

IT MAKES NO SENSE TO SAY THAT JOYFUL SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES SHOW THERE IS A GOD WHEN TERRIBLE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Religion says that the existence and love of God are verified by religious experience. You get to know God by sensing that he is with you and in you. Only a few people report a strong experience. And most doubt the validity of the experience afterwards.

An experience of suffering, of meaningless existence cannot be equal in value to an experience of God. An experience of God is short and fleeting. An experience of suffering is longer. An experience of God cannot be as deep as the experience of suffering. You cannot experience something that is not you the same way as you can experience something that makes you a sufferer. Suffering will always be a more convincing experience than the experience of God because it is about you. The argument that God must exist as some people experience God is an insult to sufferers for suffering must necessarily be the experience that there is no God and no hope. It trivialises their experience.

When you endure great personal suffering in what ways can it ruin your relationship with God? It may make you mad at him. It may make you cease believing. If God comes first then it follows that it is better to be raging at God. Thus the concept of God is no help to somebody who suffers in such a way that their connection to God is severed. It harms.

