

Children of Abraham (The Abolition of Human Sacrifice)

The Quaker World perspective does not limit its values and concerns to predominately Western Jewish/Christian/Islamic cultures. However, as its origins and development have been mostly resourced and nurtured, Quaker evolution are from these cultures and traditions. Maybe the first responsibility for Quakers might be to address those cultures and belief systems in promoting its aims towards World Peace and Justice.

The Judaic roots of Jewish, Christian and Islamic theology all share two basic beliefs:

- 1) There is one God, and that God must be followed above any other false god.ⁱ
- 2) The leading early patriarch, Abraham, believed he must demonstrate his loyalty to God by sacrificing his son, and was visited by an angel (messenger of God) and stopped him from doing this.ⁱⁱ

Prior to Abraham, it is believed that human sacrifice to God was common, and this is when the Hebrew people gave up such practice. It is often considered a test of Abraham's loyalty to God to have asked him to sacrifice his child. However there is a further message that God did not want the sacrifice in the end. The Christian theology goes further and suggests that Jesus' own crucifixion was a restatement of this as a final sacrifice by God to take on the weight of such transgressions. Muslims see this event as the ultimate testing of faith, and as such the ultimate value of life and our offspring.

It therefore appears that if any belief leads to the sacrifice of our offspring for that belief, then this must be in direct contradiction to what God demanded of Abraham, or must be the putting of another belief above that in the One God. This also brings together deist and humanist values.

As Children of Abraham, we must stand for the abolition of human sacrifice, be it in military action or any reaction to such action, or any other intentional taking of human life.

We might declare that we are committed to supporting the "Children of Abraham" who prove that status by taking a stand against taking human life. There are plenty of opportunities for this throughout the world. The most obvious at present would be the conflicts arising between Palestine and Israel and involving many other nations and peoples. We might encourage a "Three Nations" approach to the present conflict. The third nation would be developed from those Israelis, Palestinians, Muslims, Jews, Christians and others Worldwide who took a stand that protecting human life itself was superior to any other political stand and renounced any action that involved taking human life. Ways of joining up these people in and out of Palestine/Israel would be encouraged to become effective in bringing about peaceful solutions. This might include new collectives, such as the Kibbutzim that helped establish Israel itself, but which included Muslims, Jews, Christians and others living and working together for peace, possibly at the frontline of the conflict itself, and seeking international support for its safety and maintenance.

ⁱThis is repeated throughout the religious texts of all three religious groups and the following are the prime examples:

Jewish: Exodus 20 Commandments 1 and 2, *I am the Lord your God and You shall have no other gods before me*

Christian: Mathew 22:34-40, "You shall love the Lord your God with all heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment.

Islam: Qur'an 47:19, "There is no other god besides God."

ⁱⁱ This again is referred to in numerous religious text in each religion but the following are primary ones:

Jewish: Genesis 22:1-24

Christian: Hebrews 11:17-19, NKJV

Islam: Qur'an 37:101-113

