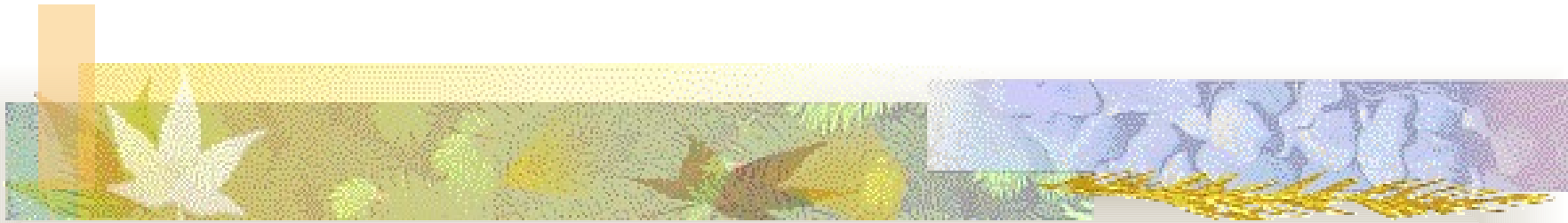


Why Is There So Much Pain and Suffering?



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Pain and Suffering

- Pain & Suffering – The Issues
- Atheist/Evolutionist’s View of History and God
- The Biblical View of History and God
- The Role of Man’s Free Will
- The Nature of Death and Suffering
- God’s Purposes In Our Suffering
- Is God Doing Anything About Death & Suffering?
- Our Source of Hope



Pain & Suffering: The Issues



Pain/Suffering/Death is Everywhere

- We see pain, suffering and death all around us
- Holocaust wipes out 6 million Jews during WWII
- September 11, 2001 attack on World Trade Center resulted in the death of 3000
- Tsunami kills more than 250,000 in Dec. 2004
- 2 million Sudanese Christians have been martyred for their faith
- Earthquakes, floods, accidents cause thousands of deaths
- Earthquake in Haiti kills more than 150,000 in Jan. 2010
- Human suffering, toothaches to broken limbs and cancer
- Suffering caused by man, natural disasters, & disease



God is All-Powerful & All-Loving

- How can an all-powerful, all-loving God allow pain, suffering and evil?
 - People ask why such things occur
 - Why such death and suffering if a loving God is in control?
 - Atheists use the pervasiveness of suffering to discredit a ‘loving God’
- Why doesn’t God use His power to stop the evil, suffering, pain, and death?

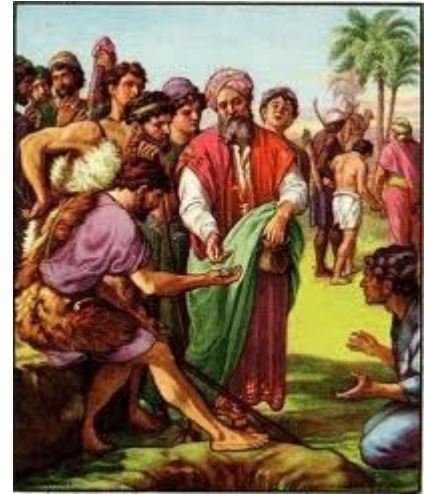


Questions People Ask

- What is evil?
- Where did evil come from?
- What is the purpose of evil?
- Does there have to be so much evil?
- Couldn't God make a world without evil?
 - Could have not created anything
 - Could have created a world without free creatures
 - Could have created free creatures that would not sin
 - Could have saved all sinners in the end despite their sin
- Then why did God choose this world?

OT Examples of Suffering

- **Gen. 3:17**, “ ... cursed is the ground because of you; ... ”
- **Gen. 50:20**, Joseph sold into slavery – “ ... God meant it for good ... ”
- **Judges 16:28**, Samson cries out “ ... please strengthen me only this once ... ”
- **Est. 4:14**, Queen Esther “ ... for such a time as this? ”



More OT Examples of Suffering

- **Job 23:10**, “ ... I shall come out as gold,”
 - Who can forget the sufferings of Job, a just and upright man?
- **Ps. 40:12**, David, “For evils have encompassed me without number; ...”
- **Jer. 15:18**, “Why is my pain unceasing, ..., refusing to be healed?”



“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” **C. S. Lewis**

NT Examples of Suffering

- **Rom. 8:22**, “ ... the whole creation has been groaning together ... ”
- **2 Cor. 12:7-9**, “ ... a thorn was given me [Paul] in the flesh ... ”
- **Mark 10:45; Is. 53:5**, “ ... to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- **John 9:2**, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”
- God’s purposes are sometimes beyond our understanding

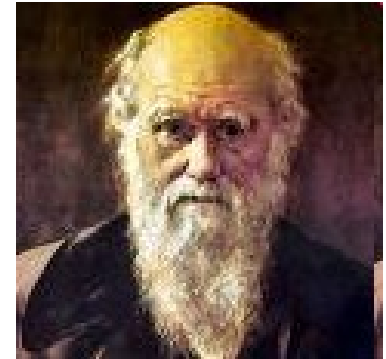




How Does the World Deal With Death and Suffering?

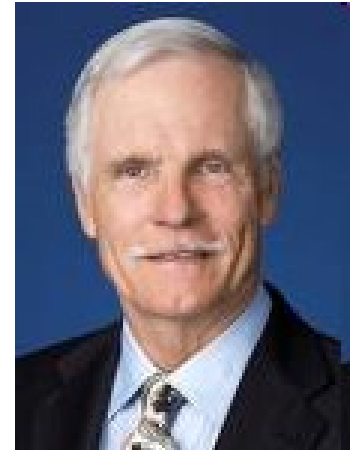
Darwin Rejected Christianity

- Charles Darwin rejected Christianity after the death of his daughter
 - Annie's cruel death destroyed his belief in a moral, just universe
 - This period was the death knell for his Christianity
 - Darwin could not reconcile belief in God with the death and suffering he observed around him
 - His book "On The Origin of Species" was really a history of suffering and death
 - Darwin considered death a permanent part of the world



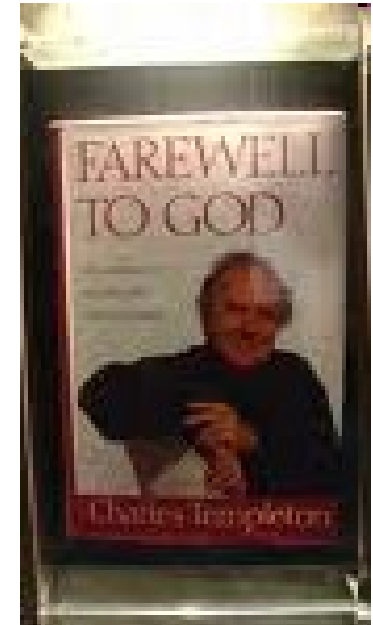
Ted Turner Lost His Faith

- Billionaire Ted Turner lost his faith after his sister died
 - The NY Times wrote “Turner is a strident non-believer, having lost his faith after his sister ... died of a painful disease”
 - “I was taught that God was love and God was powerful,” Turner said, “And I couldn’t understand how someone so innocent should be made or allowed to suffer so.”



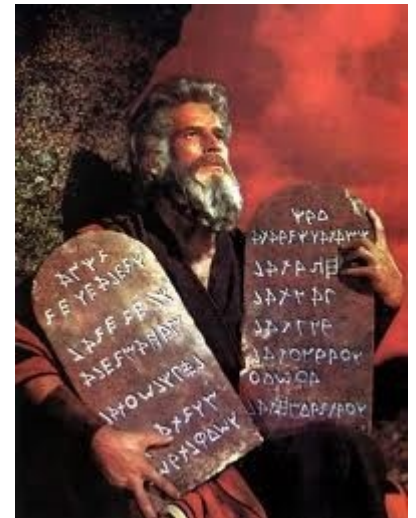
Templeton Slid Into Unbelief

- Former well-known evangelist, Charles Templeton
 - Published a book in 1996 “Farewell to God”
 - Describes his slide into unbelief and rejection of Christianity
 - Once listed ‘best used of God’ by National Assoc. of Evangelicals
 - Geneticists say it was nonsensical to believe that sin is ‘the reason for all the crime, poverty, suffering, and general wickedness in the world’
 - Could not reconcile an earth full of death, disease and suffering with the loving God of the Bible



Does An Atheist Have a Case?

- For the atheist to complain that the Christian God is “evil”, he must provide a standard of good and evil by which to judge Him
- Where do we find an objective standard of right and wrong?
- A moral law implies a moral law giver



Answering The Atheist

- If the same chemical laws cause brain waves that determine ideas, how are Mother Teresa's actions better than Hitler's?
- Christians accept an objective standard of morality that is above that of individual humans
- It is set by an objective and transcendent moral Lawgiver who is our Creator





The Atheist/Evolutionist View of History and God

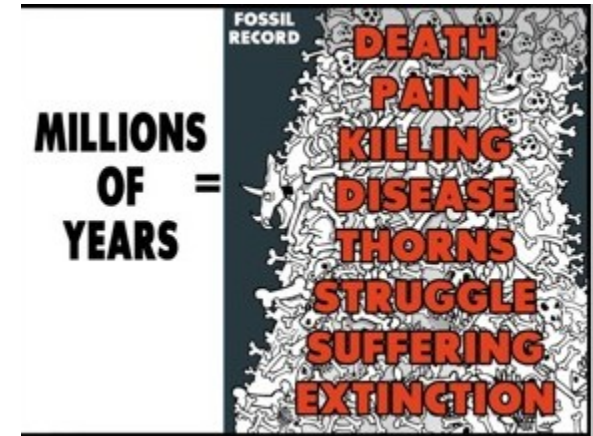


Atheists' View of History

- Atheists/Evolutionists Have a Wrong View of History
- Belief in evolution and/or millions of years of history necessitates that death has been a part of history since life first appeared on this planet
- See history as full of death, disease and suffering

Time and Death

- Carl Sagan, “The secrets of evolution are time and death”
- According to this view:
 - Death, suffering and disease over millions of years led up to man
 - Death, suffering and disease exist today
 - Death, suffering and disease will continue into the future
- Death is a permanent part of history
- Death is our ‘ally’ in the ‘creation’ of life





Implications About Suffering *

- This world has always been a deadly place
- Who caused the cancer, disease and violence represented by the fossil record?
- God called everything He had made “very good”, **Gen. 1:31**
- **Rom. 3:23**, death is the penalty for sin
- How can all things be ‘restored’ to a state with no death, pain or tears in the future [**Rev. 21:4**] if there never was a time free of death and suffering?

* From atheist perspective



The Biblical View of History and God



Bible's View of History & God *

- God's Word has much to say about pain, suffering, death, evil
- **Gen. 1:31**, “ ... and God saw that it was very good.”
- **Gen. 1:29-30**, People and animals ate plants, not other animals
- No violence or pain in this ‘very good’ world
- Adam's rebellion brought sin and death into this world
- **Rom. 3:23**, Death is the result of sin

* Bible gives the right view



Death Is The Result of Sin

- God had warned Adam that He would judge sin with death:
 - **Gen. 2:17**, “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
- God gave us a taste of life without Him, a world full of death and suffering
 - **Rom. 8:20**, “For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope”
 - **Rom. 8:22**, “For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now”



Implications About Suffering *

- Explained by the Genesis account of the Fall
- We see a fallen, cursed world because of the Fall
- From the Bible's perspective of history, death is an enemy, not an ally
- **1 Cor. 15:26**, "The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."
- Sin, pain, suffering and death were not part of God's original creation
- **Rom. 3:23**, Death/suffering is the penalty for sin

* From the Christian's perspective

Implications – 2

- Adam wanted to decide truth for himself, independent of God
- Pain and suffering is a result of the existence of sin
- Fall of the entire human race and the curse on all creation
- Sin entered the world that was once a paradise
- Adam was the head of the human race





Implications – 3

- We are all descendants of Adam
- We all sinned in Adam
- **Rom. 5:12**, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned”
- Because God is holy and just, there had to be a penalty for rebellion



God Upholds Things

- In the OT, we see what the world is like when God does “uphold” things
- **Deut. 29:5**, “And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.”
- See also **Neh. 9:21**, “Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness; They lacked nothing; ... “
 - God upheld their clothes, shoes and feet miraculously
- **Dan. 3:25**, the Creator upheld the bodies and clothing of Daniel’s three friends in the midst of fire – nothing could be hurt or destroyed



God Removed His Sustenance

- God has removed His Sustaining Power *
- **Rom. 8:22**, the whole of creation is groaning and travailing in birth pangs
- Everything is running down because of sin
- God has given us a taste of life without Him – a world full of violence, death, suffering and disease
- **Col. 1:16-17**, tells us that all things are held together, right now, by the power of the Creator
- God is allowing us to experience what we wanted – life without God, **Rom. 1:18-32**

* Temporarily



Things Are Decaying

- We see death, suffering, disease – all as a result of God’s judgment against sin
- We are getting a taste of life without God
- Specific evil acts are also the result of individual sin
- An earthquake cannot be blamed on any individual’s sin today, but is the result of sin in general



The World Will Be Restored

- The world will one day be restored to a state in which it once was
 - **Acts 3:21**, “whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.”
- Wolves and lambs, lions and calves, will dwell peacefully together
 - **Is. 11:6-9**, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . .”



The Role of Man's Free Will

Man Has A Free Will

- Why didn't God make us so we couldn't sin?
- If He had made us so that we could not sin, we would no longer be human beings, but puppets on a string
- God created man with a free will
- There are implications of a free will



The Risky Gift of a Free Will

- Evil is a necessary part of free will
 - Otherwise we would be robots
 - We would have ceased to be human
 - Free will resulted in the Fall
- Men make choices
 - Choices can be bad



Free Will Risk – 2

- Much of the suffering in the world can be traced directly to the evil choices men and women make, e.g.
 - Bank robber committing murder
 - Crooked decisions made in government or business may bring deprivation and suffering to many people
 - Results of natural disasters compounded by refusing to heed warnings



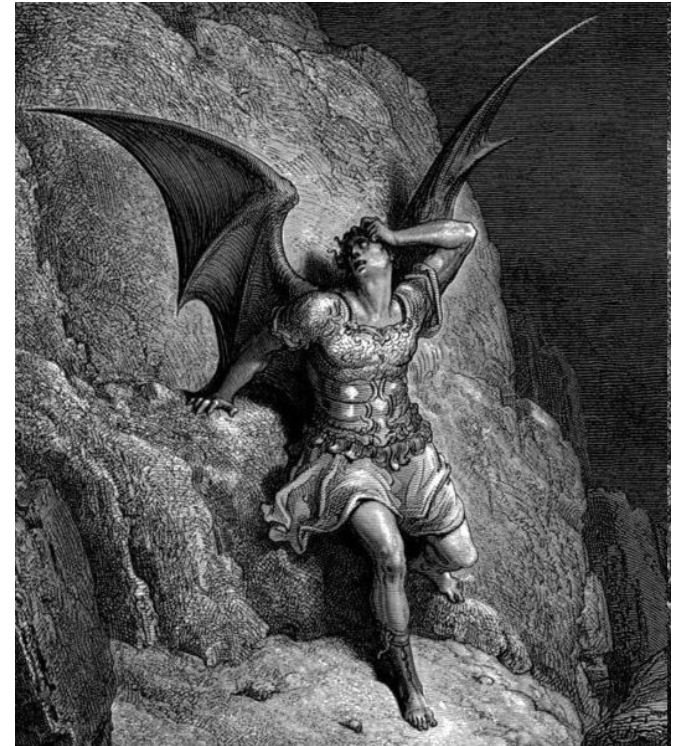


Free Will Risk – 3

- Some, but not all, suffering is allowed by God as judgment and punishment
 - God allows suffering with a view to restoration of a person/people and character formation
 - **Heb. 12:7-8,11**, “you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.”
 - Endure chastening as a legitimate son

Free Will Risk – 4

- God has a vengeful and implacable enemy in Satan
 - Satan was defeated at the cross but Satan is free to work his evil deeds until the final judgment
 - Satan is a force stronger than human beings



Free Will Risk – 5

- God Himself is the great sufferer and has fully met the problem of evil in the gift of His own Son at infinite cost and suffering to Himself
 - Our sins are forgiven because of His sacrifice,
 - **Mark 15:25**, “Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.”





The Nature of Death and Suffering



Greatest Test of Faith

- To believe that God is good
- God has clearly revealed His character and demonstrated it to us in the cross
 - **Rom. 8:32**, “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”
- God never asks us to understand, but just to trust Him
 - **Rom. 8:28**, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”



Testing Our Faith

- **Hab. 3:17-18**, “Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls -- Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”
- **1 Cor. 10:13**, “God will not give you more than you can bear ...”



God Could Have Stamped Out Evil

- A time is coming when God will stamp out evil in the world
- In the meantime, God's love and grace prevail
- His offer of mercy and pardon is still open to everyone
- If God removed all evil today, who of us would still be here?
- **Lam. 3:22**, "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail."



Does The Devil Exist?

- The Devil appears in many forms
– an angel of light, a roaring lion
- God allowed Satan to cause Job to suffer, **Job 1:6-12**
- Jesus described the destruction of a farmer's harvest in **Matt. 13:28**,
“An enemy has done this.”
- Why does God not kill the Devil?
- Then why does God not kill us,
who also do evil every day!



Judgment Is Preceded By Warning

- The OT and NT are filled with God's warnings and pleadings
- **Gen. 6:3**, “ ... yet his days shall be 120 years.”
 - Noah preached for 120 years
- **Ezek. 33:11**, “ ... I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?”
 - See also **Ezek. 18:23**
- God is long suffering (patient)



More Warnings

- **Matt. 23:37**, Jesus wept over Jerusalem: “ ... How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!”
- **Gal. 6:7**, “ ... for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”
- **2 Pet. 3:9**, “ ... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
- Think of all the misery that has its origin in the wrongdoing of human beings
- God is holy and merciful but cannot let sin go unpunished



God's Ultimate Solution

- God sent His Son to die on the cross on our behalf
- No one has the full answer on the origin of evil
- **Deut. 29:29**, “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and our children forever.”
- We should be thankful we do not get what we deserve!

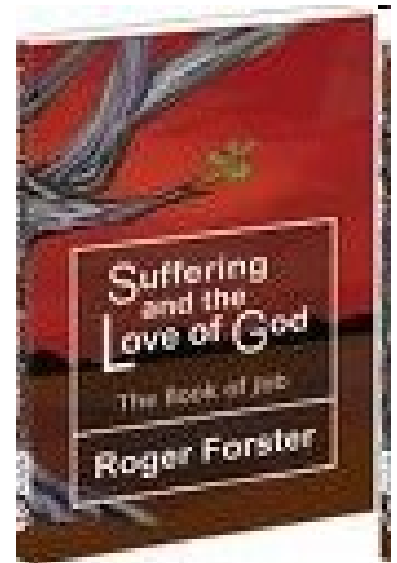


What About “Senseless” Suffering?

- What about specific cases of “senseless” suffering?
- Suffering is part of the ‘big picture’ involving sin
- Suffering can be:
 - The direct result of human sin
 - By the deliberate sinful acts of others
 - By the social policies of tyrannical dictators and oppressive governments
 - By natural disasters or accidents
- Individual cases of suffering are not always correlated with particular sins of individuals

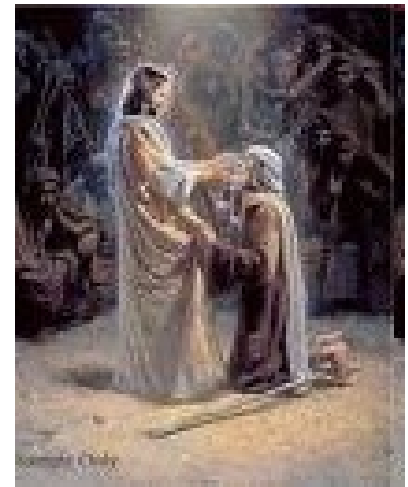
God Allowed Job's Suffering

- **Job 1:1**, “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil.”
 - Suffered intensely
 - Lost all of his children, servants and possessions in one day
 - Struck by a painful illness
 - The Lord never told Job the specific reasons for his suffering, but God had His reasons
 - God demanded that Job not question the decisions of his Maker



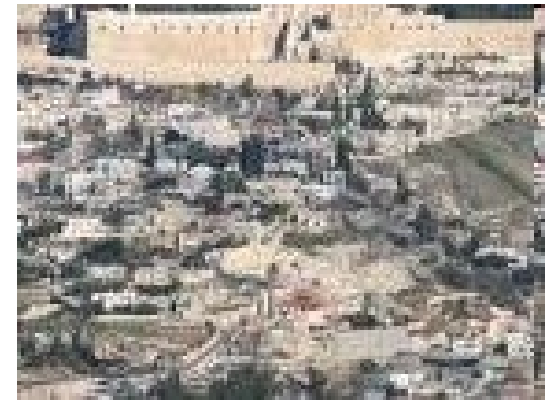
Jesus & The Blind Man

- Jesus was asked why a man was born blind
 - **John 9:1-7**, “Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. . . .”
 - His disciples asked Him whether his blindness was due to:
 - 1) his own sin, or
 - 2) the sin of his parents
 - Jesus explained that neither was the case
- The man was born blind so that God could demonstrate His power when Jesus healed him



Jesus & The Tower of Siloam

- **Luke 13:4-5**, "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."
- Compare this with the World Trade Center tragedy on September 11, 2001





The Lesson of Tower of Siloam

- Why did 18 Jews die tragically when the tower of Siloam collapsed?
- Suffering in our lives is not always related to our personal sin
- But Jesus went on to say – unless you repent, you will all likewise die
- No one is innocent
- All of us are sinners and therefore condemned to die

The Rich Man & Lazarus

- The account of the rich man and Lazarus is a key to understanding suffering
- God's past judgments have included almost every type of suffering imaginable
- **Luke 16:19-31**, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day."
 - Jesus gives the key to understanding the apparent injustices of this world
 - The story of a faithful beggar (Lazarus) who sat at a wicked rich man's gate
 - Lazarus, covered with sores, ate table scraps



The Lesson of the Parable

- There is an eternal world to come, where God will make all things right
- In death they were separated by a chasm
- The rich man wanted to warn his five brothers by sending Lazarus to them
- **Luke 16:31**, “But He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead’”





Men Choose Hell

- **John 3:18**, “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
- **John 3:36**, “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
- **John 12:48**, “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”
- **Luke 10:16**, “He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”



God's Purposes In Our Suffering



Paul & Suffering

- **2 Cor. 12:7-11**, the Apostle Paul found reasons to ‘glory in my infirmities’
- Paul suffered shipwrecks, torture, beatings, imprisonment, stoning, etc.
- Christ’s Resurrection was the key to his making sense of his suffering
- **1 Cor. 15:14, 19**, without the Resurrection, ‘then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, ... and we are of all men most miserable’



Paul's Experience of Suffering

- **2 Cor. 4:7-11, 16-18** – perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; ...
- **2 Cor. 11:23-28** – imprisoned, beaten, stoned, imperiled, ...
- **Heb. 11:32-40** – recounting the trials of the OT saints – who obtained a good testimony through faith
- Paul regarded these as opportunities
- Paul had a deep concern for the churches



Believers and Suffering

- Believers fail to anticipate trials
 - Jesus suffered trials & promised us trials
 - **John 16:33**, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”
 - The Apostles suffered trials
- Believers have a fear of trials
 - **1 Cor. 10:13**, “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God [is] faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear [it].”
 - God will provide a means of escape

Why We Face Trials

- To glorify God, **Dan. 3:16-18, 24-25**
 - The three friends of Daniel saved from the hot furnace
- Discipline for known sin:
 - **Heb. 12:5-11** – chastening of children
 - **James 4:17** – failing to do good
 - **Rom. 14:23** – without faith
 - **1 John 1:9** – confessing sins
- To prevent us from falling into sin:
 - **1 Pet. 4:1-2** – suffered in the flesh





Why We Face Trials – 2

- To keep us from pride, e.g. Paul by his “thorn in the flesh”, **2 Cor. 12:7-10**
- To build faith
 - **1 Pet. 1:6-7** – faith more precious than gold
- To cause growth
 - **Rom. 5:3-5** – perseverance -> character -> hope
- To teach obedience and discipline
 - **Acts 9:15-16** – suffer for My name’s sake
 - **Phil. 4:11-13** – “ ... I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”



Why We Face Trials – 3

- To equip us to comfort others
 - **2 Cor. 1:3-4** – comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God
- To prove the reality of Christ in us
 - **2 Cor. 4:7-11** – “ ... that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”
- For testimony to the angels:
 - **Job 1:8** – Job, a blameless and upright man
 - **Eph. 3:8-11** – made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places
 - **1 Pet. 1:12** – things which angels desire to look into



Understanding Suffering

- We may not see the reasons for some suffering in this life
- It can test our faith and/or refocus our hope
- **Rom. 5:3-4**, “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”
- Suffering is character-building for the believer



Practical Reasons For The Suffering of God's Children

#1. Suffering can 'perfect us', or make us mature in the image of Christ

- **Job 23:10**, "But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold."
- **2 Cor. 12:7-10**, "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, ... and He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. ... For when I am weak, then I am strong.'"



More Reasons For Suffering

- **Heb. 5:8-9**, “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”
- #2.** Suffering can help some to come to know Christ
- #3.** Suffering can make us more able to comfort others who suffer



God's Purposes Are Beyond Us

- God's purposes are sometimes beyond our understanding
- **Is. 55:8-9**, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.’”
- **Rom. 11:33**, “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!”



God's Purposes & Job

- **Job 42:1-3**, “Then Job answered the LORD and said: I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose *of Yours* can be withheld from You. *You asked*, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; *You said*, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.”



God's Purposes – Summary

- The Bible tells us how and why evil came about
- The Bible does not tell us why God allowed it to happen
- We do know that God is all-wise and all-knowing and that He has reasons for allowing things to happen that are beyond our comprehension



What Is God Doing About Death and Suffering?



Is God Doing Anything?

- What is God doing about death and suffering?
 - God has already done everything you would want a loving God to do, and infinitely more!
- #1. The Son of God became a man and endured both suffering and a horrible death on the cross on man's behalf
- Unless God had intervened, Adam's sin would have condemned us to spend an eternity of suffering and separation from Him



Christ Died For Us

- Unless God had intervened, ...
- **Lev. 17:11**, “The life of the flesh is in the blood”
– blood represents life
- **Heb. 9:22**, “Without the shedding of blood there is no remission [of sins]”
- Since we are creatures of flesh and blood, the only way to pay the penalty for our sin is if blood is shed to take away our sin
- In the OT, a blood sacrifice was required because of our sin



Christ Covered Our Sins

- Animal blood could only temporarily cover our sin, but it could not take it away
- Jesus Christ stepped into history,
John 1:1-14
- He became the “last Adam”, **1 Cor. 15:45**
- He was a perfect man, one without sin,
Heb. 4:15
- The first Adam’s sin was paid for by the last Adam’s sacrifice



Christ Rose From The Grave

- #2.** The Son of God rose from the grave so that He could provide for eternal life for all who believe
- **John 3:16**, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
 - Christ’s resurrection showed that He had ultimate power over death
 - He can now give eternal life to anyone who receives it by faith



Christ Died, Was Buried & Rose

- **John 1:12**, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”
- **Eph. 2:8-9**, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
- **1 Cor. 15:3-4**, “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,”
 - Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures



Christ Sympathizes With Us

#3. The Son of God sympathizes with our sorrows

- Christ's suffering and death mean that God Himself can personally empathize with our suffering – because Christ experienced it
- No pain or suffering has ever come to us that has not first passed through the heart and hand of God
- **Is. 53:3**, “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.”



Christ Understands

- **Heb. 2:18**, “Because He himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.”
- **Heb. 4:15-16**, “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
- Christ understands our suffering



How Long Will This Go On?

- How long will this suffering and death go on?
 - We need to understand God's perspective of time
 - God dwells in eternity
 - He is preparing His people to spend eternity with Him
- **Rom. 8:18**, “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.”
- **Heb. 12:2**, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”



Our Source of Hope



The Christian's Hope

- The hope of a resurrection is the key to understanding our suffering
- Bertrand Russell said that no one could sit by the bed of a child with a terminal disease and believe in a loving God
 - A minister challenged Russell to explain what he could offer such a child
 - An atheist could only say “Sorry, you had your chance; this is the end for you”
- The Christian has hope that this life is not the end

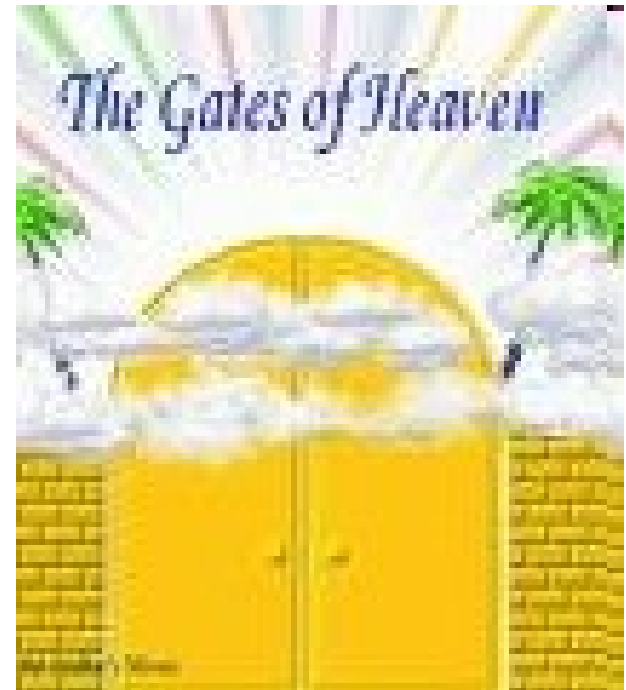


God Has Prepared An Eternal Home

- God has prepared an eternal home where there will be no more death or suffering
- We who believe have a wonderful hope
- We will spend eternity with the Lord in a place where there will be no more death
- **Rev. 21:4**, "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."

Our Eternal Home

- Pain and suffering will be eradicated in the new heavens and the earth
- Death opens the way to Heaven
- **Ps. 116:15**, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”





Our Source of Hope

- The Cross of Christ is the believer's foundation for the hope and faith needed to endure and overcome trials
- Scripture does not guarantee a trial-free life
- **Job 1:1**, “Job who was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.”
- **Rom. 8:37**, Christians are given the hopeful promise of an overcoming life through the Cross of Christ



Victory Over Sin and Death

- **Heb. 12:1-2**, “and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross ... ”
 - The key to enduring life’s trials and ‘winning the race’ is faith fixed on the crucified Savior
- **Col. 2:14**, “ ... And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”
 - Paul declares that the Cross is the believer’s source of victory over sin and death



Our Victory in Christ

- **1 Cor. 15:21-22**, “For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.”
- The Bible tells us how and why evil came about
- The Bible does not tell us why God allowed it to happen
- We do know that God is all-wise and all-knowing and that He has reasons for allowing things to happen that are beyond our comprehension



In Conclusion

- We see the biblical view of pain and suffering
 - The role of man's free will
 - The nature of pain and suffering
 - God's purposes in our suffering
 - What God is doing about death and suffering
 - God's promise and our hope for the future
- May God grant us the strength to endure life's trials and tribulations today