

## My God, my God, why?

From ancient times, the cry of the wise man in the Scripture in the crucible of a deadly crisis has been, in one form or another, the question, "Why, God?"

- Job in **Job 24**
- David in **Psalms 13 & Psalm 22**
- Asaph in **Psalms 73 & Psalm 77**
- Jesus in **Matthew 27:46**

One of the central ideas in biblical wisdom literature in books like the Psalms, Proverbs and the Prophets is God's world operates with \_\_\_\_\_.

There is a certain way that God's world works. Things happen for a reason and follow certain patterns you can \_\_\_\_\_ on.

God has not only established order in his world, but that he is also *free*! He's not \_\_\_\_\_ by the conventional order of his creation that has been broken by sin.

- **Isaiah 45:6-7**
- **Psalm 135:6**

Ordinary wisdom doesn't always apply in \_\_\_\_\_ cases. We must not simplistically or mechanistically apply conventional wisdom of how life works because the divine order of creation has been disrupted by sin.

### Four Biblical Realities for Hard Times

- God's created order has been severely \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by sin—both by spirit beings and human beings..

**Genesis 1-2**

**Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:20**

**2 Thessalonians 2:7**

**Deuteronomy 29:29**

**Genesis 3**

- God lovingly allows and even decrees suffering in the lives of his people to \_\_\_\_\_ their faith and cause them to \_\_\_\_\_ to be more like Jesus.

discipline – **2 Chronicles 7:13-14; 1 Corinthians 11:29-32**

personal growth – **James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:3ff**

protection – **2 Corinthians 12:1-10**

preparation – **2 Corinthians 1:3-11**

love – (**Hebrews 12:7-11**)

**See Posted Handout**

- God sometimes uses things like a deadly disease to bring particular \_\_\_\_\_ on those who reject him and give themselves over to evil.

**Acts 12:22-23**

**Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9**

**Romans 1:18**

- Natural disasters in this world broken by sin, are allowed and even decreed by God to call unbelievers everywhere to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ their hearts to him through faith in Jesus Christ.

**Luke 13:1-5.**

**Hebrews 9:27**

### Misguided Thinking in Hard Times

- Some claim that faithful Christians are supernaturally protected from the pandemic.

We have escaped sin's \_\_\_\_\_. **Romans 8:1**

We have victory over sin's \_\_\_\_\_. **Romans 6:1-14**

We are still subject to sin's \_\_\_\_\_. **Romans 8:20-24**

The difference for Christians is, our experience in this present corruption is NOT \_\_\_\_\_.

Pain for us in this world is for \_\_\_\_\_ us not punishing us.

**1 Thessalonians 5:10**

**1 Corinthians 15:55**

**Philippians 3:20-21**

- Some presumptively accuse certain sins or groups for causing the crisis.

**John 9**

- Some back off from or even abandon their faith in God, wondering how an all-powerful, all-loving God could allow this kind of evil to continue in his world.

Philosophical Answer:

**John Paul Sartre** - "If God does not exist there is no longer any possibility of an a priori good existing. It is nowhere written that one must be honest or must not lie, since we are now on the plain where there are only human beings. Dostoyevsky once wrote, 'If God did not exist, everything is permitted.' That is right. If God does not exist, we have neither behind us nor before us a luminous realm of values nor any means of justification of any behavior whatsoever."

Evil and suffering are a problem for those who believe in God, but it's an even greater problem for those who don't. Getting rid of God does not help in understanding or dealing with the problem of evil and suffering.

Of all the religions and philosophies of man, the Christian faith stands supreme as the most coherent, cohesive world view in explaining the origin of the universe, the meaning and purpose of life as we know it on earth, the human condition, and death.

Biblical Answer:

### The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 1:12** – the angels *long* to look into what the gospel of salvation means. The word long is the biblical word for lust—the angels are passionate about, obsessed with looking into the meaning of the gospel of Christ.

When we ask, “My God, my God, why?”

- Go to the \_\_\_\_\_!  
Even though the cross cannot tell you what the answer to that question is, the cross can tell what it isn't, and it can't be. It can't be that God doesn't love us, that he doesn't care, that he's remote and indifferent!

**Isaiah 43:2** *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.*

Because Jesus suffered ultimate agony for us, we can be absolutely certain that **he is able and willing** to give us grace in our time of need, that he is walking, as he promised, with us through our suffering and will bring us safely home to his eternal kingdom.

- Go to the \_\_\_\_\_!  
Even though the empty tomb does not answer that question, the empty tomb can tell you what it isn't, and it can't be that God is powerless to defeat and stop evil. He clearly is, since he overcame the greatest evil power of all—death.

### Revelation 21-22 & Philippians 3:20-21

**1 Corinthians 15:51-55.** *Behold...the trumpet shall sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed! For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying this is written, “Death has been swallowed up in victory! Oh death where is your victory? Death where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

God is not simply going to compensate us for the life lost in all the suffering in this world. God is going to fully \_\_\_\_\_ that life.

*“Death has been swallowed up in victory!”*

That death will be swallowed up in Christ's victory means that death and all that it entails, all the evil and suffering ever experienced that ruined God's good creation, will, in the end, only add to the joy and glory of our eternal existence in the new heavens and new earth. Christ's victory doesn't simply end evil, it swallows it up!

Jesus illustrated this in three parables of **Luke 15**.

- The shepherd's increased joy over finding the lost sheep
- The woman's increased joy over finding the lost coin
- The father's increased joy over the return of his lost son

**Fyodor Dostoyevsky** *“I believe like a child that suffering will be healed and made up for. That all the humiliating absurdity of human contradictions will vanish like a pitiful mirage...that in the world's finale, the moment of eternal harmony, something so precious will come to pass, that it will suffice for all hearts, for the comforting of all resentments, for the atonement of all the crimes of humanity, for all the blood that they shed, that it will not only make it possible to forgive, but to justify what has happened.”*

**Genesis 50:20**, *What you intended as evil, God intended for good and the saving of many.*

**Psalm 73** - God's name is *El le Olam*—the God of eternity, in all its mysterious distant past and distant future, and in his presence every absurdity of this messed up world finds its reason.

The essence of gospel hope. All of the unanswered cries of “*why God?*” will be finally \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

A profound gospel insight:

**Hebrews 12:1-3** – For the joy set before Jesus, he was able to endure the suffering of the cross.

What gave Jesus the joy that enabled him to endure the cross?

**Isaiah 53:11** Jesus would see the results of his suffering and be satisfied - *my righteous servant shall justify many.*

The very thought that you are Jesus' living hope will make him your \_\_\_\_\_.

We, of all people, can stop asking “Why?” and start asking “What?” “What lessons, God, do you have for me from this crisis? What actions do you want me to take? How can I, with great care and wisdom, glorify you in this crisis by living in a manner worthy of the gospel before my loved ones and before my neighbors?”

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One of the central ideas in biblical wisdom literature in books like the Psalms, Proverbs and the Prophets is God's world operates with **order**.

There is a certain way that God's world works. Things happen for a reason and follow certain patterns, patterns you can **count on**.

God has not only established order in his world, but that he is also *free*! He's not **bound** by the conventional order of his creation that has been broken by sin.

- **Isaiah 45:6-7**
- **Psalm 135:6**

Ordinary wisdom doesn't always apply in **extraordinary** cases. We must not simplistically or mechanistically apply conventional wisdom of how life works because the divine order of creation has been disrupted by sin.

### Four Biblical Realities for Hard Times

1. God's created order has been severely **marred** and **corrupted** by sin—both by spirit beings and human beings..

**Genesis 1-2**

**Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:20**

**2 Thessalonians 2:7**

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**Genesis 3**

2. God lovingly allows and even decrees suffering in the lives of his people to **refine** their faith and cause them to **grow** to be more like Jesus.

discipline – **2 Chronicles 7:13-14; 1 Corinthians 11:29-32**

personal growth – **James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:3ff**

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3. God sometimes uses things like a deadly disease to bring particular **judgment** on those who reject him and give themselves over to evil.

**Acts 12:22-23**

**Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9**

**Romans 1:18**

4. Natural disasters in this world broken by sin, are allowed and even decreed by God to call unbelievers everywhere to **repent** and **realign** their hearts to him through faith in Jesus Christ.

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We have victory over sin's **power**. **Romans 6:1-14**

We are still subject to sin's **presence**. **Romans 8:20-24**

The difference for Christians is, our experience in this present corruption is NOT **condemnation**.

Pain for us in this world is for **purifying** us not punishing us.

**1 Thessalonians 5:10**

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**Philippians 3:20-21**

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