

Suffering, Punishment and Freedom

1

**Does God
Cause
EVERYTHING?**

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess....

19 This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that **I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live** 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.

Romans 8:28

28 And we know that **in all things God works for the good of those who love him**, who have been called according to his purpose.

2

**Does God
Cause
PEOPLE to SIN?**

James 1:13-14

13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." **For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;** 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

Galatians 6:7-8

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. **A man reaps what he sows.** (*implies personal responsibility and punishment for personal choices*) 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

3

**Does God
Cause
SOME Things**
(for His Greater
Purposes)?

Hebrews 12:4-13

- God disciplines His children because He loves us

Exodus 7:3-5

3 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in Egypt, 4 he will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites. 5 And **the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord** when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it."

1 Peter 3:18

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. (*It was God's plan for Jesus to suffer — for our benefit*)

4

**Are People
FREE to
LOVE & CHOOSE**
(Good and Evil)?

Proverbs 19:21

Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.

Joshua 24:14-15

14 "Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. 15 And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, **choose this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Galatians 5:13

13 For **you were called to freedom**, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

1 Corinthians 6:12

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything.

Also: Romans 10:9-13; Galatians 5:1