

IF God Exists, **Why** Evil?



1. Where did evil come from?
2. What is evil?
3. Why does evil exist? Does it have a purpose?
4. Why doesn't God eliminate evil now?

From the TruthQuest series,
Living Loud-defending your Faith
Chapter 7, pages 83-94
Norman Geisler & Joseph Holden
Broadman & Holman Publishers copyright 2002

1. Where did evil come from?

Evil originated as a result of Lucifer exercising his free will against God's will.

Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"

4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! 5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

James 1: 13-14

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

1 John 1:5

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

Isaiah 14:12-13

" How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of **God**; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;

Jude 1:6

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

How can a good, loving, perfect and all-powerful God allow evil to exist in the world He created?

Humanity is plagued by crime, pain, suffering, injustice and many other wrongs. Many people blame God for the evil that is in the world. Who is responsible for this evil? Is it God's fault?

God gave man the ability of free choice and with this good ability man choose to do something bad, evil. Evil entered the world by man choosing to eat the forbidden fruit. "Evil came from something good: free will."

"The blacksmith who shapes a red-hot horseshoe on has anvil. As he hammers to for the smoldering horseshoe, a spark flies off his hammer and sets the barn in which he is working on fire. Ultimately, the barn is completely destroyed. The good blacksmith shaping a good horseshoe with good fire burned down the good barn. Just as the burned-out barn was a by-product of something good, such as a horseshoe making, evil also is the result of by-product of something good, such as free choice."

Why did God give us free choice? Because that is what makes our relationship to Him meaningful. We choose to love God because He makes that decision possible. What kind of relationship could we have otherwise? *We are responsible for our own choices.*

2. What is the nature of evil?

"Evil is something that is real but not something material."

Evil is actually a lack of something good. It is the lack of something that should be present. If there is a bad relationship between things, it is considered to be evil. When we abuse something that is good, it becomes evil. Not that the material or physical thing is evil. But the misuse of it is evil.

3. Why does evil exist? Does it have a purpose?

Evil exists in the world because God has a purpose for it.

God exploits evil for His glory. He so orders the affairs of life so that the bad things are use for His ends and not for the mere purposes that satan intends. Take for instance **the cases of Job and Joseph**. God brought glory to Himself through the trials of Job. Job was put on display to men and angles to see. Joseph was mistreated and preserved many live, including those who mistreated him. God intended to use men's evil and free actions **to glorify Himself and display His grace**. Isn't this also true of the cross?

Job 1:6-12

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is* none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

9 So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 "Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

11 "But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has *is* in your power; only do not lay a hand on his *person*." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

Genesis 50:20

"As for you, you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.

4. Why doesn't God eliminate evil?

Christ **officially** defeated evil in His death and resurrection. He will finish it **actually** with His second coming and the crown. But not until all the sheep are accounted for. When all of them are gathered in, then He will return. His sheep are those who love Him and choose to follow Him. These sheep have not all exercise this ability to choose Him yet. God will eliminate evil at the appointed time. God has not eliminated evil yet because it is not His plan.

God is giving His children the opportunity to prove their love for Him by their choices. Persevering under trial **gives us the opportunity to demonstrate to the world that we love God**. One day God will show His love for us by rewarding our perseverance.

James1:12-14

12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

John 10: 27

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand.

Where does it fit?

Drugs, alcohol, cards, music,
Internet, TV, robots, people,
Gambling, sports, books, etc.
Xbox, mountaintop

Good

Neutral

Evil