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Parable:

The Sacrifice

Every night, I go to sleep with the same fear: I will wake up in a mechanic’s shop as a result of some ailment that was missed, or worse, I won’t be alone. This fear is irrational as nearly everything can be fixed with ease – our hands, our feet, down to every ‘unique’ identifier had been designed as to be easy to repair. Every one of us had it, however – a side effect of being helpless. For as long as I can remember, I’ve been married with two beautiful kids and, forever, have kept this video documentary. Although I can’t view it myself, it’s supposed to help with the development of updates and future versions of us, so I can’t complain even though it does watch everything I do.

Today was just another day. I woke up; I woke up Ben and Jill, had breakfast, drove them to and from mental growth centers, sports, food, and endless other daily concerns. I had dinner and went to sleep. Although you’d think they wouldn’t need help processing the data they gather from us, they do. Or at least they like to let us think we’re useful to them. This is my wife’s job. It’s a nice job – easy hours, accommodating to schedules – but she isn’t allowed to give me even as much as an inkling as to if she likes her job, how she’s communicated with, nothing. Apart from that, what we talk about or even do, although never private, is also never prohibited or looked down upon – we could murder someone in cold blood and never face a single consequence.

Today was the worst day of my life. I woke up and was ordered to make a choice of which child to give up. For whatever reason this was for, whether it be an attempt to keep a constant population or just to measure a reaction, it was given to us in the normal way: a string of text in the top right of our view for the morning – the entire morning. It was torturous, every moment just wishing it would disappear even if it were only for a second so I could pretend it was just another day, that I wasn’t about to betray one of them and myself. I don’t remember having ever disobeyed an order given or even thinking about doing so. Is it even ok to talk about the decision? Apparently. My wife told me that she had received the same message as me. After the kids had gone to training for the day, I realized that the disappearance of the order had only cast me deeper into the pit of despair. I decided, I would not let them take either of my children. Luckily, I didn’t share this with my wife as she had the alternate opinion, saying “we may only do as they ask.” I left to pick up the kids and am now driving with no plan of returning.

Today was the same – I woke up, I woke up Jill, had breakfast, drove her to and from our daily appointments, had dinner, and I went to sleep – it was just another day.

Addendum:

The main question this parable works to answer is whether creations or creators instill purpose. Of course, the answer is subjective and may be a mix of both, but the parable takes it to the extreme, forcing the narrator to choose – either the wish of his creators or the implied wish of his creations (to avoid the imminent fate that faces them). The parable first establishes that the narrator and his race are at the absolute discretion of their creators although given absolute freedom to act. This allows the narrator to find his own purpose, not just have it handed to him. This purpose is given by metaphor with allegiance.

Despite the unsure fate of someone who disobeys the orders given (which is implied to be absolute), the narrator choses to attempt to save both his children. This shows that he chooses to define his decisions based on what he thinks is best for his children, regardless of the result for himself. Therefore, he shows that he has assigned his purpose in life to his children, or creations. This is contrary to the wife, however, who wishes to sacrifice one of them. This mental predisposition is also shown in how they interpret their messages in their view. The wife interprets it as a request, showing that she will, no matter what, fulfill the wish of her creators and thus have no reason to view it as an order like her husband does. Her husband views it as an order since he does not blindly do as told; instead he thinks what is best for his creations, not his creators.

Finally, the last paragraph serves to reinforce the fact that forced allegiance (through advantage in power) is not the same as intrinsic purpose. However, it also shows, in perhaps the most extreme example, how our realities and thus purposes are defined by our creators. In this case it’s with control over memory – something that defines reality. So, in a macro sense, no matter what the answer to the question is, the parable shows how absolute creators such as God allow us purpose. This, in the context of the parable, is shown in the second to and last paragraphs where the narrator takes the opportunity to pursue and to fulfill his purpose. Since his memory is erased the next day, his reality for the moment is that he succeeded which is granted to him by his creators.