

SOE13: The goal of religion

Post by “Elayne” of December 30, 2019 at 1:43 PM

Oscar, I don't generically try to minimize harm. I have a strong degree of empathy, such that I cover my eyes in violent movie scenes because I find it painful. I have a pain in my corresponding body part when I witness another person being injured.

But it's completely contextual. If someone tried to hurt one of my kids, and my only route of defense was to harm the aggressor, I'd do that in a flash. I wouldn't even stop to think. The total result of my action would be the pleasure of saving my child from harm, and the pleasure isn't based on reason but on direct, spontaneous interaction with reality.

It's unlikely I would use premeditated pain more than essential for defense, but that's only bc of how I am "wired".

If someone got pleasure from hurting others, which happens, it's natural for the targets of harm to join forces against the aggressor to restrain them in some way. In that case, if the aggressive person could think through the results of action, they could decide if it was wiser for their pleasure to aggress or to refrain and get pleasure another way. It might not always come out in favor of nonaggression. This, I think, is why Epicurus said laws are for the protection of the wise.

The Christian version is in loving everyone, even your enemies, turning the other cheek, forgiving indefinitely, and leaving judgment/ consequences to a supernatural idea. Of course it doesn't get carried out much in practice, and thank goodness for that, because biologically speaking we will likely always have intra-species predators, and if we want to enjoy life, it's wise to treat them differently.