



The Meaning of Suffering and Healing

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October 11 & 13, 2013

MEANING THAT MEANS SOMETHING...

has to mean that *when we suffer*.

THE GREAT WASTE / NON-STARTER: “Why?”

[Keep in mind: Because I can't imagine a *sufficient* “Why?” ≠ there can't be. It's very likely there are a lot of things beyond our current ability to understand.]

“Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?”

Job 40:8

FINDING MEANING: “Where?” “What?”

Connecting with Meaning In Suffering

1. Brutal *honesty*... along with *“considering”*.

*In the day of prosperity be happy,
But in the day of adversity consider —
God has made the one as well as the other
So that man will not discover anything that will
be after him.*

Ecclesiastes 7:14

2. Suffering *exposes us*, especially our *“comfort plan”*... let it do its work.

“Bless you prison, bless you for being in my life. For there, lying upon the rotting prison straw, I came to realize that the object of life is not prosperity as we are made to believe, but the maturity of the human soul.”

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn,
The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:16–18

3. *God's work* can be *displayed* IN suffering!

Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

John 9:3

4. “PRESENCE” — *WITH* is *everything!*

“FOR” is a close second.

³⁹ And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me always, for their own good and for the good of their children after them. ⁴⁰ I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put the fear of Me in their hearts so that they will not turn away from Me. ⁴¹ I will rejoice over them to do them good and will faithfully plant them in this land with all My heart and with all My soul.

Jeremiah 32:39–41

- ▶ Remember *where all this is going*: “walk through the valley of the shadow of death” goes to “dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

THE ONE AND ONLY UTTERLY UNIQUE GOD...

is a *God who suffers*.