Why so much Human Suffering?

Summary

A child's fatal illness, a mining disaster, two World Wars — the question of why a good God allows suffering is as old as suffering itself. This article traces the answer back to Eden, and forward to the reign of peace that ends it.

- The classic problem of suffering, posed through real tragedies.
- Genesis' answer: Adam's choice to define right and wrong apart from Yahweh as the root of a "reap what we sow" pattern.
- Modern illustration: sexually-transmitted-disease statistics as a case study in self-inflicted consequence.
- Yahweh's respect for human free will versus His coming intervention: the literal 1,000-year reign of peace.

The full article begins on the next page.

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A little boy suffered from a congenital heart defect. Death hung over his every breath. It took his life before he had a chance to really understand what living was all about. He was only 3 years old.

Why? Why does Yahweh let little children like this die? Where is Yahweh when we need Him most?

In Europe, a coal mine explosion snuffed out the lives of 51 miners. They were hard working men. Many were loving fathers and husbands, dedicated to supporting and maintaining their families.

The pain and tragedy of it all was dramatically evidenced by scenes of weeping wives and family members, reeling and agonizing over the loss of their loved ones.

Where was Yahweh? Why does Yahweh allow such terrible disasters and suffering to occur, concerned people ask?

According to estimates, in World War I, more than 8 million military personnel were killed, and millions of civilians not in direct combat also died. Multiple millions of others suffered painful, debilitating, deforming injuries that would last for the rest of their lives.

World War II occurred in nearly the same area and for some of the same reasons. The loss of life and incident of mayhem and crippling injuries were staggeringly worse.

As the smoke was barely clearing from World War II, fighting and killing erupted in the Middle East. In other areas of the globe hundreds of local wars have since been fought. Why does Yahweh allow so much suffering? Why does He not prevent wars?

Droughts and floods afflict our globe. Crops can't grow - livestock can't survive. Famine looms over many regions. Why does Yahweh allow natural disasters to strike that cause famines and starvation, disease and death? Where is Yahweh?

Nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche claimed: "God is dead!" English mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote a prodigious amount of verbiage in his

"Unpopular Essays" trying to prove a God never existed; that there was not a "first cause", as he stated it.

But objective individuals know better. The intricately woven details of this earth's composition and life systems, let alone the rest of the universe, prove a First Cause.

Yahweh does exist - His creation proves it! "The fool has said in his heart, `There is no God'" *(Psalm 14:1)*. "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Divinity, so they are without excuse" *(Romans 1:20)*. "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of Yahweh, so that the THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN WERE NOT MADE OF THINGS WHICH ARE VISIBLE" *(Hebrews 11:3). (A fact recently PROVED by scientists - the smallest known particles of matter, when under extreme magnification, are nothing more than "organized energy patterns, giving the appearance of substance"!)*

If Yahweh does exist - and He does - why must the world face devastating, heartrending problems? Why has there been so much suffering throughout human history?

There is a reason why humans find themselves engulfed in seemingly unsolvable problems, despite all of the marvellous technology and scientific understanding man has acquired.

To comprehend why this earth is in the plight it is in, and why humans have written so much blood and suffering into history, we must go back to our beginning. The only reliable source of available knowledge - the Bible - our very own personal "operator's manual" for the mortal, human race!

"In the beginning Yahweh created [re-created, re-fashioned from what Satan's rebellion destroyed, and Yahweh had previously created] the heavens and the earth" *(Gen. 1:1)*. The great Yahweh from another dimension, out of another realm - other than the physical one which we are able to understand, did it all. No other explanation makes sense.

Much later, He began our human history on earth. "So Yahweh created man in His own image" *(Gen. 1:27*). Yahweh purposefully left out much of the history of the universe and life on earth prior to our being first introduced. Our "operator's manual" - the Bible, is written about, and refers only to the period of time that is relevant to us in this mortal lifetime. The extreme past as well as the extreme future *(our*

eternal life in the Kingdom) has been left out for simplification - in order that we might be able to concentrate on the task at hand - getting this mortal life in order, and preparing for the future. Think of comparing it to the operator's manual of a new car. The car manufacturer includes only that information pertaining to the year and model of the car you purchased - even though you know the car manufacturer has produced many previous models, and may yet produce future models.

Our original parents were given a first simple rule and the free-will choice to follow it. Along with the choice, Yahweh warned them of the penalty for making the wrong choice.

"...Of every tree of the garden you may eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" *(Gen. 2:16,17).* Yahweh was symbolically telling Adam that if he chose to determine on his own what was right and wrong - thereby rejecting the certain knowledge of what is right and wrong that Yahweh said He would freely provide, that Adam *(and his progeny)* would surely make some errors, resulting in death. Yahweh had already learned of the problems inherent in allowing His created beings - the angels,

to make this same choice - their rebellion and eternal punishment.

Our parents made the wrong choice. They were unable to resist the temptation of trying to do it "on their own". They turned down "the tree of life" - the symbolic representation of accepting Yahweh's definition of right and wrong - living Yahweh's way which leads to happiness, abundant living now - ultimately leading to eternal life.

Instead they chose what Yahweh had warned them not to. The way of hit and miss, some happiness at times, much sorrow and difficulty, and the way of living apart from Yahweh - as He had warned, that would lead to death.

That's why all the suffering, war and hardships of the past and why the same today! Just like our first parents, we have had, and still do have, the free-will choice of following Yahweh's defined ways of what is right and wrong. History, past and present, is witness to our stubborn continuance of this rejection. It is that simple!

The Bible clearly teaches us, that in THIS LIFE, "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW". An example: We celebrate our recent choices that resulted in our "sexual

liberation". Over the past 30 years, the cases of sexually transmissible diseases have skyrocketed to the point where one in four men or women in North America has been infected at least once, with herpes, gonorrhoea, or syphilis. The World Health Organization has warned that HIV *(the AIDS virus)* could spread through much of our population unless a cure or quarantine is introduced. And we still discuss sexual freedom as a "basic right between consenting adults"!

The words "consenting adult" are an obvious contradiction in terms; any one sufficiently informed to make an "adult" decision, would never willingly participate in "liberated" sexual encounters under these circumstances. But millions still do! Like animals - brute beasts, their brains do not function sufficiently to overcome the momentary satisfaction of relieving their sex organs! These so-called "liberated" men or women are contributing to a tragic loss of life, the pain and suffering of those infected as well as their friends and relatives, and the hundreds of billions of dollars this costs us all, as ample evidence that we "reap what we sow" in this lifetime!

Yahweh is aware of what takes place on this earth. He knows the suffering and heartache that is extant. But

He does not desire that mankind shall live the WAY PEOPLE HAVE CHOSEN. "Behold, Yahweh's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" *(Isa. 59:1,2)*.

Yahweh does not want humanity to suffer. Yet He knew that without suffering we would never learn the full meaning of the wrong choices we make - that we would never learn the full meaning of His Love - Yahweh is love *(1 John 4:16)*. The love that He freely gave us in our hearts and in our minds - and in writing - in His Word. He is all compassionate, full of mercy, long-suffering and kindness - He cares about you and me!

At the same time Yahweh does not want to remove our free-will choices. He is not looking to create some mindless automatons. Rather, He is in the process of creating like-minded beings who are learning to discern, desire and choose His way of life. During this process we humans must learn that having our own way, the "way of good and evil" that we choose, is the way that leads us to unhappiness and miseries. Yahweh is not to be blamed for our own greed,

hypocrisy, lying, cheating, governmental corruption, false religions - over-inflated egos! But Yahweh is responsible for the discipline, the punishment - suffering - that we bring upon ourselves as a result of our wrong decisions.

Yahweh is watching developments on this earth. He is still keeping hands off and allowing men to make choices - to complete *(finish)* the experience of learning how really wrong some of our ways are, that seem so right to us.

Yahweh is waiting until sin reaches the full; until the time comes when, if He did not step in to intervene, mankind would bring *(and would know it)* an end to all life *(Matt. 24:22)*. Then at the precise time, Yahweh will send Yah'shua the Messiah back to this earth to put an end to man's rule, and establish Yahweh's Kingdom.

For 1,000 years *(Rev. 20:4)* Yahweh's way of life will bring peace, health and prosperity. The "earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters of the sea" *(Isa. 11:9).*

War shall become a thing of the past: "They shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword

against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" *(Mic. 4:3).*

And then our vast undertaking of participating in the "creative management" of the entire creation - the universe, will begin!

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