

Why Do Bad Things Happen?

This is a common question, seen by unbelievers as an unanswerable question, and a question many Christians cringe at and try to duck. “Why does a loving, all-powerful God allow suffering in His world?”

This question is not the end of us. To ask this question and demand for answer assumes more than the materialist/naturalist can explain:

- The universe contains moral values
- The universe has logic and order
- People and what happens to them are important
- Life should be really worth living
- Good should be rewarded
- Life should contain satisfactory answers. *(based on Warren W. Weirsbe, Bumps Are What You Climb On)*

If life is the product of random chance, purposeless action, then how can and BAD thing happen? How do we have the capacity to judge and determine what is bad?

If we can even find bad just once, then moral values beyond materialism exist.

But the scriptures tell us that there is an origin and answer for evil.

I. Scriptural Answers To The Origin Of Evil

A. Creation: Not Every Bad Thing Is “Evil”

Consequence Of Necessary Physical Laws

The world God set up has needed, natural laws. Sometime these can work against us.

We need gravity – but sometimes we fall. OSHA statistics say that most fatal workplace falls are from less than 7'. Is falling evil? Can it have terrible, terrible consequences?

Rain is needed, but what of the flood? Snow is great, but what of too much?

Lightening has a place, but also a bad effect. Hurricanes and tornadoes as well.

What of the benefits, and dangers of fire?

Same with earthquakes, volcanoes, tides, and many, many more things.

B. The Fall: Death Comes To All

The Creation was not always against us, and isn't much of it is now.

It was created “very good” and without death, until sin came.

Genesis 3:17-19 “Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.

18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you shall eat the plants of the field;

19 By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

With no access to the tree of life, the perfection that God made began to decay towards death.

Rom. 5:12 “So death passed upon all men”

But even death is not an unmitigated evil.

Ps. 116:15 “Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His godly ones.”

Sometimes death is a victory, a release, and glory to God.

II. Much Evil Is Of Human Origin

God gives us free will and He gives it to others also.

A. We Make Bad, Foolish And Sinful Decisions

Much of suffering is self inflicted?

“We have met the enemy and he is us” – comic strip “Pogo”

Suffering can be—and often is—self-inflicted. Oxford scholar C.S. Lewis estimated that eighty percent of human suffering stems from human choice.

Among God’s great gifts to men, the ability to choose has proved the most dangerous.

If we look at what harms us most, and most often, is it acts of self, acts of others, or acts of God that harm us most and are most evil to us?

A frugal person has a surplus; a spendthrift can’t pay the bills.

Hate leads to violence, and violence to pain.

Greed leads to stealing and abuse.

A violent temper leads to fights, injury, property damage, murder, and arrest.

Drunkenness causes hangovers, wrecks, cirrhosis, poverty, and spouse abuse (Proverbs 23:29–35).

Sexual promiscuity leads to unwanted children, disease, abortion, and divorce (Hebrews 13:4).

Gal. 6:7,8 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting”

B. We Are Connected To Others And Often Injured By Their Decisions, And They By Ours’

Since we are connected to each others, much of the evil and pain and this world is shared and reciprocated.

We are effected by the actions of other for good and ill.

How much effect did our mother have on us?

What if she were a self-sacrificing saint who was always giving?

What if she were a selfish alcoholic thief of dubious morality?

What is the benefit/damage to us? It is much and obvious.

Think of the poor sailors who just happened to on the boat that Jonah chose?

What of poor Uriah because David chose to trist with his wife?

What did Herod do to the innocents of an entire village because Jesus was there for a short while?

How many spouses have been harmed by the unfaithfulness of others?

Parents of children who are involved in drugs and alcohol, and vice versa.

This is so common that we even have a saying for it: “Man’s inhumanity to man.”

Robbers steal.

Murderers kill.

The greedy take and exploit.

The unscrupulous lie to the old and steal their retirement savings.

Terrorists plot, murder, and maim.

How many types of crimes are on the book to try to restraint the actions of evil men?

Why doesn’t God step in?

From time to time He does. And when He does, some will view that as evil as well.

Rev. 18:9-20 “And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning,

10 standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’

11 “And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more;
12 cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet...
15 “The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning,
16 saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls;
17 for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!’ And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance,
18 and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What city is like the great city?’
19 “And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!’
20 “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.”

How could anything be done that would satisfy all that any action was just?

God brings that justice that He knows is best, when He knows as best, with considerations beyond ours.

Yet some man will question every decision and scoff at the supposed injustice of it all.

Isa. 40:28 “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.”

C. The Darkness Hates The Light

The better things are, they better people are, the closer we are to God, the more some evil will find us.

Jn. 3:19 “And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil.”

This is why Paul said: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (**2 Tim. 3:12**)
 Jesus was executed on a cross even though He lived a sinless life (Matthew 27:35).

The question for us is not when we'll get away from troubles, but what do we get out of the troubles?

Ps. 119:71 “It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Thy statutes.”

Jas. 1:1-4 “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

4 And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

Corrie Ten Boom, Holocaust survivor, wrote, “When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.”

Prov. 3:5 “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding”