Adam and Eve.

Jesus prayed for the Hebrews and begged God to forgive them for what they were doing. Jesus practiced the formula of salvation for all other men. Whoever follows him can gain salvation. If all don't become Christians, then the Christians must go through this same path of suffering for other people.

The reason Jesus was crucified was that the church and nation would not receive him, become one with him. God wanted to use him as a powerful example, but it was not possible because Jesus did not have the support and following of the unified church and state behind him to put God's will into practice. But the Hebrews failed by being too proud of themselves as the ruling nation. They did not fulfill the formula of sacrificing themselves for other nations. By killing Jesus they lost the privilege of being the chosen nation. Thus Jesus had to take the burden of sacrifice upon himself. He had to sacrifice himself for the whole world. Present-day Christianity is trying to form one world centered upon itself. But if a spiritual movement centered on sacrifice for the whole comes along, it will grow more rapidly than even Christianity.

This idea of sacrifice is familiar to us from everyday life. If on the job, one employee is willing to do more work, the boss will advance him, put him in charge of others so that he must take responsibility if those under him do not come through.

This teaching of sacrifice is God's teaching. I'm for you, we are for the nation, the nation is for the world, the world is God's. When I become one with God, He and I stand on the same level. Love makes two one. This process of sacrifice is the pathway for everyone to become one with God.

All people are God's children. He loves all so He is sacrificing those whom He loves most to save others.