

Faherty's "Sacrifice": the History of Human Sacrifice; Progressive Theology; Chafer's Definition of Biblical Inerrancy; New Testament Criticism

Faherty, Robert L. "Sacrifice." In *Encyclopaedia Britannica: Macropaedia*. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979), 16:128; 131-32:

Nature of Sacrifice. The term sacrifice derives from the Latin *sacrificium*, which is a combination of the words *sacer*, meaning something set apart from the secular for the use of supernatural powers, and *facere*, meaning "to make." The original use of the term was religious, referring to a cultic act in which objects were set apart or consecrated and offered to a god or some other supernatural power.

In a sense, what is always offered in sacrifice is, in one form or another, life itself. Through sacrifice, life is returned to its divine source, regenerating the power of life of that source; life is fed by life. Thus, the word of the Roman sacrificer to his god: "Be thou increased by this offering."

The killing of an animal is the means by which its consecrated life is "liberated" and thus made available to the deity, and the destruction of a good offering in an altar's fire is the means by which the deity receives the offering. (p. 128)

The occurrence of human sacrifice appears to have been widespread and its intentions various, ranging from communion with a god and participation in his divine life to expiation and the promotion of the Earth's fertility. It seems to have been adapted by agricultural rather than by hunting or pastoral peoples. Of all the worldly manifestations of the life-force, the human undoubtedly impressed men as the most valuable and thus the most potent and efficacious as an oblation. Thus, in Mexico the belief that the sun needed human nourishment led to sacrifices in which as many as 20,000 victims perished annually in the Aztec and Nahua \nā'-wā\ calendrical maize ritual in the 14th century A.D.

Bloodless human sacrifices also developed and assumed greatly different forms: e.g., a Celtic ritual involved the sacrifice of a woman by immersion, and among the Maya in Mexico young maidens were drowned in sacred wells; in Peru women were strangled; in ancient China the king's retinue was commonly buried with him, and such internments continued intermittently until the 17th century. (p. 131)

The Norse cast human and animal victims over cliffs and into wells and waterfalls as offerings to the divinities dwelling therein. In the Aztec sacrifice of human beings to the creator god Xipe Totec, the victim was lashed to a scaffold and shot to death with bow and arrow. (p. 132)

Human sacrifice practiced in Vedic India was continued later by the followers of the goddess Kali, to whom a male child was sacrificed every Friday evening. And to bring things closer to home we have documented examples of the Mississippian culture across the river at Cahokia, Illinois, engaging in human sacrifice:

Fowler, Melvin L. *The Cahokia Atlas: A Historical Atlas of Cahokia Archaeology*. (Springfield: Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, 1989), 148, 150:

Mound 72. Excavations through the mound indicated that it had been constructed as a series of smaller mounds that were then reshaped and covered over to give the mound its final shape. Within these smaller mounds a series of features was excavated, mainly burial pits and burial deposits. More than 250 skeletons were recovered in various states of preservation. (p. 148)

One burial seemed to be an individual of great importance; he was buried with the remains of other individuals on what appeared to be a platform of shell beads. Near him were several retainers with grave goods accompanying them. Most of the burial and grave goods suggest that many of the people buried in this mound were sacrificed, probably to accompany one or more important individuals. (pp. 148, 150)

Although the examples given to document how religion inevitably leads to phallic reversionism, drug abuse, and human sacrifice are quite ancient, the principles still remain true.

The Zeitgeist of client nation America is in decline as exemplified by its increasing involvement in each of these categories.

There is a religion in this country that does not necessarily meet in buildings but it does have a theology. It is called Progressivism and the several categories of its systematic theology are communicated through several outlets. For example, a nongovernmental organization, or NGO, the National Education Association, controls the curriculum of the nation's public schools where the ideology of the Frankfurt School is instructed daily.

This curriculum is designed so that, intentionally or not, it is fulfilling Antonio Gramsci's goal of the "long march through the institutions" and is advanced through the communication of several doctrines that are held sacrosanct by Progressive theologians: (1) The Big Bang Theory which holds that the universe originated billions of years ago in an explosion from a single point of nearly infinite energy density.

Question: What is the origin of the "single point of energy?"

Biblical answer: First of all, Christians believe that the Bible is inerrant. An excellent statement professing this belief is found in:

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), 1:22:

Πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος [*Pasa graphē theopneustos*] ('Every Scripture [is] God-breathed'—2 Tim. 3:16) is the claim of the Bible for itself and this oracle or dictum is no more open to question than is πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός [*pneuma ho Theos*] ('a Spirit God [is]'—John 4:24), ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν [*ho Theos agapē estin*] ('God love is'—1 John 4:8), or ὁ Θεὸς φῶς ἐστίν [*ho Theos phōs estin*] ('God light is'—1 John 1:5).

It is here asserted that the Bible claims for itself that on the original parchments every sentence, word, line, mark, point, pen-stroke, jot, or tittle was placed there in complete agreement with the divine purpose and will. Thus the omnipotent and omniscient God caused the message to be formed as the precise reproduction of His Word. The original text was not only divine as to its origin, but was infinitely perfect as to its form. It is both necessary and reasonable that God's Book—the Book of which He is the Author and which brings the revelation and discipline of heaven down to earth—shall, in its original form, be inerrant in all its parts.

The Christian takes on faith the inerrancy of Scripture. But by human standards, there is no accumulation of ancient documents that have maintained as small a degree of textual difficulties as has those of the Bible.

The secular world, either out of ignorance or through duplicity, claim that our beliefs are founded on religious texts with no secular documentation of their historicity. The following references ought to successfully refute these claims:

“Principle Manuscript Evidence for the Greek New Testament.” In *The NET Bible*. 1st Beta Ed. (Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 2001), 2364:

No ancient literature has survived in its original form; everything we have is derived from copies of the originals. The New Testament is no exception. However, in comparison with any other ancient literature, the New Testament is without a peer—both in terms of the chronological proximity and the surviving number. Several ancient authorities are preserved in only a handful of manuscripts. Not so with the New Testament. There are approximately 5,500 Greek witnesses, ranging in date from the second century A.D. into the middle ages. Besides the Greek evidence, there are nearly 30,000 versional copies (e.g., Latin, Coptic, and Syriac), and over 1,000,000 quotations from the New Testament in the church Fathers. New Testament criticism [The art of evaluating or analyzing works of art or literature. The scientific investigation of literary documents (as the Bible) in regard to such matters as origin, text, composition, or history (MWCD-11).] has always had an embarrassment of riches unparalleled in any other field.