

DISCOVERY 2000

Making sense of Pain and Suffering?



God can do everything. Surely He can stop suffering.
God is love. Surely He wants to stop suffering.
Then why does suffering persist?



Everywhere one turns in this world, one sees evil, sorrow, heartache, pain, suffering and death, To many people the problem of pain and suffering is an obstacle to Christian faith.

Is pain a good thing?

1. Something is wrong - hot, sharp = protection
2. Attention getter = warning
3. Discipline

The causes of pain and suffering

1. Personal choices - the law of cause and effect

List some personal choices with the likely effect:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Is the law of cause and effect good or bad? Why?

_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Other people's choices - no man is an island

List some choices that may cause suffering to others:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Is it fair to blame God for the results of choices we or others have made have made?

3. Pain says, "Something is wrong with our world"

- it shouldn't be this way. We want something better.

When God created our world, how did He make it?

Genesis 1:31 (2)

What went wrong? What were the consequences?

Genesis 3:1-24

Is it reasonable to expect that man could operate independently of his Creator and nothing go wrong?

How did the problem begin?

The Bible says the trouble began with the Devil or Satan, Many people today do not believe in a personal Devil. They teach that evil is just an idea - a state of mind - a product of the imagination. The Bible says the Devil is real, This teaching runs right through the Bible from beginning to end - more than 100 times

Where did Satan come from? Did God create the Devil?

Luke 10:18 (1005)	Satan came from Heaven
Revelation 12:7-9 (1182)	He caused a war in heaven
Ezekiel 28:12-17 (830)	He started perfect but became proud
Isaiah 14:12-14 (667)	His pride

Some will ask, If Satan is a created being, is not God indirectly responsible for creating evil? At first thought it might seem so, but the answer is certainly not. God created Lucifer, a magnificent angel. When he came forth from the Creator's hands he was not only beautiful but also perfect. Lucifer made a devil out of himself.

A mother gives birth to a baby son, Like most mothers, she proudly shows her little son to others. As the years go by the little lad grows up and gets into bad company, He goes from bad to worse and finally commits murder for which he is hanged. Would you go to his mother and say, "Why did you bring a miserable wretch like that into the world? Of course not, As a babe he was just as sweet and pure as any other baby, He made a wretch of himself. Just so, Lucifer, created perfect, made a devil of himself.

Why didn't God destroy the Devil when he sinned?

What options do you think were available to God? What do you think a loving God should do?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The Bible indicates that this planet is not the only one that supports life. So in dealing with Lucifer and the rebellious angels, God had to take into account the millions of loyal angels and the possible billions of created beings. Had God destroyed Lucifer when he sinned many of the angels and other created beings would not have understood. To them it would have seemed that God was a tyrant and they would, in the future have served Him from fear instead of love,

When God created men and angels, He took a terrible chance for He created them free moral agents. He gave them the power of choice. This being so there was always the possibility of someone doing wrong and Lucifer was that one, In order to vindicate His character before the universe God has had to allow the action of Satan to run its course. A just and loving God could do nothing else

Why do bad things happen to good people?

We live in a war zone. Revelation 12:17 (1182)

Otherwise people would serve God for the wrong reason - insurance - The story of Job

God also knows suffering. Look what they did to his Son!

Can good come out of suffering?

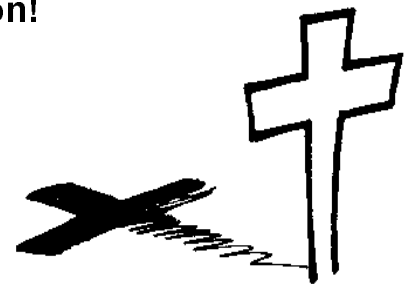
We learn out of suffering - I won't do that again

God can bring good out of suffering - The story of Joseph

-Romans 8:28 (1091)

God can give strength through suffering - tree in the open

-2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (1118)



God's promises

Hebrews 13:5 (1157)

James 4:7 (1160)

Psalms 73:26 (557)

The End of pain and suffering - it will not go on forever

Revelation 21 (1189)

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and there was no sea anymore. ... 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Now God's presence is with people, and he will live with them, and they will be his people. .. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain, because all the old ways are gone." 5 (He) ... said, "Look! I am making everything new!"

"But God made a promise to us, and we are waiting for a new heaven and a new earth where goodness lives". 2 Peter 3:8 (1167)