



Finding Deeper Faith with Simone Weil

Jim Stump in The Sacred Chain • Sunday December 15, 2024 • Life Together Presenter: Douglas Olena

Red in Tooth and Claw

- “Hurricanes caused pain and suffering, viruses caused disease, cancer destroyed from inside out, and predators with sharp fangs caught their prey and ate them alive.**
- “At best, we have to ask how this kind of creation could be called good; at worst, we have to wonder whether it makes God the author of evil.” 233**

Simone Weil

- **Known as an outsider in the faith, she nonetheless represents an aspect of Christianity from a mystical point of view.**
- **Stump draws on her thought: “God is supreme goodness and created things are not God ... giving created things their own existence has to make them something other than God. It shouldn’t surprise us, then, to find suffering and pain in the created order” 234-5**

Incompleteness not Evil

- Let me riff on a thought. Time according to Stephen Wolfram is the process of passing through all the irreducible complexity in the universe. Terrence Deacon suggests that what we have is not evil, but incompleteness.**
- We are in the process of becoming children of God in reality through practice over time. The process can't be rushed, and we are in the middle of it.**
- His letters ... outline spiritual maturity as an ongoing transformation characterized by a deepening relationship with Christ, moral integrity, and a commitment to love and serve others. (ChatGPT 4o)**

“I suggest we should think of natural evil, Simone Weil’s distance between us and God, as a feature in the necessary process of coming to maturity as children of God.”

— Me today

Seeing this Incompleteness/Evil

- “Weil’s point, though, is that these difficult parts of creation should be seen as signs of God’s love.” 237
- Stump reminds us from Part II TIME “that God didn’t create the world originally as it was ultimately intended to be.” 238
- That and the appearance of a telos, a directionality in biological evolution gives support to this suggestion.

**“God couldn’t create morally
mature beings from scratch
because moral maturity demands
participation in the process.”**

— Stump 238

Weil's Conclusion in Service of Stump's

- “The extreme greatness of Christianity lies in the fact that it does not seek a supernatural remedy for suffering but a supernatural use for it.’**
- “If God simply intervened to eliminate suffering, that would be the same as eliminating our existence. ...**
- “Those who ask why God permits affliction, might as well ask why God created.” 239-40**

“God used pain and suffering to shape us into image bearers so that we might participate in transforming the groaning creation into what it was ultimately intended to be.”

— Stump 240