



Jordan Brawner | September 12, 2018
Part 5: What about evil and suffering?

[1] Evil and suffering is a hard question for every belief system!

- It's hard for Christians because we can't account for the reason or good to every bad thing that happens.
- It's hard for the atheist because once you've eliminated God you've eliminated any hope for ultimate justice or life after death.

[2] There are implied assumptions on the side of those who say evil and suffering is evidence against God that must be questioned!

Ravi Zacharias

- When you say there is evil, aren't you assuming there is such a thing as good? When you say there's such a thing as good, aren't you assuming there's such a thing as a moral law on which to differentiate between good and evil? When you say there is a moral law, you must accept there is a moral lawgiver. If there is no moral lawgiver, there is no moral law. If there's no moral law, there's no good. If there's no good there's no evil.
- We can see the role of pain to warn us that something is wrong. Is it impossible for God, in his infinite wisdom, to allow pain in our lives to help us know that something is wrong?

Tim Keller

- The problem with saying evil and suffering is pointless and God has allowed it is to assume that because you can't see any good reason God would have for allowing evil and suffering therefore there can't be any. You have to say just because I can't be sure of what it is that might be the reason why God allows evil and suffering doesn't mean there can't be one. Just because we can't see or understand a reason doesn't mean one doesn't exist. I don't know what the reason that God allows evil and suffering is but I do know what the reason isn't. Because of Jesus we know it's not a lack of love or caring.

[3] Could evil and suffering actually be evidence for God?

CS Lewis

- "When I was an atheist, my argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? Of course I could have just given up my idea of justice by saying that it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too, for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not just simply that it did not happen to please my fancies."

[4] Believers in Jesus have great reason for _____ and _____!

Isaiah 53:3-5 (NCV)

³ He was hated and rejected by people.

He had much pain and suffering.

People would not even look at him.

He was hated, and we didn't even notice him.

⁴ But he took our suffering on him
and felt our pain for us.

We saw his suffering
and thought God was punishing him.

⁵ But he was wounded for the wrong we did;
he was crushed for the evil we did.

The punishment, which made us well, was given to him,
and we are healed because of his wounds.

- Because of Jesus we know God cares and has fully experienced this world's evil and suffering!

Matthew 19:28 (NLT)

Jesus replied, "I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 19:29-30 (NCV)

And all those who have left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or farms to follow me will get much more than they left, and they will have life forever. ³⁰ Many who are first now will be last in the future. And many who are last now will be first in the future.

Revelation 21:4-5 (NCV)

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 The One who was sitting on the throne said, "Look! I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted."

- Because of Jesus we have the hope of total renewal, restoration and justice!

[5] If God is given the blame for all evil and suffering in this world doesn't then he also deserve the blame for all the _____ and _____?

James 1:17 (NCV)

Every good action and every perfect gift is from God. These good gifts come down from the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars, who does not change like their shifting shadows.

1 John 4:7 (NIV)

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.