

IS GOD STILL IN CONTROL? (2)

A QUICK RECAP

God has complete control of nature, nations, unbelievers, everyday events, and even Satan
Is God then responsible for suffering? No.

- Much of man's suffering is the result of his own folly
- But not all suffering is the result of our own folly

Why do innocent people suffer?

- Innocent people have often suffered because of the sins of others
- The only way God could put an end to all suffering would be to take away our free will
- Consequently, there are many things we don't understand

WHAT IS OUR REACTION TO THIS?

When we don't understand, we can do one of four things:

1. We can hold a grudge against the Lord eg. Job 19:6
 - Then we rely on our own judgment as to what is right and wrong eg. Genesis 3:5
 - Then man replaces God and everything becomes relative
 - This reaction eventually leads to rejection
2. We can doubt God's love for us eg. Psalm 22:1-2
 - It means that we equate God with a "sugar daddy" cf. Job 2:10
 - Joshua assumed that God no longer cared for His people Joshua 7:7
 - This reaction eventually leads to resentment
3. We can accept it fatalistically eg. Genesis 43:14
 - "Well, I suppose it was meant to be"
 - This reaction eventually leads to depression
4. We can believe that God always acts correctly Revelation 15:3
 - His thoughts are higher than our thoughts Isaiah 55:8-9
 - This reaction eventually leads to inner peace cf. Habakkuk 3:17-18

We can either question God or we can trust Him cf. 1 Corinthians 2:16

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW BELIEVERS TO SUFFER?

To discipline us because of our sins 1 Corinthians 11:29-32

To reveal Himself to us Job 42:5

To keep us from falling into sin 2 Corinthians 12:7

To encourage our spiritual growth Psalm 119:71

To complete Christ's sufferings Colossians 1:24

To reveal His glory John 9:3

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN?

Submit yourself to Him in everything James 4:7,10

- He uses every incident for our good Romans 8:28-29

Trust Him even when it doesn't make sense cf. Job 13:15

- We dare not trust our own reasoning or emotions Proverbs 3:5

Learn to be content Philippians 4:11-13

- He will provide for our every need Philippians 4:19

Rejoice in His sovereignty and His justice Psalm 96:10

- No one can cause us any permanent harm Hebrews 13:5-6