



WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

SERIES: The God Questions

Sunday, May 1, 2022

THE SIDE EFFECTS OF LIFE

John 16:33 (NIV) *"In this world you will have trouble."*

1 Corinthians 13:12 (NLT) *"Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God knows me now."*

POINTS OF LIGHT: Through the Fog of Suffering and Pain

LIGHT #1 - God is not the CREATOR of evil and suffering.

Genesis 1:31 (NASB) *God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.*

Two Kinds of Evil

- **MORAL** evil.

Romans 3:23 (CEV) *"All of us have sinned. All of us have fallen short of the glory of God."*

- **NATURAL** evil.

Romans 8:22 (TEV) *"For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain like the pain of childbirth."*

LIGHT #2 - Although suffering is not good, God can use it to ACCOMPLISH good.

How does this happen?

1. God uses pain to **DRAW** people toward Jesus.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (TLB) *"For God sometimes uses sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek eternal life. We should never regret His sending it."*

2. God uses pain to **SHARPEN** our character, to help His children become more like Christ.

Romans 5:3 (ESV) *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope...*

Hebrews 5:8 (TEV) *“Even though He was God’s Son He learned to be obedient because of His sufferings.”*

3. God uses pain to lovingly **DISCIPLINE** His children for their own good so they might learn the right path to take.

Hebrews 12:10 (NLT) *For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in His holiness. ¹¹ No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening - it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.*

Romans 8:28 (NASB) *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Genesis 50:20 (NIV) *“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”*

LIGHT #3 - The day is COMING when suffering will cease and evil will be judged.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV) *The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

LIGHT #4 - Our suffering will pale in COMPARISON to what God has in store for His followers.

2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV) *“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”*

Romans 8:18 (NIV) *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

1 Corinthians 2:9 (NLT) *“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him.”*

LIGHT #5 - We CHOOSE whether to turn bitter or turn to God for peace and courage.

John 16:33 (NASB) *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation but take courage. I have overcome the world.”*

The ultimate answer of God to this question of suffering is not an **EXPLANATION**, it is the **INCARNATION** – Jesus Christ fully God and fully man, coming in to our experience to live and die for us.

Psalms 34:18 (NIV) *“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”*