



HOW CAN A GOOD GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

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"Either God wants to abolish evil, and cannot; or He can but does not want to. If He wants to, but cannot, He is impotent. If He can, and does not want to, He is wicked. But, if God can and wants to abolish evil, then how come evil is in the world?"

~ Epicurus

1. Was suffering part of God's _____?

Revelation 21:3-5a NLT *"I heard a loud shout from the throne saying, 'Look! God's home is now among His people! He will live with them and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever!' and the one sitting on the throne said 'Look, I am making everything new!'"*

"And free will is what has made evil possible. Why then did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having. A world of automata, of creatures that worked like machines, would hardly be worth creating." ~ C.S. Lewis

2. Does God truly _____ about our experience of suffering? If so, why doesn't He do more to _____?

Philippians 2:6-8 NLT *"Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared, in human form He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on the cross."*

"If we again ask the questions, 'why does God allow evil and suffering to continue?' and we look at the cross of Christ, we still do not know what the answer is. However, we now know what the answer isn't. It can't be that He doesn't love us. It can't be that He is indifferent or detached from our condition. God takes our misery and suffering so seriously that He was willing to take it on Himself." ~ Tim Keller

Living in the Time In-Between

...God never wastes _____

...God always has the final _____

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NLT *"That is why we never give up! Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day! Our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather we fix our gaze on the things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone but the things we cannot see will last forever."*

"They say of some temporal suffering, 'No future bliss can make up for it,' not knowing that Heaven, once attained, will work backwards and turn even that agony into glory." ~ C.S. Lewis

"This is the great defeat of suffering – The Biblical view of Resurrection – not a future that is just consolation for the life we never had but a Restoration of the life you always wanted." ~ Tim Keller

Further Resources

- Disappointment with God – Philip Yancey
- Where is God when it Hurts? – Philip Yancey
- The Case for Faith – Lee Strobel
- The Reason for God – Tim Keller