

WHY IS THERE SO MUCH SUFFERING?

“Where is God in all this? Go to him when your need is desperate and all other help is vain. What do you find? A door slammed in your face and the sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence.”

-CS Lewis, A Grief Observed

Why Is There Suffering?

1). Not because someone sinned

John 9:1-3 (NIV) *As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.*

Luke 13:1 (NIV) *Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? ³ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*

2). Yet we live under the Fall.

Romans 3:23 *all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

God Can Use Suffering in 4 Ways:

1). God draws us to Himself

Hebrews 6:19 (NIV) *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰ where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf.*

Psalm 56:8 (NLT) *You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.*

2). God Strengthens our Faith

James 1:2 (NIV) *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds.*

James 1:12 (NIV) *Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.*

1 Peter 1:7 (NIV) *These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

3). God helps us to See Differently

Romans 8:28 (NIV) *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.*

4). God uses us to Help Others

2 Corinthians 1:4 (NIV) *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*