

## Introduction

We are still addressing questions people have about THEISM (i.e. questions about God and His existence).

QUESTION: *“If God exists, why do bad things happen?”*

### ***A. When do we consider something to be “bad”? Examples?***

### ***B. Did God create evil and suffering and other bad things?***

If God created everything and evil and suffering are something, does this not mean that God created evil and suffering and other bad things? NO!

There are several reasons why we cannot say that God created evil, suffering and other bad things:

1. The Bible tells us that God made everything good.
2. Evil, suffering and other bad things are things that are real but not things that are material.

### ***C. Where did evil, suffering and other bad things come from?***

How could evil, suffering and other bad things emerge from the perfectly good creation created by the perfectly good God?

Evil, suffering and other bad things came into the world through Adam and Eve by their own free choice to disobey God.

If God knew that free choice would give rise to evil and suffering and other bad things, why did He give us free choice?

Genesis 2:16, 17; Romans 5:12; 8:20-22

Genesis 3:16, 17

### ***D. Is Satan responsible for Adam and Eve's sin?***

The Bible records Satan tempting Adam and Eve. How can God hold Adam and Eve responsible if Satan was the one who caused them to sin?

We can't blame Satan because his effort was a contributing cause, but not a determining cause.

### ***E. Why doesn't God eliminate all bad things?***

There are several reasons why God does not stop all bad things at this time:

1. In order for God to eliminate all bad things, He would have to eliminate all free choice.

ASK: Do you really want God to eliminate your free choice?

2. In order for God to eliminate all bad things, He would have to eliminate many natural laws that work for the overall benefit and enjoyment of humanity.

3. In order for God to eliminate all bad things, He would have to eliminate a universal law of physics known as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics.

Genesis 3:17

Romans 8:20-21

4. In order for God to eliminate all bad things, He would have to eliminate Satan and demons.

5. God's primary objective is not to make us as happy as possible in this present world, but that we come to know and glorify Him by believing what He says and learning to trust Him.

Hebrews 11:1-2

Hebrews 11:6

6. Jesus' work on the cross did officially defeated Satan, sin and death. He will actually defeat Satan, sin and death at His second coming.

## ***F. Is there a purpose for evil, suffering and other bad things?***

Some would say, "because an all-good God must have a good purpose for everything, and because there seems to be no good purpose in pain and suffering, it is therefore logical to deny the existence of an all-good God."

There are a number of reasons to reject this kind of thinking:

1. There are some good purposes for pain and suffering.

*a. Some pain is necessary to warn us of an impending greater danger.*

*b. Some pain is necessary to keep us from destroying ourselves.*

*c. Some pain is necessary to teach us that certain types of behavior are wrong and have consequences.*

*d. Some pain and suffering is necessary to develop character.*

James 1:2-4

*e. Some pain and suffering enables us to comfort others.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-6

*f. God sometimes uses pain and suffering to get our attention and draw us to Himself.*

Psalm 73:28

2. Sometimes God's purposes for bad things are not immediately apparent, but become evident with the passing of time.

Genesis 50:20

3. Sometimes God allows bad things in order to ultimately defeat evil.

Hebrews 12:2

4. We may not know every purpose God has for every bad thing, but that doesn't mean there is none.

Romans 11:33-34

Romans 8:28

5. There are many attributes of God that can only be experienced and appreciated because evil exists and bad things happen.

6. People will not be able to blame their rejection of God on bad things they have experienced because there will be people in heaven who have experienced the same kind of bad things.

### ***G. Could God have avoided evil, suffering and other bad things?***

There are several reasons why God may have thought the present way was the best:

1. God could not guarantee any perfect world would stay that way as long as free creatures lived in it.
2. Some people say that God shouldn't have created anything in order to avoid bad things. However, this implies that nothing is better than something.
3. God chose this way to accomplish His purposes because it is the only way to bring about a perfect world and accomplish His plan with free people.