

The Spiritual Scientist

An ezine for those who think!

The Benefit of Pain



Question: If God is good, then why does he allow the many pains that periodically torment us?

Answer: The pains of the world serve as protectors from a far greater pain. Let's see how.

The Discovery Health Channel's Mystery Diagnosis episode aired on 21 November, 2009, had an intriguing title: "The Boy Who Never Cried." It featured an infant, Baby Carson, who suffered from an extremely rare disorder called Congenital Insensitivity to Pain with Anhidrosis (CIPA). Children with CIPA feel no pain, nor do they sweat or shed tears. They are highly vulnerable to injuring themselves in ways that would be ordinarily prevented by feeling pain. Often, they have eye-related problems, like infection due to having unfeelingly rubbed the eyes too hard or too frequently or having scratched them during sleep.

CIPA children like Carson often play recklessly, being unafraid of banging into anything. From a child's short-sighted perspective, obliviousness to pain may seem a blessing that grants fearlessness. But from a mature parental perspective, that same obliviousness to pain is seen as a curse that impels foolhardiness. Parents of CIPA children often have one prayer: let our children feel pain.

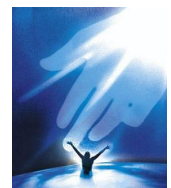


If intellectual maturity can grant us insight into the benefit of pain in this particular case, is it not possible that spiritual maturity can grant us insight into the benefit of pain in general? Such maturity comes by acquiring spiritual education and spiritual experience.



1. Spiritual education, as given in the Vedic scriptures, helps us understand that we are spiritual beings, souls destined for ever-increasing happiness in a loving relationship with God in his eternal abode. Due to imprudent desires, we chose to enjoy separate from him and came to this material world, where everything due to its temporary nature frustrates our quest for permanent happiness.

2. Spiritual experience comes when we chant the holy names of God in devotion and relish the sublime shelter, the supreme joy of remembering him. Then we comprehend that God loves us and wants to give us the best: constant happiness, no suffering. The sufferings of this world are caused not by God, but by our own bad karma. God allows our own due sufferings to come upon us to:



- Protect us from the futile and fatal illusion that we as spiritual beings can be happy in a material setting.
- Provoke us to redirect our desires to the spiritual level where we can reclaim the eternal happiness that is our rightful God-given destiny.

Those of us who have never had the this analysis abstract and impractical. the material level, instead of fruitlessly why not dynamically try to transcend



opportunity for spiritual growth may find But, given that the pains are inevitable at complaining or passively enduring them, them by growing up spiritually?

