

“The Problem of Pain and Suffering”
The Gospel of John Chapter 9:1-12

How is it possible for a good and loving God to allow the terrible suffering and tragedies that surround us? If He is omnipotent, does He not have the power to stop disasters and cause this man to see from birth?

The answer to these questions is not completely given in scripture, as God holds many secrets (Deut. 29:29). He is infinite and we are not (Job chapter 38 & 39; Isa. 55:8-9). We must begin with an understanding of the character and nature of God to cast light on our dilemma.

God is perfectly holy, righteous and good (Lev. 19:2; Ps. 25:8, 107:1; Lk. 18:19). He is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1Jhn. 1:5)! Everything He created was very good (Gen. 1:31; Jms. 1:17). Lucifer was created a beautiful angel, but rebelled against God and became the **evil** one (Isa. 14:12-20; 1Jhn. 5:19). Adam succumbed to Satan’s temptation (Gen. Chapter 3) and death entered the world through Adam’s sin (Rom. 5:12). The whole of creation was subsequently stained after the Fall (Rom. 8:20-23). God is not the author or creator of evil, death or suffering. They originated in the **evil** one and are passed on to those who follow him (Jhn. 8:44; Eph. 2:2; Heb. 2:14; 1Pet. 5:8). Such scriptures as Ex. 4:11 and Isa. 45:7 can only be understood in the context of their occurrence after the Fall.

God would not allow His creation to remain in such condition, for He sent His Son to destroy the works of the devil (1Jhn. 3:8). He accomplished this through Jesus’ suffering, culminating on the cross (1Pet. 3:18). The cross is God’s answer to sin and suffering in the world (Rom. 8:28-32). All of creation will be redeemed when Christ returns and establishes a new heaven and earth ((Rom. 8:18-19; 2Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. Chapters 21 & 22).

The disciples have misunderstood these particulars as we note from their questions to Jesus. He first corrects their erroneous thinking (Mk. 12:24). He then proceeds not to answer their questions but to give God’s purpose for this man who was born blind. That purpose is God’s glory (Jhn. 11:4; 1Cor. 6:20, 10:31)! The Light of the world (spiritually literally true) now opens the eyes of the blind man (physically literally true) to authenticate He is God in the flesh (Mk. 2:1-12) and has the power to illuminate the spiritually blind as well. The One who was sent by God (Jhn. 8:29) instructs the blind man to go to the pool of Siloam (which means sent).

His responsibility, like ours, is to believe and obey the Son of God.