

If God is Good,
Why does Suffering Exist?

It was very good, but then...

The Awesome, Perfect, Eternal God

To whom then will you compare me,
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.
Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these?
He who brings out their host by number,
calling them all by name, by the greatness of his might,
and because he is strong in power not one is missing.
Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as the dust on the scales;
behold, he takes up the coastlands like fine dust.
All the nations are as nothing before him,
they are accounted by him as less than nothing
and emptiness.

From Last Week:

In the beginning, God created... (Genesis 1:1)

God Spoke: “Let there be light...” (Gen 1:3)

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In a world of darkness, God sends His word to bring light (physical and spiritual)

Example: **John 1:1-5**

Also From Last Week:

- God created people **in His image** (Gen 1:26)
 - A mind to listen and learn about Him
 - A will to choose to follow Him
 - Emotions to love Him
 - Authority to care responsibly for His creation
- “God saw **all** that He had made, and it was **very good.**” (Gen 1:31)

What happened?



We see evil all around us,
and
We see evil inside of us

Why...?

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Before God created people...

- Angels – servants and messengers
 - John 1:3 > He made everything
 - Psalm 103:20,21
- Not all Angels are the same
- Lucifer, a powerful and beautiful angel
 - Ezekiel 28:13-15 > a guardian cherub
 - Isaiah 14:12-14 > “I will be like God”

Moving away from
the light of God



Into the darkness
of rebellion

Lucifer

“Morning Star”

Satan

Enemy, Accuser

“I will ascend to heaven”

“I will raise my throne”

“I will make myself
like the Most High”

A Choice in the Garden

- God did not make people like robots
 - True love requires a choice
- Genesis 2:16,17
 - The man and woman could have anything they wanted in the garden
 - They had a perfect relationship with God and each other (Gen 2:25)
 - Only one rule : do not eat the fruit of the forbidden tree

Satan tempted Eve

- Genesis 3:1 > “Did God *really* say...?”
 - He wanted Eve to doubt God’s Word
 - He tempted Eve to doubt God’s love
- Genesis 3:2-5 > “You will not die...”
 - “You will be like God” (Satan’s original sin)
 - “Believe in yourself - rule your own life!”
- But God did not make us to live apart from Him.
He made us to be guided by His word.

Eve and Adam make a choice

- Genesis 3:6 > The woman saw:
 - The fruit looked like it would **taste good**
 - The fruit was **attractive** to the eyes
 - Eating could increase her **wisdom and power**
- She ate, and then Adam ate
- 1 John 2:16 > the same temptation
 - Feels good, looks good, makes you proud

The bait might look tasty,
but the hook is deadly



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What is Death?

- **Genesis 2:16,17** – what did God say would happen when they ate from the tree?
- **Isaiah 59:2** > sin separates us from God
 - When someone dies *physically*, their soul is separated from their body
 - When someone dies *spiritually*, their spirit is separated from God
- **Genesis 3:7,8** > they hid themselves from God
 - Death = separation from life

The results of sin (Genesis 3):

- **Verses 10-12** > Three Things:
 - ✓ Fear – “I was afraid”
 - ✓ Shame – “I was naked”
 - ✓ Guilt – “I ate”
- The Curses on People and Creation
 - **Verse 16** > woman: painful childbirth and loss of freedom
 - **Verse 17-18** > man: thorns, pain, sweat, hard work
 - **Verses 19** > man and woman: death
 - **Romans 8:20-22** > all creation suffers

Bad news for all of us

- **Romans 5:12**
 - We all inherit sin – it's not just what we do, it's who we are
 - Because of sin, we all are dead spiritually
 - Because of sin, we all will die physically
- The end of last lesson: “It was **very good**”
- The end of this lesson: we are **separated from God** and will **die** because of our sin
- Is there any hope?

Some clues of hope...

- **Genesis 3:9** > God came to the man and called out to him
 - “Where are you?”
 - God gives people an opportunity to confess sin and ask forgiveness
- **Genesis 3:21** > God covered their shame
 - What did God do to make their clothing?
 - God killed a **substitute** for the man to cover his shame
- The Bible is not just a book of rules
- The Bible is the story of God seeking man.



Remember: He is God, we are not God

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens. When I look at
your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the
stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are
mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?

Psalm 8:1,3,4

Possible Study Plan

- ~~1 Is the Bible Trustworthy?~~
- ~~2 Did God Really Create the World?~~
- ~~3 If God is good, why does suffering exist?~~
- 4 Why is evil so widespread and powerful?
- 5 Why is Israel so important?
- 6 Why did God punish Egypt so harshly?
- 7 What is the purpose of the Ten Commandments?
- 8 Are Biblical heroes all good guys?
- 9 How do the Old and New Testaments fit together?
- 10 Why did Jesus perform miracles?
- 11 What did Jesus really say?
- 12 Is death the end (or the beginning)?