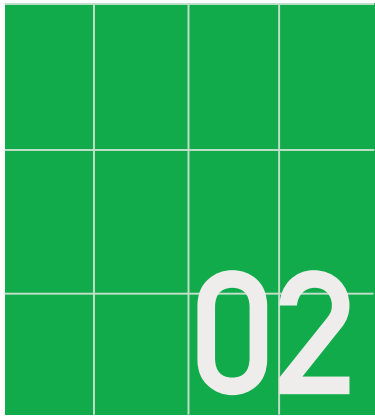




BEYOND BROKENNESS:

Hope in Life's Darkest Valleys

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Hope Channel. My name is _____ and I'll be your host for the series *There is More to Life*.

In this series of eight studies, we are exploring the foundational beliefs of Christianity from a biblical point of view. From the origins of the Bible to the life of Jesus Christ and what happens when we die, our time together will be a time of discovery and learning, guided by Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

Today we explore one of the most profound questions all human beings ask: Why is there sin and suffering in the world?

We'll explore this subject by asking several questions: Where did evil come from? If God is a loving God, why is there sin and suffering? And most importantly, What is God's answer for the problem of sin?

Let us open our hearts to rediscover the depth and richness of God's Word. We begin with a word of prayer:

"Heavenly Father, we come before You with open hearts, longing to hear Your voice through Your Word. Fill our minds with understanding and our spirits with wisdom. May Your truth guide us, Your love inspire us, and Your presence transform us. Teach us to walk in Your light and to reflect Your grace to the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

II. MAIN ARGUMENT

I'm sure you have at one time or another asked yourself: if God is love, why is there so much pain and suffering in the world?

This question has been in the minds of human beings for millennia. It challenges our own perceptions of life. It makes us question whether there is meaning to our existence and hope for our future.

To tackle this complex subject, we begin with the origin of evil.

Besides the question about why evil exists at all, I'm sure you've also asked yourself who the Devil, or Satan, is.

The answer to this question lays the foundation for our study today. We'll see that the origin of evil is intimately related to the origin of God's adversary, Satan.

Satan's story highlights what can happen when God's creatures abuse freedom. But it also highlights how God relates to the choices his creatures make.

The Bible uses the term Satan to describe God's adversary. This word comes from the Hebrew expression *hassattan*, which means "the opponent." The Bible does not describe exactly how this being originated, but we have glimpses of his origin. We can understand that Satan was not created as an evil being.

For example, in Ezekiel 28:12-15, we read of an exalted king who is described as being adorned with beauty and perfection, even compared to a guardian cherub in heaven. However, pride and self-centeredness began to corrupt his heart.

We also get some more details in Isaiah 14:12-14: he desired to exalt himself above God, saying, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God."

Lastly, in Revelation 12:7-9 we get a symbolic picture of this cosmic battle where the Dragon and his followers were cast out from Heaven, setting the stage for the ongoing conflict we witness today.

These three passages reveal some details about the origin of sin. We learn that Satan was originally a highly exalted angel, perfect in beauty and wisdom, dwelling in God's presence. But he underwent a transformation, from a being of perfection and loyalty to his Creator to God's adversary. Satan's pride led to his expulsion from heaven, along with the angels who aligned with him in his rebellion.

Since then, Satan has actively worked to oppose God's purposes. His tactics center on deception, spreading lies about God's character and leading humanity astray. From

the Garden of Eden to the present day, his goal has been to separate us from God and obscure the truth of His love.

What happened with Satan is the same that happens with us: we have abused our God-given freedom.

To understand this, we need to understand the nature of free will.

You see, God created humans and angels with free will—the ability to choose whom to worship and serve. True love, loyalty and respect cannot be forced. For love to exist, freedom must also exist.

Sadly, Satan used this freedom to choose self-exaltation over submission to God's perfect will. This decision introduced sin and suffering into God's creation.

In Genesis 1, we read that God created everything “good”. Sin is a deviation from God's perfect creation. Evil is a foreign agent in the world. It disrupts harmony and brings pain, suffering, and death.

By its very creative act, God gave proof that He is love and wanted to share life with His creatures.

It's important to understand that God is not the author of suffering. He only allowed evil to exist because His creatures chose to rebel. This cosmic conflict between good and evil demonstrates the devastating results of rejecting God's ways.

Yet Satan's rebellion is not the end of the story.

His defeat is assured through Christ's victory on the cross. In His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus demonstrated God's justice, mercy, and unshakable love. Through this act, the universe witnesses the true nature of God and the destructive reality of sin. We do not need to fear Satan and his plans against us: God is on our side.

One day, as promised in Revelation, Satan will face his final defeat, and the conflict he initiated will come to an end. Until then, God's love, truth, and victory shine as a beacon of hope, calling us to trust in His ultimate plan for restoration.

Satan's origin reminds us of the power of free will and the greatness of God's justice and mercy in overcoming rebellion with love.

All right, now that we understand that evil was not caused by God but started when His creatures abused their free will, we can try to answer the question of how we humans got caught up in the problems of evil.

Humanity's involvement in the cosmic conflict between good and evil began in the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve lived in perfect harmony with God. We don't know how long they lived in a state of pure glory, peace and happiness. All we know is that during that time, they had the freedom to live and enjoy God's creation, except for one prohibition: not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:16-17).

Here is where Satan disguised as a serpent, tempted Adam and Eve. In Genesis 3:1-6, we read that he approached Eve carefully, questioning God's character and casting doubt on what God had said. We read:

***“Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”
(Genesis 3:1)***

Notice how the serpent twisted God's words. God never said that they couldn't eat from the trees!

When Eve explained God's command and risk of death for disobedience, the Serpent planted the seed of distrust

“Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

With lies and deceit, Satan convinced Eve that disobedience would not lead to death, but to a greater understanding and a more exalted kind of life, even equality with God.

Doesn't this sound familiar? Isn't that what we read in Ezekiel, Isaiah and Revelation about Satan's desire for exaltation as a former angel?

Sadly, Adam and Eve chose the same path and disobeyed by eating the forbidden fruit. In that moment, they aligned themselves with Satan's rebellion, choosing self-interest over trust in their Creator.

Their disobedience brought sin into the world, severing humanity's perfect

relationship with God.

The effects were immediate and far-reaching—shame, guilt, fear, and separation replaced the intimacy they once shared with their Creator.

Our first parents' decision to disobey subjected the entire human race to its consequences: evil, suffering, and death. Their decision wasn't just an isolated event—it's a reality we experience today as we face the daily choice of allegiance to God or Satan.

For humanity, the most profound consequence of sin was separation from God.

In Genesis 3:8, we read that God used to have a daily meeting with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden:

“And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the [d]cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”

Now, instead of talking to God in person, they were banished from entering the Garden of Eden.

“Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”— therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.” (Genesis 3:22–24)

The perfect communion with God they had enjoyed was broken, leaving humanity to contend with hardship, suffering, and death.

Not only did Adam and Eve had to contend with a harsh new reality in creation, sin introduced a natural inclination toward selfishness, moral corruption, and rebellion, affecting every decision, every relationship, and every generation. Romans 3:23 says,

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Sin also brought death—both physical and spiritual—into the world. What was

meant to be a life of endless joy in God's presence became an existence marked by sorrow, suffering and death. Romans 6:23 reminds us that "the wages of sin is death," a reality we see daily in sickness, grief, and the fragility of life.

Sadly, sin affected creation itself. God's design was replaced with disorder. Romans 8:22 describes this reality:

"For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now."

From environmental destruction to natural catastrophes, the earth bears the scars of humanity's broken relationship with its Creator.

Sin also warped human relationships. People became selfish, mean and violent. Family bonds, friendships, and even nations struggle under the weight of sin's divisive power.

The suffering we experience reveals the true nature of sin. It shows how rebellion against God leads to brokenness, pain, and despair. This realization deepens our need for God in a world filled with desperation and sadness.

The good news for you and me is that, even though our sins created a deep abyss of separation between us and our holy God, He did not abandon us.

From the moment humanity fell into sin, God set into motion His rescue plan—a plan rooted in His love, justice, and mercy. His answer to the problem of sin is salvation through Jesus Christ.

God immediately set in motion His plan of redemption, promising Adam and Eve a Savior who would crush the serpent's head:

***"And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel" (Genesis 3:15).***

Human history reflects this ongoing "enmity" between us and evil. Each of us faces the choice Adam and Eve did—whether to trust in God's love and obey His will or to follow the deceptions of the enemy.

In Genesis 3:15, we see the first promise of a Redeemer, one who would crush that deceitful serpent's head and defeat the power of sin and evil. The promised "Seed" of Genesis is Jesus Christ who reconciles us with God.

Jesus Christ, God's Son, came to Earth, lived a perfect life, and willingly died on the cross to pay the penalty for sin. As John 1:29 declares, Jesus is "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

Through His death, Jesus bore the weight of sin for all humanity, bridging the gap between us and God. Through Christ's victory on the cross, we're offered a way out of this conflict. By choosing to love and serve Him, we join God's plan to overcome evil and restore the universe to perfect harmony.

But Jesus' victory didn't end at the cross. His resurrection broke the power of sin and death, offering hope and eternal life to all who believe in Him. As the Apostle Paul affirms in 2 Corinthians 5:2:

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

God's plan doesn't stop with individual salvation. His answer to the problem of sin is not only to save us from its effects but to restore creation to eternal harmony. He promises to eradicate sin entirely, ensuring it will never rise again.

When Jesus returns, He will restore all things, creating a New Earth where sin, suffering, and death will be no more (Revelation 21:1-5). God has promised to restore His creation, wiping away every tear, every trace of sin, and its effects. This ultimate renewal is the culmination of God's redemptive work, a demonstration of His perfect love and justice.

His love ensures our redemption, His justice guarantees sin's defeat, and His mercy offers us the chance to be part of His eternal kingdom.

In Christ, all your problems find their solution.

Through Christ, God empowers His people to live with purpose and demonstrate His love in the midst of brokenness. We have the opportunity to live as beacons of hope, showing the world what redemption looks like. God's plan isn't just to undo sin's damage—it's to create something even more glorious, where His love reigns supreme

forever.

God's promise to you, dear listener, is that God's love for you doesn't change. He will never abandon you in your pain but walks with you through it.

The pain you experience can serve a greater purpose—to refine our faith, strengthen our character, and draw you closer to God. As Romans 8:28 reminds us,

“In all things, God works for the good of those who love Him.”

Suffering also provides an opportunity for us to rely on God's promises and experience His sustaining grace. It points us to a greater hope—that the pain of this world is temporary. One day, Christ will return to establish His eternal kingdom, where sin and suffering will be no more. Revelation 21:4 assures us of this: “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”

III. CONCLUSION

Let me tell you the story of Job—a man whose story speaks deeply to the heart of this question about suffering and why God allows it.

Job was the kind of guy everyone respected. He was wealthy, had a big family, and was known for his faith in God. He wasn't just successful; he was honest, living his life with integrity and putting God first in everything. He even offered sacrifices for his kids just in case they made mistakes. Job truly wanted to honor God in every way.

But then, everything changed. The Bible gives us a behind-the-scenes look, where Satan challenges God, saying,

“Of course Job worships You—he has everything he could ever want! Take it all away, and he'll curse You to Your face.” (Job 1:9–11)

So, God allows Job to be tested, but He places a boundary: Satan couldn't take Job's life.

What happens next is heartbreaking. In a single day, Job loses everything—his animals, workers, and even his children.

If that weren't enough, he's struck with painful sores all over his body. Can you imagine that? Everything he held dear was gone, just like that. Job was devastated. He

tore his clothes, sat in ashes, and mourned deeply.

Yet, even in his grief, he said, “The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Now, Job’s friends came to comfort him, but let’s be honest—they weren’t great at it. Instead of helping, they started accusing Job, saying he must’ve done something terrible to deserve this. Job, however, insisted he had done nothing wrong. He poured out his heart to God, asking why all of this was happening, yet he never turned away from Him.

One of the most powerful things Job said was:

“Though He slay me, yet will I hope in Him.” (Job 13:15).

Imagine that kind of faith—choosing to trust God when everything in your life feels shattered.

At one point, Job demands answers from God, and God responds—but not with the kind of explanation Job expected. Instead, God asks Job questions about the vastness of His power and wisdom:

“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Who set the boundaries for the sea?”

These questions remind Job—and us—that God’s ways are far beyond our understanding. It’s humbling, isn’t it? Sometimes we just don’t see the full picture.

In the end, Job’s faithfulness was rewarded. God restored everything to him—doubling his wealth, blessing him with more children, and giving him a long, full life. But the real takeaway isn’t just about the restoration. It’s about how Job’s story shows us that even when life feels chaotic and unfair, God is still in control, and His plans are ultimately good.

Job’s story is relatable because we’ve all faced moments where we wonder, “Why is this happening? Why would God allow this?”

Those are tough questions, but Job’s story shows us that even in the midst of suffering, we can hold on to God. His story reminds us that God doesn’t ignore our pain, and He’s not the author of evil. Instead, He works through it to reveal His justice,

mercy, and love. And just like Job, we can trust that one day, everything will be made right.

God's promise to you, dear listener, is the same he made to Job: His love doesn't change, even amidst suffering and pain. While He allows suffering as part of the cosmic conflict between good and evil, He does not cause it. Instead, He works to bring good out of every situation (Romans 8:28), just like He did with Job. Through His mercy, He comforts us, guides us, and provides strength to endure life's trials.

In the end, God's perfect justice and mercy will vindicate His character and ensure that love, not evil, governs the universe forever. So, while suffering exists now, it's temporary. God's love is eternal, and His promise is sure: a future free from pain, filled with peace, and ruled by His unending love.

The question isn't just why suffering exists—it's how we respond. Will you trust the God who offers hope, redemption, and the assurance of a world made new?

I invite you to commit yourself to studying, living, and sharing God's Word. Make it come alive in your life by daily reading and application of its truths in your daily walk with God.

Until next time, God bless you more than you ask or imagine!