Cry, The Beloved Country Essay Essay, Research Paper

Alan Paton, in his novel, Cry, the Beloved Country, shows how the horrors of South African apartheid effected two individual families, one black and one white. Throughout the course of the novel, these two families overcome the chains of apartheid and learn that love and forgiveness cross racial lines. In this novel a black man, Absalom Kumalo, makes a decision to murder a white man, Arthur Jarvis. This decision effects the main character, Stephen Kumalo, a secondary character, James Jarvis, as well as the overall work.

Stephen Kumalo, the main character, is effected in many ways. First of all he suffers by the pain of having his son being a convicted murderer. Stephen Kumalo also suffers because having his son murder a man lowers his reputation as a pastor. He also has to deal with the fact that his son, Absalom, will be put to death for his actions, Stephen has to lose his son for justice to be brought about. Although, if Absalom had never killed Arthur Jarvis, Stephen Kumalo would have never met James Jarvis, Arthur?s father; much good came out of Stephen meeting James.

James Jarvis, a secondary character, was also effected by the death of his son, Arthur. First of all, he had to deal with his son no longer being with him. Although, if Absalom had not killed him, James would have probably never found out that his son was deeply involved in helping the black people win the rights that they deserved. When James discovered what his son did, it inspired him to help the black people even better than his son could because he had more money than his son did. This helped him to even better serve the blacks than his son could do, which is better for the natives.

Absalom killing Arthur effects the overall work in many ways. If Arthur had never been killed, Stephen Kumalo would have never met James Jarvis. James helps the city of Ndotsheni when he realizes how bad off they are. He gives them milk for the children, a dam to give them water in the dry season, and he wants to build a new church for them since their current one is in such bad condition. These two racially different families meeting and helping each other out gives hope to all people that apartheid can end some day.

In conclusion, when Absalom shot and killed Arthur, it did more good than bad. It helped out many more people than was possible before. The decision that Absalom made effects the main character, Stephen Kumalo, the secondary character, James Jarvis, as well as the overall work. This could have been the plan all along that one should die so that many more could live.