

DEFENDABLE FAITH - ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

If God Is Good, Why Does Evil Exist?

OBJECTION: If God is perfectly good and is all-powerful, evil would not exist.

INTRODUCTION: This argument by both amateur and professional philosophers takes many forms. One such argument stated in a logical progression is this.

God created all things. Evil exists. Therefore God _____ evil.

God is all-powerful. God can therefore do or not do _____ He desires.

Therefore, God had the power to refuse to create evil.

But He did create evil (see above); therefore, God is not perfectly _____.

The answer to this objection has long eluded mere _____. The answer cannot be found in general or natural revelation. (General or natural revelation is what is revealed about God through the _____.)

The place to find the answer is in _____ revelation, that which the Almighty God has chosen to reveal about Himself. That revelation is the _____. Only with the testimony of the Scriptures can we find a satisfactory answer to this objection. A serious study of evil in the Scriptures leads us to some interesting discoveries that do provide an answer to the penetrating question of the existence of evil. To make this discovery, we must start by observing...

THE _____ APPEARANCE OF EVIL IN THE UNIVERSE

- **Evil first appears in Lucifer, an _____ created by God.**

Ezekiel 28:12-19 NKJV 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:

"You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. 16 "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O

covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, ...”

- This is not a commentary on the _____ King of Tyre, because he was not in the Garden of Eden. Since Genesis shows us that only God, Adam, Eve, and Satan were in the garden, the one being addressed here has to be _____. Apparently Satan _____ the King of Tyre as he did the Serpent in the Garden of Eden, the King of Babylon (Isa. 14), and Judas (Lk. 22:3).
- Lucifer (his name before he sinned, revealed in Isa. 14:12) was created _____, both outwardly in beauty and inwardly in wisdom.
- Verses 13 and 14 give us a picture that Lucifer was one of the _____, a special order of angels, and he was perhaps the chief of all the angels and led _____ in the holy mountain of God in heaven.
- Lucifer sinned. “Iniquity” means to choose one’s _____ way. Lucifer decided to live his angelic life the way he wanted rather than the way God wanted.
- When he sinned, his wisdom became _____, and God assures him that his ultimate doom is sealed.
- **We learn even more about the _____ of Lucifer from Isaiah.**

Isaiah 14:12-15 NKJV 12 “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.”

- The root of Lucifer’s sin was _____. He was so enamored with his own perfection that he was not content to be an angel who worshipped and served God. He wanted to be like _____.
- He was cast out of heaven, not meaning he could no longer enter there, but he could no longer _____ there. He was cast down to the earth and is called by Jesus the “ruler of this world” and by Paul “the prince of the power of the air.”
- Isaiah also declares Satan’s doom, to be cast into the lowest depths of the _____ in Sheol, which shall happen when Christ returns for the Battle of Armageddon.
- _____ **did the fall of Lucifer occur?**

We cannot declare with absolute certainty when the angels were created. Job 38:4-7, which is quoting God, indicates that the angels were present during the

_____ days of creation, which probably means they were created on the first or second days of creation.

Job 38:4-7 NKJV 4 “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

- “Morning stars” and “sons of God” both refer to _____.
- It would seem that the fall of Lucifer occurred between the _____ of creation on day six and the day of _____ in the Garden of Eden. If Lucifer fell to the earth before day six, could God have pronounced everything “very good?” Obviously, Lucifer had fallen and become Satan by the time he indwelt the serpent and tempted Eve in the garden.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

- We can trace the origin of evil to the _____ of Lucifer to live his own way rather than God’s way.
- Evil _____ when Lucifer chose to disobey God.
- Sin (evil) entered the world when _____ chose (at Satan’s tempting) to disobey God.
- _____ began as a result of choice.
- When God gave angels and men the choice whether they would obey Him, the Lord created the _____ for evil. God did not personally create evil, Satan did that when he chose to sin against God. Every time a person sins, he creates more evil.
- God did _____ create evil. He did not need to. Evil (sin) is the _____ of obedience to the Lord. As long as angels and men chose to obey God, there was no sin and no evil. When Lucifer disobeyed, evil began. When Eve disobeyed, evil entered the _____. When Adam disobeyed, evil entered the race of _____.
- Now someone can ask, “Could not God have _____ evil from entering His creation?” The answer is “absolutely.” He could have made no provision, no possibility for angels or men to disobey Him. Then there would have been no sin, no evil.
- But there also would have been no _____. Angels and men would have served God, not because He was worthy, not because they loved Him. They would have served God because there was no possibility of their doing otherwise.

- And as for men, they could not have been created in the _____ of God if they had no choice, for God in His sovereignty chooses. If mankind was to be in His likeness, man had to be _____ to choose.
- So could an omnipotent, perfectly good God have created a universe without the possibility of evil? Yes, He could. He can do whatsoever He pleases. But He could not create a universe with free moral agents like men and angels without giving them _____. That kind of creation necessarily allows for the _____ of evil.

THE RESULTS OF EVIL

- Sometimes a corollary of the objection that a perfectly good, all-powerful God could not create evil is the idea that if a God like this existed, tragically _____ things like natural disasters would not occur.
- The answer to this corollary comes from the answer about the true origin of evil.
- Many people do not understand the biblical testimony that evil has drastically impacted and _____ the world in which we live.
- The original earth was much _____ from the earth we live in today.

- God made the earth with waters both _____ and below the heavens.

Genesis 1:6-8 NKJV 6 Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

- The waters under the heavens were then used to make the seas. What were the waters above the heavens? Where are they now? They were probably a water vapor _____ that surrounded the earth in the upper atmosphere. We know of no other way that there could be waters above the heavens.
- Such a water vapor canopy would have had extremely _____ effects upon the earth. It would have produced a greenhouse effect, causing the earth to be _____ in climate over the entire face of the globe. (Evidence of such ancient tropical conditions in regions such as Siberia and the Canadian arctic have been found!)
- The water _____ was different than today. It did not rain. The earth was watered by a mist as in a sealed terrarium.

Genesis 2:5-6 NKJV ... For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man to till the ground; 6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

- The _____ of man and animals would have been increased because the water vapor canopy would filter out harmful radiation. Indeed,

the Bible records that men lived for hundreds of years before they died. Methuselah lived _____ years!

- In fact, in the earliest days of the earth, before sin entered mankind, there was no death at all among men and _____. Had sin not entered the world, Adam and Eve would have lived forever, and their descendants with them, in fellowship with God on a perfect planet that the Lord had made for them.

Romans 5:12 NKJV Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

- Also, both men and animals were _____; they did not yet eat each other for food.

Genesis 1:29-30 NKJV 29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.* 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is life, I have given every green herb for food*”; and it was so.

- There was _____ between men and animals; they did not fear each other. Neither one desired the other for food, and there were plenty of plants to go around. There was no need for competition between them.
- **Two major changes, both the result of _____, caused the earth to be the way it is today.**
 - **The _____ - When sin entered mankind through Adam and Eve**
 - God had told Adam and Eve that if they disobeyed Him they would _____. When they ate the forbidden fruit,
 - They died immediately in their _____.
 - They began to die progressively in their _____ (mind, will, emotions).
 - They died ultimately in their _____.
 - But not only did this introduce death for them personally, it caused death to enter the _____. (See Romans 5:12 above.)
 - It also caused the earth to be less _____ for them in its production of food.

Genesis 3:17-19 NKJV 17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed *is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.* 18 Both **thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,** And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you

return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

○ **The _____ - When God’s judgment fell on the entire world because of the extent of sin**

- The flood was the greatest disaster that has ever come upon the earth. The entire population of the earth died except for eight people. Why did it happen? Because of _____.

Genesis 6:5 NKJV Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

- The flood drastically _____ the world for those who would be born in future generations.
- The waters above the heavens provided sufficient water for _____ days of rain upon the entire earth. If it were to rain everywhere at once in the world today, the rain could only be sustained for a couple of days before the water vapor in our present atmosphere was exhausted.
- The disappearance of this canopy that had provided protection for the earth had far reaching effects.
 - The earth ceased to heat _____ and developed arctic and tropical regions.
 - The uneven heating of the earth caused prevailing _____ and very different weather patterns, including rain and storms.
 - All _____ related natural disasters, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, avalanches, snow and ice storms, are all a result of the changes to the earth resulting from the flood of Noah’s day. And why was the flood sent? Because man chose to sin.
 - This new type of weather did not allow the earth to be re-covered with tropical _____ from pole to pole as it was before the flood. Much more of the earth was covered with water than before the flood because all of the water from the canopy was now stored in the oceans. Deserts formed where the weather pattern did not produce sufficient rain. Much of the earth could no longer produce _____ for man or beast.
 - In fact, to sustain life after the flood, God allowed man to _____ animals for food, and animals began to also kill one another for food.

Genesis 9:2-3 NKJV 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.

- Even _____ have their origin in the flood. When God sent the flood He broke up the fountains of the deep (Gen. 7:11), which implies tremendous geological upheaval. The result is that soon after the flood, the earth was divided, which probably is a reference to a major shifting of the earth's crust resulting in sudden continental drift. (Gen. 10:25)
- With mankind no longer protected from harmful radiation from the sun and from space, the longevity of man steadily _____. As we read the genealogies of the Bible, we discover the average length of a man's life declines to around _____ rather than many hundred in the centuries following the flood.
- Therefore we see that even tragic natural disasters are the result of the choice, first by _____, then by Adam and Eve, and ultimately by us all to _____ God.

EVIL'S IMPACT UPON THE _____ OF GOD

- The fact that God is both all-powerful and perfectly good is actually shown in the way He deals with mankind concerning natural disasters. God in His mercy often time intervenes to _____ the impact of disasters so that not as much life is lost and not as much suffering is inflicted. God also stirs compassion in the hearts of His _____ to minister to people so affected. In most cases, the greatest relief to people hurting from such disasters comes from Christians, motivated by the Spirit of God who lives within them.
- And for the one who is a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ, no disaster of any kind or proportion can take away what is really precious to us, our eternal life with God. No matter what we suffer in this world, it will be like a _____ in comparison to the joy of all eternity. This we have ultimately because God is perfectly good, and He is all-powerful.

GOD'S ULTIMATE _____ OVER EVIL

- Just as God did not create evil in the world He made, He does not intend for it to _____ in His world forever.
- God has defeated Satan already through Christ's _____ upon the cross. Satan has not been imprisoned yet, but he is a defeated foe. He has no power over the _____ who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- But ultimately, Satan will be _____ and then finally cast into the Lake of Fire. Heaven and earth will be remade, and only the redeemed shall inhabit the universe with God, and evil will forever be banned.

Revelation 21:27 NKJV But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 21:3-5 NKJV 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."