

If God made everything – where did evil come from? People struggle with the fact that there is evil in the world. We dislike evil but are confused about why God would allow evil to exist.

Some people even try to deny God's existence or to a lesser extent His omnipotence. They believe that a good god would not allow evil to exist and if he did then he was not the all-powerful god that he claimed to be.

The 18 century philosopher David Hume raised the question and people pretty much use the same argument today.

Is God willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent.

Is he able but not willing? Then he is malevolent.

Is he both able and willing? Then whence cometh evil?

Is he neither able nor willing? Then why call him God?

Many who don't desire to follow God's instructions, use this as their go-to argument to nullify the existence or power of a Creator God.

I believe that the problem stems from a misunderstanding of just what evil is. When God finished creation He stated that it was **very good**, meaning that everything was just as it should be. *God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.* Gen 1:31 (NIV) At this point anything that was not as it should be did not exist.

But when Adam and Eve decided to do things their way, things were no longer existed in the way that they should be. Things that were as they should be were called good (by God's definition) and things that were not as they should be were called evil.

God did not create the evil that exists, that was a result of us not treating His creation as it should be treated. *"Cursed is the ground **because of you**;"* Gen 3:17. **The key here is that the evil was caused by us.**

Then why would a good God allow the Holocaust, genocide, racism, terrorism, murder, child abuse, broken and dysfunctional families, earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, and famines? Genesis 3:17 tells us that humanity is either directly or indirectly responsible for all of these. They occur as a result of our sin. When sin entered the world everything was affected. Suffering and evil go hand in hand. The perfect working order is now contaminated by our sin. The whole of creation is now suffering and in chaos because of our actions and poor judgment.

Every manufacturer of a product tells us how it is to be used. When we deviate from those instructions the manufacturer is not at fault – we are. Although we all have used a large screwdriver for a pry bar, it is not the manufacturer's fault if it breaks or slips and causes damage or injury.

Which brings us to the question of "Why doesn't God do something about evil?" Is He incapable of ridding the world of the evil? I believe that He is doing something about it, but since it exists He is using it to teach us important lessons.

Who among us hasn't accidentally (or on purpose) driven on the wrong side of the street? If we survived the crash or just missed crashing into an oncoming car, we learned a great lesson and would not likely do that again. These lessons are much more vivid and motivational than reading the DMV manual that says not to drive on the wrong side of the street.

Since we have free will there will be evil. Free will and the absence of evil are contradictory in the world we live in. If we have freedom then we can choose incorrectly. As we look at the horrifying evils being done in the world, we are left with a deeper question: Is human freedom worth it? **God's answer is a resounding YES.**

God could erase all evil in the world, but since we have created the situation He is using it to reinforce His instructions to us. Contrary to what some believe, He is not doing it to punish us; but to train us. Suffering is part of that training – it is not pleasant but it is very effective.

So was David Hume right or did he too miss the mark. I believe that God is not only willing to eradicate evil but is doing so – albeit in His own time and for our own edification. He is omnipotent and His action (or inaction as some would see it) is not malevolent, but shows His love for us and for the maturing of His entire creation.

For now, we can only see a dim and blurry picture of things, as when we stare into polished metal. I realize that everything I know is only part of the big picture. But one day, when Jesus arrives, we will see clearly, face-to-face. In that day, I will fully know just as I have been wholly known by God. 1 Corinthians 13:12 The Voice

Our future holds a world that will not contain evil. A world that has been put back into the correct balance again, just as it was created to be.

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