



Why does God allow
suffering?

The earth at creation

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was **very good.**”

Genesis 1:31

The earth in the future

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and **there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,** neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away”

Revelation 21:4

Why not make creation perfect?

If mankind was created perfect there would be:

- No choice on man's part
- No grace on God's part
- No real thankfulness to God
- No scope for mankind's love to be tested
- **No development of character**



Is God's plan the best plan?

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Isaiah 55:9



God's plan

“..... that God may be **all in all**”

1 Corinthians 15:28

How Adam's love for God was tested

"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt **surely die**"

Genesis 2:16-17

The consequence of Adam's sin

"For the wages of sin is death ..."

Romans 6:23

Consequences of sin

V21 pestilence
V22 sickness
V22 warfare & exile
V23 drought
V27 disease
V29 oppression
V30 plunder

V32 child abduction
V44 poverty
V52 cities besieged
V59 plagues
V66 derision
V67 slavery

Deuteronomy 28:15-68

Discipline is part of sonship

“For the Lord **disciplines** the one he **loves**,
and chastises **every** son whom he receives.”

It is for discipline that you have to endure.
God is treating you as sons. For what son is
there whom his father does not discipline?”

Hebrews 12:6-7 ESV

The universal experience of suffering

“Though he (Jesus) were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he **suffered**”

Hebrews 5:8



Suffering is designed to develop character

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful **fruit of righteousness** to those who have been trained by it”

Hebrews 12:11 ESV

Suffering is designed to develop character

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and **every branch** that beareth fruit, he **purgeth it**, that it may bring forth **more fruit**"

John 15:1-2

The work of the husbandman



- Pruning is the removal of plant material to maximise fruit production.
- A properly pruned grape has 80 to 90% of its growth removed.

The sufferings of the Apostle Paul

Of the Jews five times received I forty **stripes** save one.

Thrice was I **beaten** with rods, once was I **stoned**, thrice I suffered **shipwreck**, a night and a day I have been **in the deep**;

In **journeyings** often, in **perils** of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

In **weariness** and **painfulness**, in watchings often, in **hunger** and **thirst**, in **fastings** often, in **cold** and **nakedness**.

2 Cor 11:24-27



Paul's view of suffering

"I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us".

Romans 8:18

Most die without hope

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few there be that find it**”

Matt 7:13-14

A call to action

" suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

I tell you, Nay: but, **except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

I tell you, Nay: but, **except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."**

Luke 13:2-5


The opposing views of suffering

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, **If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.**

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, **Dost not thou fear God**, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss"

Luke 23:39-41



"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain:** for the former things are passed away" Rev 21:4