

Why Does God Allow Suffering

BY DAVID POSEY

I. Suffering and evil are the inevitable products of freedom.

- Think about it: we could be insulated from the evil acts of others if we were locked in a room, but is that what we want? Do we consider parents who lock their kids in a basement “for their protection” good parents?
- God chose to give us our freedom when he created us. The upside of that freedom is that when we choose to honor God, even during suffering, then God is glorified. The downside is that we can choose not to honor him; but God was willing to take that risk.
- God could easily have created us without the ability to choose evil and, therefore, without any possibility of suffering. What kind of world would it be? Isn't that the kind of “world” heaven is?

II. Suffering is in the world because...

1. ...*sin* is in the world. There is no sin in the first two chapters of Genesis.
 - Theoretically, if Adam and Eve had not sinned, but were still allowed to procreate, all of us would be in Paradise — until someone sinned.
 - Why did God even put the tree in the garden in the first place? Why did he allow Satan to test them?
 - God didn't create us to be marionettes on strings; he created us with free will, to choose good over evil, God over Satan.
 - When Adam and Eve sinned, they opened a new chapter in world history. From that time on, Satan has been the prince of the world and the whole world lies under his sway (see John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; I Jn. 5:19; I Pet. 5:8).
 - But that time is coming to an end. Revelation 20:10, 14
2. Suffering and evil are products of man's sin, not God's character. I John 1:5.

III. “The Logical Conclusion”

If God prevented suffering in the world, then it would be *complete*; there would be no suffering at all for anyone, anywhere. If he allowed for *some* suffering — how much? Where would it end? He takes away *your* suffering but not your neighbor's?

1. If there was no suffering in the world there would be no sickness, evil, or death... in fact, no aging. Nothing would be corrupt or corruptible (since that would cause suffering).
2. Imagine a world in which there is no death??
 - Everyone would live forever in a pristine environment; there would be perfect love and...
 - Life would be eternal, everlasting...
 - So if there was no suffering, then there would be no sin...no one would hurt another; no separation from God.

But, wait!! This sounds like...Eden!! Or HEAVEN

What is the origin of suffering?

Suffering entered the world with the sin of Adam & Eve. “Death” (both physical & spiritual) entered on that occasion: Rom. 5:12 (spiritual death)

a. I Cor. 15; Rev. 22 (cf. v. 14 - *exousia*)

- If you're going to blame someone, blame Adam & Eve: not God!
- But then – Adam is one of us, isn't he??
- And... what is true of us?? We sin! Therefore, we share something in Adam!

b. But, we have a choice: in Adam, we all die, while in Christ we can be made alive!

Conclusion

Suffering is inevitable in a world where we have freedom of choice