



MINISTÈRE DU PASTEUR CLÉMENT SALOMON · BIBLE STUDY #7

Why Does God Allow Suffering?

The honest answer the Bible gives — and the God who cries with you

Somewhere tonight a grandmother is sitting on a plastic chair in a hospital hallway. It is past two in the morning. She is not arguing about theology. She is not looking for a clever answer. She is holding the edge of her dress in both fists and whispering one word over and over: *Why?*

If you have ever whispered that word, this study is for you. And here is the first thing you should know: God is not offended by the question. The Bible is full of people who asked it out loud — and God kept talking to them.

Start where the trouble started

Many people begin the question in the wrong place. They begin with, "Why did God do this?" The Bible begins somewhere else. When God finished making the world, He looked at it and said it was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). No graves. No hunger. No hospitals. That was His design.

Then something entered the garden that God never planted. A voice in Eden told the first lie ever told about God:

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

Genesis 3:4 (KJV)

That lie was a whisper that God could not be trusted — and the moment it was believed, the world cracked. Every funeral since has been an aftershock. Jesus explained the same thing with a story about a farmer whose good field filled with weeds overnight. The workers asked

where the weeds came from. The farmer's answer is one of the most important sentences in Scripture:

"An enemy hath done this."

Matthew 13:28 (KJV)

Read that again if you have been blaming God for a grave. Jesus said the weeds have an author, and it is not the Farmer.

There is a war you cannot see

The Bible pulls back the curtain and shows us something staggering: this planet is not a quiet corner of the universe. It is a battlefield in a conflict that started in heaven.

"And there was war in heaven... And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth."

Revelation 12:7-9 (KJV)

A real enemy. A real rebellion. And notice how the passage ends — with a warning and a countdown:

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth... for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Revelation 12:12 (KJV)

Two things are true in that verse at once. First: much of the pain in this world is the rage of a defeated enemy, not the will of a loving Father. Second — and don't miss this — **he has only a short time**. The war is real, but it is not endless, and it is not undecided.

The man who lost everything

There is an entire book in the Bible written for people in that hospital hallway. It is the book of Job. In one day Job lost his property, his workers, and all ten of his children. Then he lost his

health.

Here is what makes the book so important: the reader is shown the part Job never saw. In chapters 1 and 2, the disasters are traced to Satan, not to God — and God sets limits on what the enemy is allowed to touch (Job 1:12; 2:6). Job's friends had it all wrong. They insisted he must have sinned. They were confident, religious, and completely mistaken — and at the end God rebuked them for it (Job 42:7).

"The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job 1:21 (KJV)

And here is the most honest part of the whole book: *Job never received an explanation.* God never handed him a chart of chapters 1 and 2. What Job received was God Himself — and it was enough. Sometimes the answer to "why" is not information. It is a Person.

Where was God when it happened?

People often picture God far above the suffering, arms folded, watching. The Bible shows the opposite. Stand at the grave of Lazarus and watch what God incarnate does when He meets human grief. He knows the man will be alive in ten minutes. He cries anyway.

"Jesus wept."

John 11:35 (KJV)

Two words. They tell you that your tears are not an inconvenience to heaven. The prophet said it centuries earlier:

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

Isaiah 53:4 (KJV)

And then, at the cross, God did something no other religion claims about its God: He climbed into the suffering Himself. Jesus was betrayed, beaten, abandoned, and He cried out in the dark. So when you ask, "God, do You know what this feels like?" — the scars answer before He does.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

Psalm 34:18 (KJV)

"But couldn't He just stop it?"

Yes. And one day He will. So why the wait? The Bible gives a reason that is not comfortable but is deeply kind:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9 (KJV)

Every day God waits is a day someone else can still come home. If He ended the story last year, some of the people you are praying for would not be in it. The delay is not indifference. It is mercy holding the door open — and the door is still open for you tonight.

What Romans 8:28 really says

This verse gets quoted at funerals, sometimes clumsily. Read it slowly, word for word:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Romans 8:28 (KJV)

It does **not** say all things are good. Cancer is not good. Abuse is not good. What it says is that God can take what He never wanted, and work it — weave it — into something good. Joseph said it to the brothers who sold him: "ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20). God is not the author of your pain. He is the Redeemer of it.

And there is a purpose you may not have considered. Paul wrote that God "comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble" (2 Corinthians 1:4). The people who help hurting people best are almost always people who have hurt. Your worst season may become someone else's lifeline.

How the story ends

Jesus never promised His followers a life without pain. He was more honest than that — and more hopeful:

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 (KJV)

He came to end this, and He said so plainly: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8). The cross was the turning point. The return of Jesus is the finish. And the last chapter has already been written:

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Revelation 21:4 (KJV)

Notice who does the wiping. Not an angel. God Himself bends down to your face. And when it is over, it is over for ever — "affliction shall not rise up the second time" (Nahum 1:9).

So the Bible's answer to suffering is not a formula. It is this: **God did not start it. God suffers with you in it. God is working good out of it. And God has already set the date to end it.**

Before you close this — one question

What are you carrying right now that you have never said out loud to God? You do not have to be strong or have the right words. You can simply say, "Lord, I don't understand — but I'm not letting go of You." That prayer has held up stronger people than you think.

If you are hurting, please also reach out to people who can help you in person — a pastor, a trusted friend, or a qualified professional. This study is spiritual encouragement, not medical advice. **In an emergency, call 911.**

Would you like to know more about Jesus, study the Bible, or go deeper on this topic? Reach us today:

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SHARE THIS WITH SOMEONE WHO IS ASKING "WHY?" TONIGHT

Viewer Handout

Why Does God Allow Suffering? — pocket version

5 truths to remember

1. God made a world that was "very good" — suffering came from an enemy, not from His design (Genesis 1:31; 3:1-6; Matthew 13:28).
2. There is a real war behind what we see, and the enemy knows "he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:7-12).
3. God does not always give explanations, but He gives Himself — Job's story shows heaven's side (Job 1:12; 2:6; 42:7).
4. God is not distant from your pain: "Jesus wept," and He bore our sorrows (John 11:35; Isaiah 53:4; Psalm 34:18).
5. He waits in mercy, works good out of evil, and will end suffering for ever (2 Peter 3:9; Romans 8:28; Revelation 21:4).

Memory verse

"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

Revelation 21:4 (KJV)

Think & pray about it

- What have I been blaming God for that the Bible traces to the enemy instead?
- Where has God quietly carried me through something I thought would break me?
- Who around me is hurting right now, and how could my own hard season help them?

Presenter Bullet Sheet

- **Open with the story** (the grandmother in the hospital hallway) — ask gently: "When did you last ask God 'why'?" Let the silence sit; do not rush to fix it.
- **Point 1 — Where trouble began:** Genesis 1:31; Genesis 3:1-6; Matthew 13:28. God's design was "very good"; "an enemy hath done this."
- **Point 2 — The unseen war:** Revelation 12:7-12. A real rebellion, a real enemy, and a limited time.
- **Point 3 — Job:** Job 1-2 summary. The disasters came from Satan, God set limits (1:12; 2:6). Correct the friends' error (42:7): suffering is not proof of sin.
- **Point 4 — God with us in it:** John 11:35; Isaiah 53:4; Psalm 34:18; the cross. He entered the suffering.
- **Point 5 — Why the delay:** 2 Peter 3:9. Mercy, not indifference.
- **Point 6 — Romans 8:28 handled carefully:** not "all things are good," but God works good out of evil (Genesis 50:20; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4).
- **Point 7 — The end of the story:** John 16:33; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 21:4; Nahum 1:9.
- **Appeal:** Invite each person to bring the unspoken pain to Jesus tonight — no perfect words required. Offer prayer and Bible study. Remind the group that serious grief, depression or crisis also needs qualified help; in an emergency, call 911.
- **Close:** Memory verse (Revelation 21:4) + tease the next topic ("Prayer That Changes Everything").

10 Myths vs. Facts

Myth	Fact (with Bible)
1. God sends sickness and disaster to punish people.	"God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13). Jesus denied that victims of a tragedy were worse sinners (Luke 13:1-5).
2. If you are suffering, you must have hidden sin or weak faith.	Of the blind man Jesus said, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents" (John 9:3). God Himself called Job "perfect and upright" before the losses (Job 1:8).
3. God caused Job's disasters.	Scripture traces them to Satan, with God setting limits on what he could touch (Job 1:12; 2:6-7).
4. Suffering was part of God's original plan.	God's finished creation was "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Jesus said of the ruined field, "An enemy hath done this" (Matthew 13:28).
5. God is far away and does not feel our pain.	"Jesus wept" (John 11:35); "he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4); He is "nigh unto them that are of a broken heart" (Psalm 34:18).
6. A good, powerful God would have ended evil by now — so He is neither.	He already struck the decisive blow (1 John 3:8) and waits only so more can be saved (2 Peter 3:9). The enemy "hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12).
7. Real Christians should not grieve.	Paul says do not grieve "as others which have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13) — grief with hope, not no grief. Jesus wept, and we are told to "weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15).
8. Suffering means God has abandoned me.	"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). Nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:38-39).
9. Romans 8:28 means everything that happens is good.	It says all things "work together for good" for those who love God — He redeems what He did not cause, as with Joseph: "ye

	thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20).
10. Enough faith guarantees healing and a trouble-free life now.	Paul's request was answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:7-9); faithful believers were not all delivered in this life (Hebrews 11:35-39). Jesus promised tribulation now and full healing at the end (John 16:33; Revelation 21:4).

Where this comes from (Sources)

This study is built on the Bible and reflects the published beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Verify everything for yourself:

- The Bible — passages on suffering and the great controversy: Genesis 1:31; 3:1-6; 50:20; Job 1-2; 42:7; Psalm 34:18; Isaiah 53:4; Nahum 1:9; Matthew 13:24-30; Luke 13:1-5; John 9:1-3; 11:35; 16:33; Romans 8:28, 38-39; 12:15; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; 12:7-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; Hebrews 11:35-39; 13:5; James 1:13; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:7-12; 21:4 (King James Version, public domain).
- Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #8, "The Great Controversy": <https://adventist.org/beliefs>
- 28 Fundamental Beliefs (2020 edition, PDF): <https://adventist.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ADV-28Beliefs2020.pdf>
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: <https://gc.adventist.org/>
- Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy; Patriarchs and Prophets*, ch. 1 "Why Was Sin Permitted?"; *Steps to Christ* (public domain): <https://whiteestate.org/> / <https://m.egwwritings.org/>

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pasteurclementsalamon.org · 903-748-9353 · jils19802012@gmail.com

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