

Tough Love

- Was all the pain really necessary? -

by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, July 2014
Scripture from NKJV unless otherwise noted.

A child of five loses his beloved father in a tragic accident. Another child is born with a genetic disorder that will fill her life with pain. Another starves as his land is torn by war or natural disaster. Violence, evil, ignorance, poverty, disease – all resulting in physical or psychological pain. I could give a thousand examples. Is God to blame? He created sentient beings with high intelligence and with free will, therefore the possibility of rebellion was inherent within the design. Does this make God responsible for sin and its consequences?

I would argue yes, to some extent. He did say, “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things” (*Isaiah 45:7 KJV*). I would argue the LORD has accepted the responsibility and has paid the price.

Let me paraphrase C.S. Lewis. With free will, the possibility for evil exists, but without free will there can be no love. For love - by definition - must be freely given.

God chose to create beings with free will. He *knew* that rebellion was a possibility, and because He sees through all time, He knew that it would come. He knew the rebellion would bring pain. He made provision for the rescue of those who would one day choose to serve Him. He planned the restoration of earth, and the restoration of eternal peace within His creation. The Lamb of God was appointed “from the beginning” before the foundation of the world, *before* the creation began.

Let me first address the causes of the pain.

THE PHYSICAL WORLD

The book of Genesis tells of very long-lived human beings. Adam lived for 900 years, and Methuselah for 969 years. What happened that life span fell to an average of only 40 years during the first century after Christ? I believe the two major factors were poor nutrition, and atmospheric disturbance.

The flood of Noah's day carried rich topsoil with balanced mineral content into the oceans, and the firmament which provided protection from damaging UV rays was almost obliterated. Extremes of temperature followed by language confusion (at the Tower of Babel) forced migrations and adaptations. The flood brought horrendous change.

But what caused the flood?

I personally believe that an asteroid impacted earth. But that still begs the question - Why? I thought the LORD made all things "very good." What happened? . . . It's called entropy. That is basic thermodynamics. Without the input of energy, any system will slow down, run down and break down. You see, this dimension includes the starry heavens, not simply this one planet.

If you are not aware this planet is dying, then you have not been paying attention. God set everything in balance. He then held everything in balance. He is the energy source. Without Him, everything begins to slow down, run down, and break down - everything within this physical dimension. So why did God stop inputting energy. Why allow this planet to die?

Job 21:14 [Speaking of those who lived just prior to the Flood of Noah] "Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (KJV).

Job 22:17 "They said to God, 'Leave us alone! What can the Almighty do to us?" (NIV)

Genesis 6:5 "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

God set everything in balance, and then held everything in balance. When the people of earth said to God, "Depart from us!," the LORD honored their choice. He slowly began to withdraw His spirit energy from this physical dimension except for a ship with eight people on board (and a whole lot of animals). The perfect balance was gone. Entropy set in. And don't forget the work of Satan - "the prince and power of the air." He stirred the pot.

The LORD could protect only those who obeyed him by building and entering the ark. Noah begged the people to prepare for the flood, but they mocked him. I believe that a very large asteroid slammed into the earth, fracturing the earth's crust, which then allowed "the fountains of the great deep" (the water cooling system) to erupt. The explosion carried the water high into the atmosphere. It then rained down for 40 days and 40 nights. The explosion of the deep waters also flooded the earth, forming the oceans that cover 3/4 of our planet. Super volcanos erupted, forcing the original great land mass into sections that drifted apart to form the continents.

The LORD brought the ark of Noah safely to rest. Noah and his family emerged to find the world completely altered. The topsoil was washed into the sea. The atmosphere was changed. Extremes of weather coupled with poor nutrition, weakened the immune system, shortened their lives and caused mutations of their DNA. Starving animals became carnivorous. Scavengers multiplied. But - the balance had shifted once again.

Just before the flood, the majority of people wanted God gone from their lives. After the flood, Noah and his family (the only survivors) wanted God's presence with them, and prayed for it. God could now restore more protections for their earth home. We see a time coming very soon when the majority of earth's inhabitants will again deny the existence of God and persecute those who still serve Him.

Since the flood of Noah's day, this earth has continued on towards sure and certain "death." The LORD has allowed this. King David wrote, "The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off" (*Psa 90:10*). These words apply to saint and sinner alike. But why? Why has the LORD allowed all of this pain? Was it just to punish humanity? What about all the innocent young children caught up in this disaster?

MADE FROM DUST

God made Adam from the dust of the ground (*Gen. 2:7*). Then He made Eve from a small bone sample, taken from Adam. The first pair were not created with "spiritual" bodies - like the angels. They were created with physical, carbon based bodies that feel *physical* pain. Why? I believe the LORD wanted to spare them.

Revelation 20:10 tells us that the Devil and his angels will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" and "will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (unto the age of the ages).

The Devil and his angels are spirit beings - not a physical beings. They cannot die in the sense that humans do. Human beings are physical beings - consumed instantly by the "fire of God." (There are several examples in Scripture.) Human beings can die and pass out of conscious existence. Long story short. I believe the LORD wanted to spare human beings the "forever and ever" in the "lake of fire."

See studies, "[Where are the Dead?](#)" "[HELL - What It's NOT](#)",
and "[Final Judgment - Lake of Fire](#)."

Yes - physical bodies mean physical pain. Whoever heard of an angel stubbing his toe? We feel physical pain because we live as physical beings, but one day the redeemed will receive "spiritual" bodies, and then we will be free from *physical* pain (*1Cor. 15: 42-44, 51-54*).

POWER AND GREED

Strength is given for a purpose. The stronger are to *serve* the weaker. But without the spirit of God, “power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely” (*Sir John Dalberg-Acton*). Might then makes right. Strength - created for good - is used for evil.

Men are physically more powerful than women. After sin, at the gate of the garden the LORD said to Eve, “Your desire shall be for your husband and he will rule over you” (*Gen. 3:16*). He will be your master. Women have been bought and sold, abused, raped, used as virtual slaves and valued less than some animals, for almost the span of recorded history. Only in very recent years have some societies elevated women by law, to relative equality with men. Those laws are tenuous. They are only as good as the men who stand behind them.

Power - whether of one individual or of nations - simply allows the exercise of unbridled selfishness. Only the indwelling spirit of God brings wisdom and selflessness. But that is not enough. Our all powerful God must rescue those who would serve Him, from those who use power to take what they want. One day soon, the Son of God will return in glory. Those who serve Him will be rescued from this earth. Those left behind will destroy one another, as the earth is consumed.

“What’s He waiting for,” you ask.

Answer: He is “not willing that any be lost” (*2Peter 3:9*).

His invitation must go out, so long as there are *any* left to speak it. When the last witness for the LORD is imprisoned, killed or threatened into silence, *that* is when this age will end.

Those of us who serve Him, understand that the misery must continue - for now.

I know you must be thinking that there are millions who have died without hearing the invitation. No problem - the LORD has a plan for them. I wrote the “[The 8th Day](#)” to explain the LORD’s plan for those who have died in ignorance or immaturity.

ANGER AND HATRED

People hate because they have been hurt, or because they can’t get what they want. Cain hated his brother Able because the LORD favored Able’s sacrifice. Ishmael hated Isaac because Abraham favored his miracle son by Sarah. Esau hated Jacob. The hatred of Ishmael and Esau began a cycle of hatred which has passed from generation to generation for more than 3000 years.

The indwelling spirit of God is the only preventive, and the only cure - for hatred and anger.

When a person has been deeply wounded, he *will* be angry - unless he is perfectly indwelt by the Spirit of God. It is a given. He may turn his anger against inappropriate targets (many times unconsciously) with negative consequences. He may try to numb his mind with alcohol or other drugs. He may distract with competitive activities. He may unconsciously repeat the circumstances of his injury, trying to make things turn out differently - trying to heal the old wound. It never works. Only the spirit of Christ can heal the wounds without leaving scars, and resolve the feelings of anger and hatred.

Hitler knew that the German people were angry after the first world war. They had lost almost everything. He turned their anger against the Jews. He directed that anger against an inappropriate target, and men did things they could not have imagined doing only a few years before. But why would God - who "is love"- *allow* such horrible cruelty? Why?

IGNORANCE and STUPIDITY

How many have died because they ate things, or smoked things, or were exposed unknowingly to things that cause disease? Even today when health educators try to warn them, young people especially do not believe they will personally be the ones to suffer. (Drug use might serve as a prime example.) The older generations were ignorant. Younger generations who ignore sound advice, are just foolish.

Entropy, selfishness, ignorance, stupidity, anger, hatred or just plain accidents - all with horrendous consequences. The question is still - WHY? Why did the LORD allow this horrible mess! And how can He possibly resolve it without some mind-control maneuver?

I do not believe our God will ever resort to mind control, in order to maintain peace within His eternal kingdom. If He could use that "easy button" then He should have used it back in the Garden of Eden - and skipped this terrible mess!!! No. The long painful history of this earth clearly demonstrates that our God will never override the free will of any sentient being.

LIFE IN A WAR ZONE

From the first breath of Adam, **we humans have been living in a war zone.**

Revelation 12:7-10 "There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought ... So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Lucifer - the highest created being - wanted to sit with God, sharing His throne. When God would not allow this, Satan rebelled against the Father, and has vowed to bring down His kingdom and rule. (NOTE: Adam was *not* the first sentient being to sin.)

Satan demanded access to every being of high intelligence, so that he could spread his lies and accusations against the Father. If the Father had denied him access, Satan would have portrayed the Father as unfairly restrictive - a vindictive despot, further instilling doubt. On a planet called Earth, the LORD allowed Satan access at one place only - the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve listened to the Serpent, and was taken in by Satan's deception. Adam could not bear to loose Eve, and the rest as they say, is history.

Eve and Adam opened the door to Satan. They did not realize he would take over. They distrusted their creator and took what He had forbidden. Satan now claimed that He was "lord" of the earth. He took over.

Dominion of the earth, originally given to mankind, was stolen by Satan. The LORD could no longer protect the humans from Satan's domination. The LORD could protect only those individuals who obeyed Him. He could not protect the earth. Thorns and thistles spread like wildfire. Violence and death became the order of the day.

Please see the study "[Dominion.](#)"

Through deception Satan incites jealousy, lust, greed, anger and hatred. Then he blames the Creator for the ensuing chaos, and suffering. His power is especially directed towards those who seek to serve the God of Heaven and His Son. He seeks to deceive, to tempt and to torment. He knows that the Father feels our pain. If he can hurt us, he hurts the Father, whom He hates with a seething passion. Enough pain may cause us to turn from the Father because He has not healed. **Make no mistake. Pain is a test!!**

Satan's power will continue until Christ returns. Until that day, the pain will continue in one form or another. Paul wrote, "All who would live godly in Christ *will* suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). **We are trapped in a war zone.** Neutrality is not an option. Those who have chosen the side of Christ *will* be targeted by the enemy.

One day - Satan will be gone. We will be delivered from the presence and power of Satan and from those who serve him (knowingly or not). We will be raised with immortal spiritual bodies which are not subject to the hungers or physical lusts we feel in this life (1Cor. 15:44). There will be no more sorrow or pain. The earth will be healed and restored. We long for that day!

THE PAIN WAS NECESSARY

If you ask a recovering addict why he does not take just one more hit, he will answer, "Because it would kill me. I would loose everything." He *knows* that one hit would not be enough. He *knows* that he would end up far worse than he was before. He *knows* that he would have to go through a very painful withdrawal again - or die.

It is his memory of the pain, and his knowledge of sure consequence which prevents relapse. I believe the same will be true for redeemed human beings, and for all of the intelligent spirit beings who sided with the Father in the great War of Heaven, against Satan.

Remember. One-third of the angels rebelled with Satan (*Rev. 12:4-7*). The remaining angels were led by the Son of God, to defeat the rebels. But why did the remaining two-thirds side with their Creator? What made them trust the Father and choose to stay with Him? All of their questions were *not yet fully answered* at the start of that war. That my friends, is a mystery of faith.

If ever - for all eternity - I have a momentary thought of something which the LORD has forbidden, I will remember the abyss - the black hole of pain and hatred caused by sin, and I will recoil from it. **Our present pain is the best guarantee of our eternal future in peace.** The pain is a revelation to us, that our Creator does know best.

I know someone is going to say this means that we will serve HIM out of fear. I would reply that fear of Him, is different from fear of being left without Him. A child who has done something which his father forbade, and has ended up in big trouble, will literally run to his father, absolutely thankful that help has arrived. He is not at that moment, thinking of punishment at his father's hand.

Just eating a piece of fruit seems a *very* small thing. Yet it opened the door. Eve was deceived by the Evil One, but Adam knowingly disobeyed the express command of God his Creator. If the LORD had allowed them continued access to the Tree of Life, then evil would go on and on and on. Only by shortening life-spans could the LORD somewhat limit the spread and power of evil - at least for a time.

We know that physical death is only a sleep. We are approaching the day when millions of human beings will be resurrected to life immortal. Their experience of pain, along with their knowledge of His love for them, will guarantee their loyalty forever to the Creator who rescued them. They know that without Him chaos ensues.

HE SHARED THE PAIN

God's own Son became a human being. He inherited the physical nature of Abraham. He *felt* pain. He became tired, hungry, and thirsty. "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (*Matt 8:20*). He was misunderstood, rejected, despised, hated, stripped, whipped almost to unconsciousness and finally nailed to a wooden cross to die publicly. If that was not enough *participation in our pain*, I don't know what would qualify.

Imagine *never* having a human friend who understands you - not really. That one hits home for me. His Father was His *only* true friend.

But God went much farther than the pain which Christ suffered during His life on earth. I remember one day, walking out the back door from work with a terrible migraine headache. I looked up at the sky and said out loud to God, "Why?" Immediately I heard the words of Isaiah 63:9. "In all their affliction He was afflicted." I understood. **He feels our pain.** He was hurting *with* me, not just *for* me.

Only an infinite Being could absorb all the pain of every human being, through all of history - and continue to exist. He knew. **He knew before He created beings with free will, that He would have to feel the pain.** He knew that His own Son would need to demonstrate His great love in a way that angels as well as human beings, could see and thus begin to believe in. He knew - and yet He created angels and men.

Think about it. Without sin there would have been no cross, and no demonstration of His deep love. It was because of sin, that His creation has seen His love. Truly all things - including sin and pain - have worked together for ultimate eternal good. We love Him deeply because He first loved us. We praise Him for His love.

Right now - living in this messed up world - it's hard to see that all the pain is necessary. Someday we will understand. Someday we will look back, and say with Him, "It was worth it."

Isaiah 53:11 "He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities."

In the Kingdom, human beings will praise God and the Lamb with a depth of understanding that cannot be experienced by any other created beings, because it is born of their shared human experience with pain. It is a forever bond. No other created beings have shared the *physical* pain experience with God's Son. Angels do not feel physical pain, therefore they cannot truly appreciate the love inherent in the choice to endure such.

I believe those who have experienced great pain for the sake of Christ, will be closer to Him in the ages to come. They are "partakers of His sufferings."

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
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