

Conversations for Common Questions and Doubts:
If God Is Good, Then Why Is There So Much Suffering in The World?

The Epicurean Paradox

Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able?

Then he is not omnipotent.

Is he able, but not willing?

Then he is malevolent.

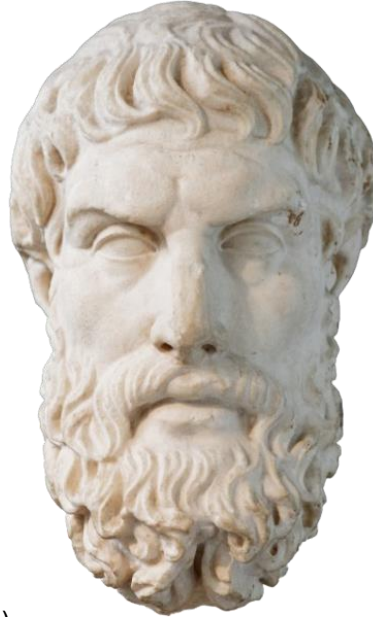
Is he both able and willing?

Then whence cometh evil?

Is he neither able nor willing?

Then why call him God?

— Epicurus of Athens, 341 - 270 BC



Six Biblical Reasons for Suffering:

1. There is a Devil

“The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist.”

- Keyser Soze, *The Usual Suspects* (1995)

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

2. A Fallen Creation and a Broken Humanity

Genesis 3:17 - 19

17 And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth 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, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

3. Random Time and Chance

Ecclesiastes 9:11 Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to those with knowledge, but time and chance happen to them all.

Luke 13:4

4 Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?

4. Lack of Faith and Prayer

Matthew 13:58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.



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James 4:2b – 3

2b You do not have, because you do not ask.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

5. God's Judgements Against Wickedness

Romans 1:18, 21a, 24

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

21a For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him

24 Therefore God gave them up...

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 - 13

11 Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the heart of the children of man is fully set to do evil.

12 Though a sinner does evil a hundred times and prolongs his life, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they fear before him.

13 But it will not be well with the wicked, neither will he prolong his days like a shadow, because he does not fear before God.

6. For the Greater Purposes of Good

2nd Corinthians 12:9 – 10

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Hebrews 5:7 - 8

7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

Genesis 50:20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

James 5:11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Romans 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

