

**WHY**  
**THE PAIN AND SORROW**

**Heirmonk Benedict  
of Holy Mount Athos**

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## Contents

<b>Part</b>	<b>I 9</b>
The Panhuman problem	
Origin	11
The pain of the just	12
The Character of Sorrow	
a) Pedagogical character	14
(b) Proof of love towards God	17
(c) Causes for spiritual progress.	19
d) They reinstate us to God	20
e) It is a gift of love, from God	21
(f) They constitute a form of humbleness	22
(g) They urge us towards virtue	23
(h) They vanish our sins	25
(i) "The stigmata"	26
(j) Its richness and auxiliary	27
Death	28
The death of an infant	31

## **Part II. FACING THE PAIN AND SORROW**

In General	38
The Final Response	41
The certainty	41
Summary	43
"Footprints"	44

**Part I.**

**WHY THE PAIN AND SORROW**





## The pan-human problem

The experience of human life reveals to us throughout its life span the whole meaning and tragicness of pain as well as the feeling of distress.

Of course, in our days the modern human-being tends to ignore the reason why pain is caused to us and the meaning it conveys for our redemption. For this reason, we see that a person nowadays to avoid in any way possible the idea of agony tends to be subjected to a life-form of false illusions, comforts, full of life's riches and pleasures, as well as artificial wonders with false promised lands, which tend to be created by various elements such as hallucinogenic drugs and narcotics.

Yet, pain and sorrow is a hard reality of human life and within a person's history. It is found in the life of a faithful person who is shown to be in a constant battle in pledge for his or her salvation that tends to be present throughout their spiritual life. "*For those who seek comfort, do not have the grace of God,*" says Abba Isaac the Syrian. Moreover, he states elsewhere in his writings "*My brother, the journey of a faithful Christian is a daily*



*bearing of a cross*". Without pain in our existence, we become an anima-tion of an animalistic life. What is meant by this is that without pain and sorrow into our lives we tend to be like wildings of nature, feeling painless and without a purpose. The pain is the crucifixion that each of us bares, it is the path and the testament of our Lord Jesus Christ that wants us to be friends and not slaves to his will, wanting us to be free and not suppressed.

\* \* \*

Pain is known as a universal issue. It is a problem and a simultaneously mystery which causes hardship and agony to every person that comes into this world. Faced with this painful reality throughout the ages, humanity has confronted this issue with a feeling of wonder and fear. With inquiries and wondering, why is a person a lifelong pilgrim of pain and sorrow, why has this uninvited guest channeled our hearts and torments our bodies and minds? The more a person investigates or looks into the problem of his or her pain, the more they tend to distance themselves from its solution. Someone cannot explain its presence in their life. The only achievement that a person has come to realize is that there is no person throughout their life which has not been through the phase of agony and tribulation. It's written by 'St. John the

Chrysostom *“As it’s for a person not to be immortal, due to being human, just for that reason he could not be without sorrow. In general, one cannot find a person without sorrow and sadness in their lives; in some individuals you find a great deal of agony in others you find less”*.