

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

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1 Peter 3:15b–16a (NLT) (15)...**If someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. (16) But do this in a gentle and respectful way...**

TODAY'S BIG QUESTION: WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

John 16:33 (NLT) (33) I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

FIVE TRUTHS ABOUT SUFFERING:

1) **Suffering entered the world through _____ and was not God's desire for us.**

Romans 5:12 (NLT) (12) When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

GOD NEVER INTENDED FOR US TO EXPERIENCE SUFFERING. SUFFERING WAS THE CONSEQUENCE OF ADAM AND EVE'S SIN.

A WORLD WITHOUT FREE WILL WOULD BE A WORLD WITHOUT LOVE.

2) **Suffering can _____ that comfort and an easy life could never produce.**

GOD DOES NOT WASTE SUFFERING.

James 1:2–4 (NLT) (2) Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. (3) For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. (4) So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

1 Peter 1:6–7 (NLT) (6) So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. (7) These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

3) **God is at _____ even when we cannot see it.**

Genesis 50:20 (NLT) (20) You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.

Romans 8:28 (NLT) (28) And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

WE OFTEN ASK “WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME?” A BETTER QUESTION TO ASK IS “WILL I TRUST GOD TO BE AT WORK IN MY SITUATION WHEN I CANNOT SEE IT OR FEEL IT?”

Psalm 22:1–2 (NLT) (1) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away when I groan for help? (2) Every day I call to you, my God, but you do not answer. Every night I lift my voice, but I find no relief.

Matthew 27:46 (NLT) (46) At about three o’clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which means “*My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?*”

4) God _____ through our suffering and we never have to do it alone unless we choose to do so.

Psalm 23:4 (NLT) (4) Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

GOD DOES NOT PROMISE TO REMOVE THE VALLEY. HE PROMISES TO WALK WITH YOU THROUGH IT.

Hebrews 4:15–16 (NLT) (15) This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. (16) So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

Psalm 34:18 (NLT) (18) The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FACE WHAT YOU ARE FACING ALONE!

5) Look forward to your _____ and choose to believe your suffering is not the end of the story.

Romans 8:18 (NLT) (18) Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.

Revelation 21:3–4 (NLT) (3) I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. (4) He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

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