

WHAT ABOUT THE IDEA THAT ACCEPTING SUFFERING LESSENS IT?

Suffering is a negative attitude of mind and a feeling of worthless existence. You can be happy despite being in pain and in that case you are not really suffering.

Suppose you are suffering and can't do much, if anything, about it.

Suppose you think it is right that you should suffer and you will God to send the suffering.

Suppose he wants you to will it and accept it for that is an act of love for him.

If you do this you accept the situation of the suffering. You cease to suffer so much. Your suffering is reduced or maybe become pain only. A happy person can be in a lot of pain. So if God sends suffering and needs us to suffer then we should not accept suffering for that makes it no longer suffering? If suffering is a gift then it is a sin to reduce it using spiritual methods.

If one tells you to lessen your suffering by accepting do they mean you are getting rid of an extra suffering, the lack of acceptance or that the suffering you have will just lessen? They can mean either or think both are true.

Would rejecting suffering be disrespectful to God because he sends it?

If God sends you suffering are you supposed to reject it or accept it? Rejecting suffering insults God and so does accepting it for the latter makes it no longer suffering. It seems you cannot win whatever you choose and God understands so it is up to you.

If God needs us to suffer and we cannot accept or reject it what are we supposed to do?

Some would say that there is an answer. Here are the religious suggestions.

Compromise. You will both accept and reject it. But that is contradictory. Accepting suffering even partly turns it into pain. Rejecting it makes it more insufferable. This would be one painful compromise. It is not really a compromise.

Reject suffering and this is not a sin for accepting it is not an option. Rejecting it makes sure it will remain as suffering.

Accept the suffering. If God needs us to suffer we have to inflict it on ourselves by letting him do it and avoiding any help and by doing things to make it worse. But that still means accepting the suffering. The only answer is that we should torment ourselves to the extreme - to the degree where acceptance is impossible. If we cannot avoid acceptance of suffering the best we can do is endure extreme asceticism. God may not like it but he understands you cannot be condemned for doing the unavoidable.

It is not your fault it has to be either accepting or rejecting so do either one of them.

Not one of these replies says that God is wrong to let suffering happen. They acclaim him for it. They imply endorsement of those who set out to make their suffering worse by despising it. It is very twisted and frightening.

And it implies that if you accept the suffering you do so in the attitude that you hope God will make it so bad that you will be no longer able to accept it.

If we suffer so much that we cannot accept it then if other people make our suffering worse they are doing us a favour.

The Catholic groups that specialise in extreme religious self-torture are right in their understanding of devotion to God. Resenting your suffering is not a sin if you cannot help it. If you deliberately suffer and unwillingly resent it you are making the only real sacrifice and the resentment only makes it a greater sacrifice. If you cannot help resenting your suffering that will add to it and religion can say that then the resentment is as much a gift from God as the suffering.

Magically making suffering good

Some would say it is sick to want to suffer even when saving the life of another. For example, suppose you have to take on a gang of hooligans to save a victimised person. Wanting to suffer would be perverse for you should be hoping that nothing bad will happen to you. And the same would say that if one could miraculously change one's feelings to enjoy the pain one endures one should do not so. Thus we see that if you cannot and should not enjoy your pain by some enchantment then it is clear that pain and suffering are intrinsically bad and thus cannot have a good purpose. The good that follows them has nothing to do with them and is indeed proof that they are bad.

Some would say that it is better to enjoy the pain if it makes you hell-bent on saving others. Being sick would refute God's existence for he made the laws that many good works require personal suffering and that this suffering should not be enjoyed.

Involuntary Suffering

You might think, "God trains and educates you through what you suffer. You can't control or regulate everything you feel so God forcing you to suffer destroys the alleged worth of suffering. Involuntary suffering proves that there is no God looking for sacrificial love. Involuntary suffering is too much suffering. Why? Because it is done to you. Something external cannot change you. Your response to it can change you. You need to choose suffering because you have learned how not it but how you can use it makes you grow".

If how you respond to suffering is what matters then that only proves the suffering should not happen.

Too many religious people seem to argue that suffering should happen for you can respond virtuously to it. And too many argue it outright. That ignores the fact that the response matters and it is really self-righteous callousness towards suffering people.

If suffering is shoved down your throat, you are not necessarily forced regarding how you respond to it. But you can be. Suffering can force you to accept it or do good. In that case the suffering is not about making you a better person but about forcing you. It is degrading.

To say God uses suffering to train you is to suggest that involuntary suffering will never force you but it does! It is callous to see the suffering of others as mere training.

When you suffer, where does the alleged discipline and growing come in? If involuntary suffering is no good then there is no God or we have to pretend that suffering is as good as fun and is a gift from God.

Retribution is suffering. Even if you ask for retribution there is a sense in which it is forced on you. You need to be able to choose suffering all along the way if it benefits.

It is harder to embrace suffering when you are okay and the opportunity to suffer is offered to you by God. Going from happy to miserable of your own free will would be horrendous in itself. But it would not be suffering for accepting suffering ends suffering. But what if it were? If God were perfect he would ask you every hour or half an hour if you want to continue suffering for that end that he has in mind. If love is sacrifice suffering can only have value when it is voluntary.

Suffering whether not chosen or chosen by the sufferer ruins compassion when it is seen as a way of getting close to God and a gift from God.

Refutes Meaning

If suffering were good it would involve valuing your existence but it cannot be good for it does not. To say there is a

purpose for suffering is the same as saying that human existence is immaterial or that nobody is worth anything for when devaluing your existence is valuable you cannot be valuable. Suffering ruins your existence and tempts you to want to cease to exist.

To say that God values suffering when that suffering is necessarily rooted like all suffering in a sense of worthless existence is to admit that God is wholly evil. Religion can answer that when we sin we consent to suffer so it is not involuntary. So in other words suffering only looks involuntary.

Violence

Violence involves hurting and force. Being good in spite of your neutral nature or bad nature is violent. Battling suffering treats it like a personal enemy so that is violent too. "In spite of/" is always violent in spirit. That is why the moralist easily turns into a bully or is one inside at least. That is the dark side of morality and one reason why it needs to be seen as a necessary evil fraught with risks and dangers. That is why everybody should be searching for the best truths and the best world views. Moral systems that are unconvincing or allegedly revealed by God because they are not as strong as real morality which is strong and unavoidable are disgraceful for if morality has problems dodgy morality will have bigger ones.

Finally

You must help sufferers to improve themselves and their circumstances in spite of their sufferings. When sufferers see that they have managed it, they will be stronger and wiser if further traumas come. They will be prepared and free from undue fear about the future. In this light, the notion that suffering has purpose is useless and a distraction from the real truth. Seeing suffering as useless and which you can deal with even if it takes years is all you need to do.

The person who sees the suffering of others as intolerable is far better than the person who sees it as horrible but tolerated for the greater good. His or her heart is in the right place. He or she just cares about overcoming it with good and does not care what purpose it allegedly has. In fact he would see it as not worth any purpose. The believer who imagines suffering is just a way to good may do good but makes things worse in the long run with her or his attitude. Seeing suffering as something inexcusable even if there is any god or whatever and which you will contend against and ban from destroying your spirit is to be your focus. Any other focus is a waste of time and harms you and not just you. You have another focus instead of the one you need to have. That is harmful.

