

## Why?

Clench your fist and shake it in the face of the heavens. Take a full deep breath and then scream it into the cold, heartless sky.

Why? Why?

Sit slumped over with your head in your hands and whisper it, over and over again like a chant. Why? Why? Why?

Gasps it between your sobs.

Why?

The infuriating silence is God's only reply. "Why?" we ask.

And God tells us.... Nothing.

Nothing.

Silence.

I've listened to that silence, that maddening silence. I've listened to it. And writhed in it and hated it and rejected it and spat on it and kicked it in.

But this time, after a long, long, a very long time, I think I began to understand it.

Why?

Could it be that the silence, the nothingness, is itself God's answer? There is no answer because there is no reason why. There is no reason. There is no reason. It was not God's will. This was not meant to be. It was not part of a plan. It just... happened.

And God is silent, not out of cruelty, or spite, or incompetence. God is silent like any other good listener would be. He listens to our pain.

And yes, I do believe he understands it. Personally. From the heart.

After all, his own dear son was brutally murdered was he not? We live in a broken world. Bad things happen. To everyone. And God weeps with those who weep.

## For Reflection

Look at the murders of the babies in Jerusalem, when Herod was after the baby Jesus, Matthew 2 v 13 – 18. The man born blind, John 9. The book of Job. The crying Psalms; 13; 22; 38; 69; etc. Romans 8 v 31 – 39. 2 Corinthians 1 v 3 – 11. Romans 5 v 3 – 5. Philippians 1 v 20 – 26. Luke 13 v 1 – 5.

In the light of these passages, is predestination a reliable Christian theology or not? Does God make everything happen, allow things to happen, know they will happen, be there for us if they happen, or what? How much of what goes on is God's work, Satan's work, the result of our own free will and the choices we or others have made, and how much is purely random?

Consider the suffering of Christ. Isaiah 52 v 13 – 53 v 12.

What truths do you hold on to in suffering? Do they work, ie; do they make sense, do they comfort, do they bring any sense of honest hope in the crisis? If not, why don't you ditch them?

What theories or common words of supposed comfort, have you heard people offer others, that you think are actually really hurtful, wrong, naive or dishonest?

