

If God Is So Good Why Does He Allow Suffering???



“If God is so good why does He allow suffering”?

As one person put the question: “If God is all powerful, He must have the ability to stop evil and suffering if that is His desire. And, if God is all good, it seems He would want to. Yet He doesn’t stop it and evil and suffering persist. Why?”

Well, this is a legitimate question and one that deserves an answer. And that answer is: “SIN.” It started with the story of Adam and Eve. The first man and woman were created by God and given a perfect place to live and enjoy full and perfect meaning in their lives. But the serpent, Lucifer, (the fallen angel) tempted Eve (with Adam and every one of us since that time, willingly and quickly following suite) with the three biggest lies in the history of mankind. These lies were: #1 The suggestion to Eve that she re-consider *if God had really said that?* (thus giving Eve a false reason to question and doubt God) #2 Then Lucifer, the serpent, told her to take and eat of the seemingly beautiful fruit of “*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*” (which God had beforehand told her and Adam not to eat of, because if they did, they would surely die) but Lucifer convinced her to go ahead and eat, because by doing so, she would gain the knowledge of good and evil and thus *become like God*. Finally, in lie #3 he told her: “*you shall not surely die.*”

Well, here we are on earth with our sin, the sin of others and death, which we so clearly see all around us. Even the earth itself became subject to decay, entropy and chaos, which in scientific terms is “the second law of thermodynamics” which caused even the earth to groan with natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis. The Bible says it this way: “*For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time*” (Romans 8:22).

The prophet Habakkuk tells us the following about God, and we need to understand the seriousness of what he acknowledges: “*Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing....*” (Hab. 1:13) So, because of our sin (iniquity) we are separated from God and are barred from entering back into His presence due to the self-contamination of our sin.

With that, I think it is appropriate to consider suffering in light of free will. God could have designed us or programed us to always say “yes” to Him as well as to never sin against our fellow man, but that would go against His very essence, which is love. A programed machine is simply a programed machine and never a truly free entity capable of love. The Bible tells us that God’s ways are beyond finding out, yet by faith in what God has revealed to us through the Bible and His creation we can be confident that He is working things out for our good in this world and even

more so for the world to come. Taking away man's free will, or his ability to sin or not, would also remove his ability to love, as love is only possible when freedom of choice is present. In other words, a world with no freedom to choose, is a world with no love.

Certainly, no one likes to suffer, but the apostle Paul who suffered greatly in this life helps us understand suffering in the perspective of eternity. *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us (Romans 8:18)*. Suffering may even be of use on our journey of transformation.

Below is a short analogy that may make it easier to understand how a God of Love is temporarily allowing the sin and suffering we see in this world today.

A man, at the conclusion of a first date with a certain girl, asked her to marry him. She immediately said "NO" to his request. The man not liking her answer overpowered her, tied her up, and took her for his wife. That of course is not how love works. Without freedom to choose there could be no such thing as love.

The good news, however, is that God has provided a second chance for all who are willing to repent of their sin and desire to follow Him in the way He intended and knows is best for us. The clear way back to God, is not by our own good deeds or living a pretty good life, but by trusting in the 100% worthy cleansing sacrifice for our sin by His only begotten and sinless son (Jesus Christ). You probably already know this common yet profound Bible verse. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16)*. This verse clearly explains the only requirement for salvation and a restored relationship with God for now and for eternity.

The ultimate question you must ask, and answer is: Will you continue to listen to Satan and insist on trying to be "a little god", doing life your way as Lucifer suggested to Eve, or will you let God be the God of His creation, with you happily functioning in the way He intended? Since God has given you the freedom to choose your own path, it is up to you to decide if you want to continue to travel on your own self-directed path or on God's path in this life and for eternity. *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him (1 John 4:16)*. Here is how you can stay on that narrow path: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths (Prov. 3:5-6)*.

It is important to understand that your sin and the sin of us all has separated us from God, and that this life you have been given is in something like a place between Heaven and Hell, a testing ground if you will. It is a place and time designed by God where we can receive the righteousness of Christ we need through faith in the undeserved but perfect sacrificial gift on God's part. The apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:4-5, *"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our sins—it is by grace you have been saved"*. Jesus Christ is God's gift to mankind of a second chance at being reunited with Him for eternity. Remember that the only thing required for salvation is that you repent (desire to turn with God's help from the wrong ways you have been directing your life) and then with grateful hearts and hands humbly accept the gift of God's sinless ransomed Son as the full payment for your personal sins as well as your inherited sin nature.

From the Bible we also learn that God, by His very nature, is a God of love and that Heaven is a place of love where no sin, suffering or pain exists. This is what is being worked out now for all who desire that kind of life and who believe that Jesus paid the full penalty for their sin, as well as to make a Heaven with you in it one day even possible. What a glorious end to a very difficult story. *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev. 21:4)*.

For the full story get a Bible and read it. Also, some recommended books on the subject are: *Why Does God Allow Evil?* by Clay Jones, *Is God To Blame* by Gregory A. Boyd, *If God, Why Evil* by Norman Geisler, *God Forsaken* by Dinesh D'Souza, and *"The Problem of Pain"* by C.S. Lewis. All available at Amazon.com and other bookstores. If you don't have time to read a book, check out this short YouTube interview by John Ankerberg with Norman Geisler <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9EUe8LF3AU>

If you are already a Christian **Please Pass this On** to someone who needs to hear its message. Have you been redeemed by the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross (the just for the unjust) to pay your sin debt? Well, if you have, the Bible says: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so"... (Psalm 107:2) For more free resources like this including "God's Plan of Salvation For Man", available in 19 common languages visit: www.freebibletracts.org