

Suffering

Revealed Truths

Sin causes suffering and death.

God does not cause suffering.

There are good reasons why God allows suffering.

God is carrying out His plan to permanently eliminate suffering and death.

Jesus suffered and died for us.

All genuine Christians will suffer for Christ.

In Heaven, there will be no more sin, suffering, or death.

Some key verses:

Ro 6:23, Ro 13:8-10, 1Co 1:18, Php 1:29, 2Ti 3:12, Heb 5:7-9, 1Pe 3:18, 1Jn 3:4, 1Jn 4:8, Rev 21:4

Exposed Falsehoods

It is false to think that people can be reasonably judged by their suffering.

It is false to think that God is indifferent to our suffering.

It is false to think that God is inactive regarding our suffering.

Some key verses:

Ps 103:10, Jer 29:11, Jn 3:16, Jn 7:24, Ro 8:35-39

The History of Suffering

Before sin, there was no suffering or death in the earth. (**Ge 1:31**)

The entrance of sin transformed the earth into a world of suffering and death. (**Ge 3:16-19, Ro 8:22**)

There will be no suffering or death in the new earth. (**Isa 11:9, Ro 8:21, Rev 21:4, Rev 22:2,3**)

There will be no sin in the new earth. (**Na 1:9, Rev 21:8,27**)

Sin is the Cause of Suffering

To understand suffering, consider love and its antonym harm.

Love is the essence of the law. (**Mt 22:36-40, Ro 13:8-10**)

Commandments 1-4 define our relationship of love to God.

Commandments 5-10 define our relationship of love to other people.

Sin violates the law. (**1Jn 3:4**)

Since sin violates the law and love is the essence of the law, sin violates love.

But, love does no harm. (**Mt 7:12, Lk 6:31, Ro 13:10, Php 2:15**)

Therefore, sin causes harm. (compare **Lev 5:15,16**)

But, harm causes suffering either through the direct application of a destructive agent or indirectly by withholding a necessity.

Therefore, sin causes suffering.

sin => violated law => violated love => harm => suffering

All Sin Causes Suffering

Our own sins cause suffering. (**Pr 13:15, Jn 5:13,14**)

Sin separates us from God. (**Isa 59:1,2, Jer 52:2,3, Mt 27:46**)

Being separated from God causes suffering. (**Ac 3:19, Jas 1:17**)

The sins of others cause suffering. (**Ge 4:7,8, 2Sa 11:14,15, Mt 2:16**)

The sins of nations cause suffering. (**Jdg 2:19-23, 2Ch 7:14, Isa 1:4-7, Jer 5:7-9, Jer 12:17, Jer 48:42, Eze 14:12-21**)

In this fallen world, chance events may cause suffering. (**Ecc 9:11,12**)

Sin's Ultimate Suffering is Eternal Death

Sin's ultimate suffering is eternal death. (**Ps 34:21, Ro 6:23, Jas 1:15, Rev 2:11, Rev 20:6, Rev 20:14, Rev 21:8**)

Satan is the Ultimate Cause of Sin and Suffering

Satan started sin, war, and death in Heaven. (**Isa 14:12-20, Eze 28:14-16, Rev 12:7-9,12**)

Satan started sin, war, and death on earth. (**Ge 3:4-15, Jn 8:44**)

Satan murdered Job's children and caused Job to suffer. (**Job 1:9-19, Job 2:1-7**)

Satan murdered Jesus. (**Lk 22:2-4, Lk 22:47,48**)

Satan wages war against God's people. (**Lk 13:16, Jn 10:10, Ac 10:38, Eph 6:11,12, 1Pe 5:8, Rev 2:10, Rev 12:13-17**)

Through the symbolism of the "scapegoat" (escape/removal goat), the annual Day of Atonement included the judgment of Satan as the root cause of sin and suffering. (**Lev 16:7-10,15-17,20-22**)

The scapegoat represents Satan, the guilty insurgent, upon whom the blame is pronounced.

The LORD'S goat represents Jesus, the innocent Son of God, upon whom our punishment was laid.

We must not Judge others by their Suffering

We must not judge others by their suffering. (**Ps 103:10, Lk 13:2-5, Jn 7:24**)

God is not the Cause of Suffering

God is love. (**1Jn 4:8**)

God does not sin. (**2Co 5:21, Heb 4:15, 1Pe 1:19, 1Pe 2:21,22, 1Jn 3:5**)

God does not harm. (**Heb 7:26**)

God works for the good of His people. (**Jer 29:11, Jn 10:10, Ro 8:28**)

God Allows Suffering for Good Reasons

Suffering reveals the consequences of evil. (**Ro 1:18-32, Gal 6:7,8**)

If not for the return of Christ, evil would completely destroy the earth. (**Rev 11:18**)

Suffering reveals the genuine from the fake. (**Lk 8:13, 1Pe 1:6,7, Rev 14:9-12**)

Suffering refines us. (**Ps 66:10-12, Isa 48:10, Zec 13:9, Mal 3:3, Ro 5:3, Jas 1:2-4, 1Pe 5:10**)

Suffering requires us to live by faith. (**Hab 2:1-4, Ro 1:17, Heb 10:36-39**)

God Suffers

God suffers. (**Ex 34:6, Nu 14:18, Ps 86:15, 2Pe 3:9**)

Christ Suffered

Christ suffered. (**Isa 53:1-12, Mt 16:21, Lk 24:25-27,45,46, Heb 5:7-9, 1Pe 1:11, 1Pe 3:18**)

They crucified him. (**Mt 27:35, Mk 15:25, Lk 23:33, Jn 19:18**)

The cross is the power of God. (**1Co 1:18**)

All Genuine Christians will Suffer for Christ

All genuine Christians will suffer for Christ. (**Mt 5:10-12, Jn 15:18-20, Jn 16:2, Ac 5:40-42, Ac 7:59,60, Ro 8:16-18, Php 1:12,13,29, 2Ti 1:8, 2Ti 3:12, 1Pe 2:19-21, 1Pe 4:1,2,12-16,19, 1Pe 5:10, Rev 13:4-8,15-17**)

Jesus will be with us in the Fire

Jesus will be with us in the fire. (**Ps 46:1, Da 3:23-25, Mt 28:20, Ro 8:35-39**)

Difficult

Did God promise there would be no suffering? (**Ex 23:25,26**) (No)

This promise was conditional. (**1Sa 2:30, Jer 18:7-10**)

Does God enjoy innocent slaughter? (**Ps 137:8,9**) (No)

This is an allusion to divine justice. (**Rev 18:2,5-8**)

Do we suffer for our ancestors sins? (**Jn 9:2**) (Yes and No)

Yes, we suffer indirectly as a result of harmful circumstances/environments they created. (**Ex 34:6,7**)

No, we are not held directly accountable for their sins. (**Eze 18:19,20**)

Does God create certain people to serve as objects of His wrath? (**Ro 9:22**) (No)

Note the words "What if". God has the right, but instead He has shown only love and long-suffering.

Why doesn't God stop atrocious sufferings now, such as kidnappings, plagues, and tortures?

God has a perfect plan that was determined before the foundations of the world. (**1Pe 1:18-20, Rev 13:8**)

God has already done something magnificent about sin and suffering.

His answer to sin and suffering is the life and death of His Son, Jesus. (**Jn 3:16, 1Jn 2:6**)

His answer is to obey His 10 commandments and by faith to be saved by His cross. (**Jn 12:32,33, Jn 14:15, Heb 10:16, Rev 14:12**)

Jesus is coming again. (**Jn 14:1-6**)

To stop all atrocities now, Jesus would have to come back now.

It is not yet time for Jesus to come back. (**2Pe 3:9**)

First, the gospel must be preached to all people in all nations. (**Mt 24:14**)

We can do our part to minimize suffering. (**Pr 31:8,9, Mt 5:16**)

We can do our part to hasten His return. (**2Co 5:18-21, 2Pe 3:10-12, Mt 28:19,20**)
