

Why Does God Allow Bad Things To Happen? – by Paula Black and Kara Black

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If there was one question you could ask God, what would it be? In a large survey, the question most people wanted to ask was, “Why does God let bad things happen?” Have you wondered why a loving God would not intervene to stop something evil from occurring? It is a common concern and very important for us to renew our thinking to understand God’s perspective. If we do not grasp this principle, this dilemma can be used to derail our faith. First, let’s talk about the BIG picture—the basics: God created a perfect world where only good things happen. God created man and woman whom He loved and gave them free-will so that they could choose to love Him back. God also gave mankind authority and ruler ship over this earth. Lucifer, a fallen angel—who was one of the most powerful and beautiful in heaven, sinned when he thought himself to be equal to God and God kicked him out of heaven. Lucifer, or Satan as he’s more commonly known, came to God’s family on earth – Adam and Eve – determined to corrupt them and turn them against God. Satan’s scheme worked. Man believed the lie and chose to disobey God, therefore losing their authority over the earth. Now Satan, who hates God and God’s creation—mankind—gained legal authority of earth. That’s when bad things began to happen. Bad things don’t happen in heaven... they happen on earth, because this earth is now “fallen”. God is no longer in authority—Satan is.

But because God loves us so much, He immediately put a plan in motion to redeem us from this curse. A curse we brought on ourselves through making a terrible choice. God’s plan involved sending His only Son—Jesus—to earth as a Man. A Man who would not sin when tempted by Satan, and Who would pay our penalty to redeem us fairly. Once Jesus died for us we had a choice to make—whether to accept this gift of redemption and become children of God again. It’s our free-will that allows us to choose to be redeemed from the curse. But that’s only STEP 1 in fixing this messed up world we live in. First, we chose to come back into relationship with God. Step 2 is bringing the world—this planet earth—back into line with God’s original perfect creation. That happens when Jesus comes back a second time to take ruler ship of the earth (which is still in the future). For us to blame God for what Adam and Eve did in the beginning is wrong thinking. They had the gift of free will and chose to use it to sin. We currently live in a fallen world with Satan in authority. That’s why God says things like: You live in the world but you’re not of the world. Romans 12:2 says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.” This world is no longer our home. God is a good God and only wants good for us. That’s why, even when bad things happen in this fallen world, God says that if we trust in Him, He will turn what Satan meant for evil into something good. Romans 8:28 says, “And we know [with great confidence] that God [who is deeply concerned about us] causes all things to work together [as a plan] for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His plan and purpose” (Amplified). There has always been war, genocide, people abusing people, famine, disease, accidents, and the list goes on and on.

Jesus told us we would have suffering in the world. He didn’t say you might –he said it is going to happen. He spoke the truth when He said in John 16:33. “I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace. In the world you have tribulation and distress and suffering, but be courageous; I have overcome the world.” Yes, God is powerful enough to stop all the bad things and take control. But He won’t because that would rob us of free will. He values us too much to turn us into robots. He also wants us to value a relationship with Him enough for us to CHOOSE it. In this present age we are limited in what we see and understand.

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First Corinthians 13:12 says, “Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.” We can’t understand everything from our finite perspective. That’s why we choose to trust in a loving God Who offers us a bigger picture. And provides peace during our time in this fallen world until we trade this short life in for an eternal life in the perfect and glorious home God has created for us. Satan loves it when we blame God for bad things. But God is not the creator of evil and suffering. As difficult as it is to accept, we chose to give Satan authority and caused this world to fall under the curse. Romans 3:23 says, “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” So much of the world’s suffering results from the sinful action or inaction of ourselves and others. For example, people point at famine and wonder where God is. But the world produces enough food for each person to have 3,000 calories a day. It’s our own irresponsibility and self-centeredness that prevents people from being fed.

The Bible says it’s because of sin that nature was corrupted and “thorns and thistles” entered the world. Romans 8:22 says, “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” In other words, nature longs for redemption to come and for things to be set right. That’s the source of disorder and chaos. God did not create evil and suffering. Now, it’s true that he did create the potential for evil to enter the world, because that was the only way to create the potential for genuine goodness and love. But it was human beings, in our free will, who brought that potential evil into reality. God undoubtedly knew we’d rebel against Him, but He also knew many people would choose to have a relationship with Him and spend eternity in heaven with Him — and it was all worth it for that, even though it would cost His own Son great pain and suffering to achieve their redemption. The Old Testament gives us a great example in the story of Joseph, who went through terrible suffering, being sold into slavery by his brothers, unfairly accused of a crime and falsely imprisoned. He could have turned against God for allowing such unjust evil in his life. But instead he chose to turn toward God, trust in, and continue to serve Him. By making that choice, even though it took years, God was able to use Joseph to save his family and many others—in fact what would become the nation of Israel. In Genesis 50:20, Joseph told his brothers, “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.”

So if you’re committed to God, He promises that He can and will take whatever pain you’re experiencing and draw something good from it, while growing you up in the process. You might say, “No, that can’t happen in my situation—the damage is too great, my suffering has been too much.” II Corinthians 4:17 reminds us, “For our momentary, light distress [this passing trouble] is producing for us an eternal weight of glory [a fullness] beyond all measure!” Paul also wrote Romans 8:18, “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” So, ultimately, you decide... you choose. Whether to turn against God for the evil in the world and the bad things that happen to you. Or turn toward Him in faith and trust. God is a good God and He loves you. That truth will not change, no matter what you choose to do or believe. But the benefits of believing God is good and that He wants to work whatever is happening in your life to good, is worth believing in.

You are loved and prayed for. Remember, with God nothing is impossible!

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