

TITLE

How can God be good when there is so much suffering and poverty in the world?

“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!”

Psalm 34:8

PAGE ONE

The Bible teaches that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have eternally existed as one God, existing together in perfect love and harmony. As a good and perfect God, they had no beginning. God was never created, He has always been.

PAGE TWO

God had everything He needed in Himself to be completely happy. Because he overflowed in abundance with so much goodness, He created the Universe. As the most supremely intelligent being in all existence He created time, the earth, all living things, and mankind.

PAGE THREE

God knew everything that would ever happen in the future and He has always been completely in control of all things. There is nothing above Him in knowledge or power, which is why He is called God. When He created the world He had a plan.

PAGE FOUR

The Bible says, God spoke, and the world was created! As the perfect and all wise creator He made a very detailed and beautifully designed world! In the beginning days, there was no sin, no pain, no sickness, no evil, and no death. The world was made in such a masterful way that man could have air, food, water and all he needed to live, including love.

PAGE FIVE

Then he walked with the man He had created in His own likeness, Adam and his wife, Eve, in an amazing garden called Eden. They had a great relationship and nothing hindered the understanding Adam had of this loving God.

PAGE SIX

However, in Heaven there was a beautiful angel named Lucifer who wanted to be God. He rebelled against God with an army of many many angels. God cast every one of them from heaven to the earth like falling stars! He has promised them a very dark future!

PAGE SEVEN

In this garden there were two trees. One tree was the Tree of Life. The other tree was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God commanded Adam and Eve to never eat of this tree. He warned them that if they did they would surely die!

PAGE EIGHT

The fruit on this tree was very pleasing to the eyes. One day, Lucifer, who is the devil, devised a plan to use this tree to destroy God's creation, because he wanted to become god over man, and rule over the world which God had given man to rule over.

PAGE NINE

The devil in the form of a snake spoke to Eve. He deceived her into thinking that eating the fruit would help her become something better than she was, and to become like God herself. When she ate it and gave some to Adam, he ate even though he knew exactly what he was doing. Adam and Eve found immediate spiritual death and would begin to die physically.

PAGE TEN

Adam and Eve lost the glory they had as the first humans created without sin and felt tremendous guilt for disobeying God. Rather than running to God for help, they tried to cover themselves and hid in shame. This is what many people do today in their own ways, and the Bible clearly explains why things are the way they are in the world we live in. It has better answers for reality than any other book in the world because it teaches God's own message to us rather than some explanation invented by man.

PAGE ELEVEN

God knew they were hiding and because He loved them so much He called out to them. When he found them He knew they could never cover their own shame. He provided a better covering for them, but explained that there would be serious consequences to such a big mistake. Often people try to cover their shame or fill their lives with things other than God. They know in their hearts something big is missing. Sadly, they try to find meaning and fill their lives with all kinds of things, like money, success, drugs, alcohol, hate, love, acceptance, approval, people, stuff, and the list goes on and on.

PAGE TWELVE

Adam was the first man ever created. He was perfectly able to choose God over sin because he was created pure. He represented the entire human race. Because he chose to go his own way, rather than obey God's way, the entire world would come under a terrible curse. God had to punish sin because as a perfectly holy God, He is a just God.

PAGE THIRTEEN

However, like we said, God knew the future of all things, and before He even created the world He had designed a plan. He made a promise to Adam and Eve that in the right time He would send a man born from a woman's seed to save man from sin, death and the devil. The devil was cursed forever, without any chance of salvation. He would receive no mercy, only justice!

PAGE FOURTEEN

Part of the consequences of Adam and Eve's rebellion were that now men would grow old and die. The world would be filled with suffering, poverty, pain, sickness, guilt, shame, and death as a result of sin. Man would now be separated from God and all His beauty and goodness.

PAGE FIFTEEN

From there out, as children of Adam, all men and women would be born like Adam, as sinners. Sin is why people are selfish, why they lie, cheat, steal, hate, and kill others. Sin is why people in their hearts are blind to God's love and have become separated from Him, even though He is so good.

PAGE SIXTEEN

If God is all wise, all powerful, perfectly loving, and abundantly good and He knows the future, why did he put that tree in the garden if He knew what would happen?

Because God created time and is outside of it! He sees all things from the beginning to the end and He knows that the end will be far better than the beginning!

PAGE SEVENTEEN

God is overflowing with goodness and now, after the fall of mankind, He would be able to come and save a dying world. He now had a stage in which to display His glory through grand acts of love, mercy, healing, forgiveness, wisdom and power.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

But how could He do such loving and gracious things for men who don't deserve His love, since they are children of Adam, making all men born to desire sin more than God?

Why would God do this for people who always choose sin and choose to live for themselves, instead of loving and obeying God?

How could He not punish men justly and still be just?

If He didn't punish rebellion against righteousness He would be corrupt.

PAGE NINETEEN

God, the creator, planned to become a man who would be born of a virgin. This way He would not be born under Adam but created by God! He lived a sinless life and was completely holy. He taught people many wonderful things about God's Kingdom, how to live for God, and would make it so man and God could have a loving relationship once again. How?

PAGE TWENTY

His name was Jesus. Jesus healed many people and even had power over the forces of nature! He forgave peoples sins and did good deeds on the Sabbath. He told people that He lived before He was born and prophesied that He would be crucified by men. But He also promised that He would one day return on the clouds of the sky to reign as King of the earth instead of the devil!

PAGE TWENTY ONE

Jesus spoke against evil, religious hypocrisy, corruption, sin and pride. Jesus claimed to be everlasting, one with the Father, and the only way to God. Many people believed in Him and followed Him. They wanted Him to be their king. Others turned away from Him! Some powerful and jealous religious leaders feared Him. They schemed to have Him killed because He equated Himself with God and accepted worship from people.

PAGE TWENTY TWO

The next thing that happened would be the most important event in world history! Jesus would be beaten terribly and his beard ripped out. Then He would be mocked, and spit upon. His hands and feet would be pierced through with nails as he was hammered to a cross. Then He was left to suffocate as liquid filled His lungs, bleeding for hours, slowly dying. Jesus knew this was going to happen and though it made him indescribably sad, He allowed it anyway.

PAGE TWENTY THREE

If Jesus was God why did He let them do this to Him?

Although his physical pain was terrible, there was something much harder and much more painful for Him to bear. At any moment He could have commanded many angels to rescue Him, but He didn't! Instead, darkness covered the earth.

PAGE TWENTY FOUR

Jesus was God the Son and for all eternity He had had a perfect relationship with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Their relationship had perfect harmony and love without any sin, friction or selfishness of any kind. Together they were completely happy and loved each other perfectly.

PAGE TWENTY FIVE

On the cross God would take all His hatred and wrath for sin, the righteous punishment for what Adam had done and pour it out on His own beloved Son. All of it! For the first time ever they were separated. Not only was God experiencing physical death, but worst of all, a spiritual death He had never known! A death He did not deserve to die because He was entirely innocent.

PAGE TWENTY SIX

He would suffer more than any sinner ever would have to in Hell, because no matter how long someone suffers in Hell they can never atone for the sins of Adam or their own. Eternal separation from God is what happens when men reject a God who is perfect and righteous. It is the only just consequence for such a terrible offense. Jesus took this separation, along with all of our guilt and shame, although He had never once sinned!

PAGE TWENTY SEVEN

But now the price was being paid for the sins of God's people because He loved the world! God loved the world so much that He crushed His own blameless Son. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to suffer the agony and torment of the cross. But He knew what would happen next and His faith strengthened Him to endure the pain.

PAGE TWENTY EIGHT

After Jesus died he was placed in a tomb. All His disciples, who wanted Him to be king, walked away very discouraged, grieving the death of their beloved master. But, on the third day He would accomplish the greatest miracle of all time. Death had no right to keep Him, because He had never sinned! He rose from the dead in a glorified body, defeating death and the grave! This proved all He ever said and predicted!

PAGE TWENTY NINE

Jesus walked the earth for forty days and showed Himself to His disciples and hundreds of other people. Many saw Him with their own eyes and even touched the holes in His hands, kneeling down to worship Him. He told His disciples to take His message to the entire world! After they had seen Him raise from the dead, Jesus gave them power and filled them with the Holy Spirit. They went out into the world with lots of boldness and courage to fulfill this mission, often facing persecution and death!

PAGE THIRTY

Throughout history, up to this very day, this mission continues, and Jesus asks everyone who wants to be His disciple to tell the world of His sacrifice! It is only in this story that we make sense of all the suffering in the world. Only when we see God's salvation can we understand that it all happened so that the end would be even better than the beginning! God cannot ever do anything that is less than perfect!

PAGE THIRTY ONE

How can a person be saved from their sins, so that the punishment they deserve for sinning against a good God can be placed upon Jesus instead?

The Bible says to believe in who Jesus is and what He has done, that He is God in the flesh, as the Bible teaches. All you must do is truly place your trust in Him! That's it! Because He is perfectly righteous, He is the only person who could ever pay the price for your sin. He paid it in full with His sacrifice!

PAGE THIRTY TWO

There is one very important thing to remember. God knows all things, even the hidden things in our hearts. To pray and place our trust in Jesus we must be sincere and truly committed to Him. Our faith must be genuine, and if it is, it is something we will want to do every day of our lives. We must desire to be with God and know God, to experience His love and to love Him in return.

PAGE THIRTY THREE

There is absolutely nothing else you must do other than put all your hope, faith, and trust in Jesus. If you truly do that, if you truly become one of God's children, then you will become a new person. The Bible says you will be born again and made a new creature! It's called the miracle of the new birth! This means your spirit is made pure just like Jesus was, and all your sins are forgiven! All of them! Your soul will live forever in perfect relationship with God the Father! You will no longer need to try to find meaning in your life and fill it with other things because you will have Jesus!

PAGE THIRTY FOUR

How do you know if you really meant it when you prayed?

If you see that you desire to know Jesus more by reading the Bible, if you have a sincere desire to be around other Christians to fellowship with them and learn from them, if you have a true desire to be free from your sins and please God by how you live, then you can be pretty sure you belong to Jesus. Give Jesus control of your life and tell Him you do not want to be in charge of your own decisions but that you want to follow Him from now on! Jesus is the only way to God.

PAGE THIRTY FIVE

If these desires are not in your heart, cry out to God to save you! Give Him your life! Do it now before it is too late! If you die you will not get another chance, and no one is guaranteed to live another day! You could die this very day and stand before God. What will you say if He asks you why He should let you enter His Eternal Kingdom where truth and righteousness reign? The time in this life is just a short blip on the screen compared to eternity!

PAGE THIRTY SIX

Jesus asks us to turn away from our sin and believe in Him. Then we should go and be baptized continuing to learn all we can about Him from the Bible. In the end of the story there will be a tree of life in Heaven. We will all have glorified bodies just like Jesus had after He rose from the dead! In Heaven there will be people from every single language and nation on earth praising and worshiping Jesus in all His glory!

Because sin and suffering was allowed to enter the world, the end will be wonderfully magnificent! Most importantly, God will be there with us!

PAGE THIRTY SEVEN

What should you do now?

Begin to pray and read your Bible so that you can know God. Write down all your questions and bring them to an experienced Christian who is willing to spend time teaching you about Jesus and the Bible. Make sure this person understands that Jesus is all you need to be saved, not some other good works of your own. Make sure they understand you don't have to be taking any sacrament to be saved. Jesus never taught this and these teachings are not from God. Jesus taught that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone! Sacraments are good but they are not what saves people!

The Bible also teaches that we are to pray to God the Father, through Jesus, with the help of the Holy Spirit. It does not teach us ever to pray to anybody else anywhere in the Bible! Do not allow anyone to distract you from Jesus where your prayers can be heard!

PAGE THIRTY EIGHT

Our trust must be in Christ alone and not in anything else, only Jesus and what He has already done! Begin attending a good church where people love God and the Bible is taught well, so that you can grow closer to God and become more like His Son Jesus.

Understand that God's love for you is unfathomable and larger and deeper than many oceans! He keeps all His promises and He promises to never leave you or forsake you all your days!

If you have any questions feel free to visit us and ask at:

PAGE THIRTY NINE AND FORTY

JESUS!

"...there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

(ALL SCRIPTURE REFERENCES...)

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