

## **If God is so powerful, why does He allow bad things to happen in the world?**

This is a good question that many people have asked. There are two kinds of “bad things” that take place in the world: 1. natural and 2. man-made. Most bad things are man-made and take place because of wicked and sinful choices that human beings make. For instance, the holocaust was a horrible chapter in human history. Six million Jewish people died as a result of Adolph Hitler's atrocities. Was it God's fault that Adolf Hitler chose to hate Jews and to murder them? Was it God's fault that the people around Hitler followed his leadership? Was it God's fault that the German people at the time embraced Hitler as their leader? Does God's Word, the Bible, teach that we should hate Jews or murder them? One of the Ten Commandments says, “Thou shalt not kill.” (Exodus 20:13) The fact is that God, in His power, has given us His Word. When we choose to disobey it, that is not God's fault. It is our fault. When leaders of countries slaughter their own people is that God's fault, or did they choose to disobey His Word? When a criminal breaks into your house and steals your stereo, did God do that, or the criminal who disobeyed God's command? In addition to His Word, God has set up several means to prevent bad things from happening, and to take care of those who violate His laws.

The Bible tells us in Romans chapter thirteen, that God has instituted the power of government on earth to prevent crime and punish criminals. “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” (Romans 13:3-4)

We must also remember that according to Scripture, judgment is coming. Those who have hated God and rejected Him will stand before His judgment seat. Adolf Hitler, who in the 1940's felt God's judgment through the governments of this world and their military powers will one day stand before God's judgment seat to experience His eternal wrath. So will every murderer, thief, adulterer and breaker of God's law who does not repent and turn to Jesus Christ for mercy and forgiveness. “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” (Hebrews 9:27)

God punishes sin all of the time. He just does not always punish it immediately or in the way that we would expect. We might expect to see lightning bolts coming out of the sky to zap someone. Instead, we see a criminal sitting in a cell in the county jail. I work a lot in the jail and the men there will tell you that they are being judged for their sins. Could God stop sin from happening? Certainly He could, but He chooses rather to give us His Word, a conscience, and human authority. When we willfully and wickedly choose to violate these restraints, judgment will come.

Does the fact that God chooses not to judge sin in the way that we think He should mean that He is wrong? Is it possible that we are wrong? Could God perhaps know more than we do about running the Universe? I know that I'm being sarcastic, but dear friend, we

would do well to think about these things before we jump to conclusions about God being unjust.

It is important, also, to remember several things.

1. God did not create the world this way. When God created the world, there was no sin, death, suffering or sorrow. When Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, choose to disobey God's law in the Garden of Eden; sin, death, sorrow and pain entered into the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12 )

2. If we believe the Bible then we believe that there is a Devil and demons who are working against God in this world. So, they are the source of some of the bad things that happen.

3. God is not mad at you if you don't understand what He is doing or have questions. God is a big God; He can handle your questions. My mother became terminally ill and died several years ago. She was a good, Christian woman. She was in a hospital bed for six months unable to breath on her own and unable to swallow food or to get out of bed, then she died. Do I understand that? No. But that doesn't mean that I react to that by hating God and refusing to believe in Him or serve Him. I understand that God is more intelligent than me. When we cannot trace God, we must trust Him. If that is hard for you to do, pray like a man did in the Bible, "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24) There is nothing wrong with asking God to help us to trust Him. We cannot understand all of the natural disasters in the world. The Bible teaches that the earth itself has been, for lack of a better term, "messed up" because of sin. According to Romans 8:20-22, the whole creation is under the curse of sin. God certainly did not create the world this way originally. Suffering, death and even an imperfect environment came because of Adam's Original sin. As a result, there are tornados and hurricanes, tsunamis and floods. We do not understand why God allows those things to happen. One day, the Lord Jesus Christ will set up His Kingdom upon the earth and straighten everything out. The Bible teaches this. We will understand "why" some day, but for now we must trust the Lord. Believers in Jesus Christ who have lost their homes and possessions to flood, fire, tornado, etc. continue to find great peace and comfort in their belief in God.

We can either choose to go through life bitter at God, thinking He is a cruel tyrant who finds pleasure in hurting people, or we can find peace and hope through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. I would, personally, rather live a life of peace and hope.