

Pain takes us beyond human capacities (Nikolaos of Mesogaias and Lavreotikis)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



[Previous Publication: <http://pemptousia.com/2016/06/the-blessing-of-pain-blessed-whys/>]

In the end, these 'whys' aren't answered in the way that our poverty and weakness would expect. According to this logic, in fact, they usually go unanswered. This is why Christ said very little about death. He Himself simply chose it and suffered more than anyone else has ever done. And once He'd risen, His mouth released more breath than words. He said nothing about life and death, restricting Himself to the prophecy of Peter's martyrdom. Pain isn't answered with arguments. Neither injustice nor death can be dealt with through reason. These problems can be resolved only through the inhalation of the breath that God alone gives, that is the Holy Spirit. They're overcome through the humble acceptance of the will of God which is so true, yet, at the same time, usually so incomprehensible.

At the time of the trial, it's accompanied by the hammer blows of unanswered questions. And we, hooked on the 'maybys' the 'whys?' and the 'ifs', retain our hopes and endure our continued existence in this world, in the expectation of something certain, something stable. But this is not often to be found in the proposed solution, but centres on divine consolation, which is beyond reason. Every attempt to replace it with human substitutes is unfair to us. Any restriction into the choking noose of rationalist answers traps us further in our drama. In the dialogue with pain, injustice and death, we have to move beyond human capacities. It's the only way out of the trial and it's also the way that benefits us.



A unique opportunity

In the end, we can pose the question, but we have to wait for the answer. Either God doesn't exist, or He allows a trial in order to give us a unique opportunity. Had there been no Crucifixion, there'd have been no Resurrection. Christ would have been a good teacher; but not God. God gives the opportunity. It rests with us to see it and make the best of it. The joy and the content of this opportunity are far greater than the stress and the pain of the trial. Death, pain and injustice are a mystery, the answer to which is unsettling. In these instances, the truth isn't expressed as a view or argument, but is offered as humility and shared pain. Our path along the borderline between life and death, between outrage and praise, miracle and injustice is full of twists and hidden turns where the truth of life is preserved. If people are able to escape the temptation to give in, they'll see the truth from a point of view that they couldn't ever have imagined. If you can embrace pain, it brings you unheard of sensitivity and reveals realities that you wouldn't otherwise have seen. The challenge isn't that events and revelations occur; that's a given. The challenge is to open our eyes and face them.

It's an incontrovertible truth, unfortunately, that often it's only by losing what we desire so much that we come to know and earn what is very much greater.

What's certain is that pain and injustice can't obliterate the love of God. God exists. And He's love and life. Perfect love and the fullness of life. And the greatest miracle of His existence is His co-existence with pain, injustice and death.

It may be that the greatest challenge for each of us is to live with our own personal pain, the hopeful embrace of these profound 'whys', the internal infiltration into the expectation of God through the 'injustices' which we think He's inflicted upon us.

Some time ago, a young lady came to me who seemed to be hovering between life and death. Despite her unbearable pain, I discerned that she had hope. In her tearful eyes I saw joy, strength and wisdom.

'I want to live', she told me. 'But I didn't come for you that. I came for you to help me to be ready to leave this world'.

I answered: 'I'm a priest of life, not death. This is why I want you to live. May I ask you something? During this trial you're going through, have you ever asked: "Why me, Lord?"'.

'I don't understand, father. What I ask is "Why not me, Lord?". I'm waiting, not for my death, but for Him to enlighten me'.

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