

Animal sacrifice is as much misunderstood today as it was in ancient times.

During meditation the physical body and thoughts are set aside in order to experience the true inner SELF (the real you) this setting aside is the SACRIFICE of the ANIMAL BODY and the feelings and sensations which keep the true inner self limited and identified with the physical animal body of each human being.

The animal sacrifice in a spiritual practice has nothing to do with the killing of an innocent animal and then using its blood to redeem sin.

Franklin Jones states:

Another Christian myth (based primarily on the death of Jesus, and only secondarily on his Resurrection or Ascension) that has ceased to make sense as an exoteric idea. It is the myth of Salvation through the blood (or the blood-sacrifice) of Jesus. This myth is as fundamental to "official" (or exoteric) Christianity as the myths of the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus, and (like those myths) it has also ceased to be meaningful (or patently acceptable as exoteric reality, or historic fact) now that various ancient and "primitive" concepts of reality have ceased to inform the common mind of humanity.

The idea that Jesus' death was a universally effective blood-sacrifice (now either magically re-enacted or otherwise memorialized in the Eucharistic ritual of bread/body and wine/blood) depends upon ideas that belong to the ancient "primitive" and popular culture of ritual magic (commonly referred to as "shamanism") and its traditional ritual blood-sacrifice of animals (and even human beings). In shamanistic cultures (and all the cultures of ritual sacrifice, all of which developed from the "primitive" base that may, for the sake of simplicity, be referred to by the general term "shamanism"), prayers are offered Up (either to God or to various deities in the "air," or in the space between "Heaven" and Earth). The participants in such cultures believe that prayers cannot ascend unless they are carried up by "mana," or the life-force of freshly sacrificed animals (or even humans). That is to say, from such a point of view, every time a prayer (or request) is offered Up, it must be "delivered" by the released (and naturally ascending) energy of a blood-sacrifice, or else it will not "arrive." Likewise, the "mana" (or blood-energy) sent Up with a prayer functions as a kind of "self-addressed stamped envelope," to convey the resultant blessing (or the prayer's "answer") back to the sender.

Such ideas were common to both the old ritual religion of Israel and the popular Hellenistic religions that existed at the time of Jesus and early Christianity. Therefore, the death (and the apparently miraculous, or magical disappearance) of Jesus, coupled with all kinds of "reports" and visions and dreams and hopes, eventually became an "official" interpretation of Jesus' death as a *blood-sacrifice* - not only literally effective, but universally effective (such that faith in the Spiritual Power, or "Great Mana," released by Jesus' death, Resurrection, and Ascension would, in any and every moment, grant any worshipper direct access to "God" in "Heaven" above, without the necessity to go through any other rituals of purification or blood-sacrifice).

Thus, Jesus was "officially" interpreted to be a human sacrifice that grants everyone the "Mana" for effective prayer (or direct access to the "Heavenly" Blessings of "God"). It is obvious that most people living in modern post-industrial societies would not claim it is necessary to kill animals (or humans) in order to provide an energy-vehicle (to and from "God") for prayer-requests. Therefore (it must be asked), in a non-shamanistic culture (or a culture that has lost all sense of either the necessity or the meaning of the process of ritual sacrifice), what is the meaning of the death of Jesus? Without the shamanistic mind (or its idea of blood-ritual), the death of Jesus can no longer be understood as a sacrifice at all (whether effective or ineffective).

Along with a general movement away from the shamanistic culture of blood-sacrifice, modern societies have also traveled a long distance in the direction of Spiritual blindness (or the simultaneous abandonment of both Spiritual Enlightenment and archaic - or, otherwise, superstitious - beliefs and techniques), in the self defensive and anxious quest for ordinary (body-based) knowledge and both mental and technical (or physical) superiority and power over the natural world. Therefore, a little recovery of real Spiritual understanding will also (necessarily) re-Awaken something of the higher (or, otherwise, deeper) dimension of the human faculties that were (or are) activated by the ancient and traditional shamanistic (and otherwise mystical) mind.

Indeed, apparently (according to the traditional reports) Jesus himself actually Taught a Way that represents both a higher development of the shamanistic point of view and a denial of both the validity and the necessity of *any* kind of blood-sacrifice. As reported in the fourth chapter of the "Gospel of John," Jesus said: "The time is coming - indeed, it is already here - when all true worshippers will worship the Father (or God) In Spirit (or Spiritually) and In Truth (or without falsehood and deception), for such are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God *Is* Spirit - and therefore, those who worship the Father must do so In Spirit and In Truth (or As Truth requires), Jesus Taught that God *Is* Spirit (or "Mana") and that true worship of God is identical to prayer (and, specifically, prayer *In* Spirit). That is to say, true worship is always associated with the prayer of Divine Communion (or Communion with Real God, *As* Spirit, by Means of Spirit), and such prayer is, necessarily, a *Spiritual* exercise.

The ancient word for "spirit" (in the common Greek language of Jesus' day) is "pneuma," which means "breath-energy." Therefore, in true (or esoteric) prayer, the individual breathes (and, Ultimately, is Absorbed In) the Divine Spirit ("Pneuma," or "Mana") - and if there is correct Spirit-breathing (or psycho-physical Absorption In the Divine Spirit-Power), prayer is *inherently* effective.

Jesus apparently Taught esoteric (or inherently effective, and, necessarily, Spiritual) prayer. He Taught the basic esoteric fourth stage breath-prayer of heart-reception of the descending "Pneuma," or Spirit-Power, or "Mana," or Truth-Blessing of the cosmically evident Divine - and, apparently, he also Taught the esoteric fourth-to-fifth stage prayer of mystical ascent. And such (esoteric, or Spiritual) prayer is the sign of a cultural point of view based on Spirit-religion - or advanced (or esoteric) shamanism, rather than lower shamanistic (or exoteric, and even "pagan") blood-sacrifices. Therefore, according to tradition, Jesus himself Taught a Way that specifically denies both the necessity and the value of blood-sacrifices.

How then, can a church be rightly established in the name of Jesus, if it bases itself on the idea that Jesus is the ultimate blood-sacrifice? Jesus Taught an *esoteric* Way that has not been understood and accepted by his own (exoteric) church - and exoteric Christianity has, also, not understood (or had forgotten) the true (or esoteric) significance of its Resurrection and Ascension myths.

Jesus proclaimed a Way for all that required no blood-sacrifice (not even his own), but only the true "Mana" of Spiritually Inspired prayer (or devotional and mystical Communion with the All-Pervading and Eternally Living Divine Spirit). Jesus' alleged crucifixion (with whatever bodily result) was either murder or misfortune, but it was not a cosmically significant ritual blood-sacrifice. Indeed, the only reason Christianity ever became associated with the myth (or tradition) of blood-sacrifice (and the ritual ingestion of ritually sacrificed flesh and blood) was that (apparently) the stark reality (and circumstance) of Jesus' death required some kind of religiously archetypal (or otherwise symbolically and psychically significant) justification. However, by his own reported Teaching during life, Jesus effectively denied such significance to his death. Therefore, he stands together with all other true Spirit-Masters, affirming that it is not the death-sacrifice of any Spirit-Master that is necessary for (or that is, in any sense, useful to) mankind.

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The only useful (and necessary) sacrifice of a Spirit-Master is his or her own Love-Surrender to the Spiritual (and, ultimately, Transcendental, or even cosmos Transcending) Divine, and his or her subsequent Love-Gift (of Teaching, Spiritual Demonstration, and Spirit-Quickening Blessing) to devotees (and the total world). Therefore, it is a Spirit-Master's Spiritual Realization and subsequent Teaching-Work and Spiritual Work (rather than his or her mere death) that are necessary for (and must be used by) mankind. And *all* true Spirit-Masters, in all times and places, have made this Sacrifice and performed this service for their devotees and the total world.