



Why God Permits Evil

If God removes the situation, you may never learn He is sufficient for all you need.
- Charles Stanley



Evil Exists

Natural Evil

Natural catastrophes are a part of creation in its fallen condition.

- Sickness & Death
- Decay
- Starvation
- Floods & Droughts

Moral Evil

Man's sin and transgression. Sin is in every heart.

They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one (Psalms 14:3 ESV).

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 ESV)

Supernatural Evil

Satan and the demonic host:

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. (Revelation 12:3-4 ESV)

The whole world lies in Satan's lap:

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19 ESV)

They are corrupt, liars and deceivers:

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ESV)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, (1 Timothy 4:1 ESV)

Demonic activity infects our lives:

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (Job 2:7 ESV)

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, (Luke 22:31 ESV)



God Exists

He is the God of Scripture

He is the God of Scripture. He is absolutely sovereign and governs history in every detail. He created everything, He controls everything, and He will consummate everything.

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.

(1 Chronicles 29:11-12 ESV)



God Allows Evil To Exist

God Has a Purpose for Evil

God has a purpose for evil and takes full responsibility for evil without reluctance. God is not evil, He is incapable of doing anything evil, and He cannot look upon evil positively. Yet God is content to leave the responsibility for evil's existence and actions with Himself. He is the sole ruler of the universe.

However, it is wrong to say there is an eternally existing evil power in the universe similar to or equal to God Himself in power. This is the error of dualism, the existence of two equally ultimate powers, one good and the other evil. Also, sin or evil did not surprise God or challenged or overcame His omnipotence or His providential control over the universe.

God allowed evil and designed it into the universe without being responsible for it. God willed that evil exist for His own glory, and we praise God for what He has done to overcome evil. God ordained evil for His glory.

God from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely, and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Of God's Eternal Decree

Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come? (Lamentations 3:37-38 ESV)

God's Righteousness

The greatest evil ever done by men is the murder of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-24). Our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God. At the cross you see the full manifestation of God's righteousness as He punishes the sinless Jesus for our sins to satisfy His righteousness. God demonstrates His righteousness by the way He confronts and deals with sin and that becomes the essence of heavenly worship. We will never understand God's righteousness until we go to the cross. At the cross, God displays the riches of His glory and the full range of His attributes. At the cross we see both God's wrath and His mercy (Romans 9:23).

We do not understand the righteousness of God. Like the religious rulers in Jesus' day, we think that God's righteousness is attainable by man.

We live in a world where our good and evil actions have consequences upon us and those around us. God's desire is that for all our sakes we would obey Him that it might be well with us (Deuteronomy 5:29). Instead, we choose our own way, and then we blame God for not doing anything about it. Such is the heart of sinful man. But Jesus came to change men's hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit, and He does this for those who will turn from evil and call on Him to save them from their sin and its consequences (2 Corinthians 5:17). God does prevent and restrain evil that cannot be redeemed for His good purposes. This world would be MUCH WORSE were not God restraining evil.



We may never actually see justice served, but God will hold unrepentant sinners accountable at the judgement throne. God will judge the sin in this world and make all things new, but He is purposely patient in order to allow more time for people to repent so that He will not need to condemn them (2 Peter 3:9).

Of course, God allowing evil in order to display His righteousness and glory seems of little comfort to a mother who loses a child or a family that loses their home in a flood or to victims of horrible crimes. Unfortunately, we don't know how God is going to bring good from evil, but we can comfort ourselves to know that He can, and that evil does not go unseen or unpunished by God. Let God be God and worship Him for the sovereign God that He is.

Scripture References

Moral Evil

They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one. (Psalms 14:3 ESV)

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5 ESV)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23 ESV)

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9 ESV)

Supernatural Evil

The whole world lies in Satan's lap:

We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19 ESV)

Satan rules over the demons:

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. (Revelation 12:3-4 ESV)

Demons developed false teachings and religions:

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ESV)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, (1 Timothy 4:1 ESV)

Demonic activity infects our lives:

So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (Job 2:7 ESV)

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, (Luke 22:31 ESV)

God Controls Everything

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. (1 Chronicles 29:11-13 ESV)

all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" (Daniel 4:35 ESV)

God has a purpose for evil:

"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. (Deuteronomy 32:39 ESV)

Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord has commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that good and bad come? (Lamentations 3:37-38 ESV)

God is sovereign:

which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (1 Timothy 6:15 ESV)

For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. (Psalms 33:9-11 ESV)

For the LORD of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back? (Isaiah 14:27 ESV)

remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' (Isaiah 46:9-10 ESV)

The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world. (1 Samuel 2:6-8 ESV)

God Wills Evil To Exist

I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things. (Isaiah 45:5-7 ESV)

“Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots! Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’ or ‘Your work has no handles’? Woe to him who says to a father, ‘What are you begetting?’ or to a woman, ‘With what are you in labor?’” Thus says the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and the one who formed him: “Ask me of things to come; will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands? I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host. (Isaiah 45:9-12 ESV)

God allowed evil and designed it into the universe:

But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) (Romans 3:5 ESV)

in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— (Romans 9:23 ESV)

Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” (Revelation 15:4 ESV)

“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. (Acts 2:22-24 ESV)

Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever! (Deuteronomy 5:29 ESV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. (2 Peter 3:9 ESV)