



2.6.7 Restoration through Reparation

According to Christian belief, an event known as the Fall of Man caused a fundamental problem at the beginning of human history. Since then, human beings have no longer existed in natural, immediate closeness to God. The path humanity must take to return to God is referred to as **restoration**.

On this path, the principle of **reparation** - also known as atonement or indemnity - comes into play.

It states that in order to return to God, a person must offer something in sacrifice. In the Old Testament, material things such as animals were sacrificed. In ascetic practice, this is done, for example, through fasting. On the inner path, the sacrifice often takes the form of a process that is accompanied by a period of suffering.

If anyone wants to follow me, they must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Mark 8:34

The [Divine Principle](#) explains this as follows: a person who takes responsibility for restoration must fulfill a condition over a certain period - often involving symbolic timeframes with the number 40 or 21. There are numerous biblical examples of this, such as Moses' and Jesus' 40 days of fasting.

The Principle of Reparation in Buddhism

This principle is also found in Buddhism, where the mystical path to enlightenment leads through difficult periods and painful experiences.

The Eightfold Path offers a practice of liberation, often associated with renunciation, mindfulness, and inner discipline.

Meditation and self-awareness play a central role in recognizing the true nature of existence and ultimately breaking free from the cycle of suffering.

ChatGPT

[Sharon Salzberg](#), a well-known American Buddhist teacher, describes how liberated she felt when she realized that suffering is part of the path. Not because we are doing something wrong or because we are ignorant - but rather:

Suffering is an essential part of the path.

Restoration through Reparation in Meditation

The principle of restoration through reparation can be directly experienced on the path of meditation and prayer.

Suffering manifests in phases during which one goes through states that can be unpleasant to painful.

It begins with the automatic thoughts that repeatedly take over our consciousness, unpleasant sensations and feelings, all the way to the perception of a spiritual atmosphere that can feel oppressive.

The Christian Church Fathers describe how demons constantly implant thoughts and torment them with temptations. Only when they have steadfastly endured this do they experience the grace of heavenly comforts such as bliss, love, and joy.

The great gifts of grace and mystical experiences are usually preceded by a phase of inner emptiness and unpleasant states in prayer.

The "*dark night of the soul*" has already been mentioned as one of the great periods of reparation. However, there are also smaller phases lasting only a few weeks or days. Every meditation often begins with an unpleasant distraction, which, after a while, leads us into a pleasant, clear, and open state. Deep meditative states are always associated with inner joy.

However, for this transformation, we must go through a certain type of suffering.

The willingness to suffer plays a decisive role.

In meditation, we experience sensations and states immediately and consciously. In everyday life, on the other hand, we often try to distract ourselves quickly. In meditation, however, we enter these states with full awareness.

We also experience that the unpleasant immediately loses its terror and changes in quality as soon as we meet it with mindfulness and let go of our aversion to it. A previously very unpleasant bodily sensation, such as painful tension, thus becomes a neutral sensation of tension.

Through the willingness to suffer, the suffering decreases.

Seen in this light, the willingness to suffer is the most powerful means of overcoming suffering.

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