

Chapter Four: Is God the Source of My Suffering

John 9:1-5 (NIV) “As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ “Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

1. So, why was this man born blind? Why would a powerful and loving God allow such suffering?
 - a. _____

2. Why did Jesus’ answer surprise everyone?
 - a. _____

3. Because atheists and other skeptics argue that God does not exist because a powerful loving God would not allow so much suffering, Ravi points out that, “the biblical world-view is the only one that _____ the _____ of evil and suffering while giving both the _____ and the _____, ...”
4. “Once we have comprehended the broader Christian perspective, we will understand that Christ readily answers the _____ question in light of the _____ question _____ it.”
5. “... every world-view—not just Christianity’s—must give an _____ or an _____ for evil and suffering.”
6. “Either evil categorically proves that God _____ not _____, as the atheist avows, ...”
7. “... or evil is ‘_____ ultimately _____ evil,’ as the pantheist claims, ...”

8. "... or evil is most _____ explained by the Christian view of God and His _____ in creation."
9. "The Christian world-view suggests that evil is better posed as a _____ than as a _____. ... Problems seek answers, but _____ demand more—they merit _____."
10. "Peter Kreeft, ... comments, 'Getting to Mars is a _____. Falling in love is a _____.'" "
11. "One cannot address the problem of evil without ending up as a _____ of that problem. Skeptics calmly bypass this reality and proceed as if they were _____ observing a phenomenon, when in reality, they are _____ of the phenomenon."
12. "Buddha's entire pilgrimage toward 'Enlightenment' began because of his absorption with the _____ of _____ and _____."
13. "We must not allow the anguish of the _____ to bypass the reasoning of the _____. The explanation must meet both the _____ and the _____ demands of the question. Answering the questions of the _____ while ignoring shredded _____ seems _____. Binding the _____ wounds while ignoring the struggle of the _____ seems _____."
14. C S Lewis says we must answer three questions regarding a ship at sea:
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
15. What was Lewis' point in the last question?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
16. Skeptics argue that God does not exist _____ evil exists. "If evil exists, then one must assume that _____ exists in order to know the _____."

17. Why are the existence of a 'moral law' and a moral law giver necessary for evil to exist?

a. _____

18. Extra credit: Evolutionists argue that our sense of morality is simply the product of natural selection favoring those 'tribes' that adopted practices that we call moral. Those that did not adopt those practices did not survive. Why do you agree or disagree with that logic?

a. _____

19. "Does it not seem odd that of all the permutations and combinations that a _____ universe might afford we should end up with the notions of the _____, the _____, and the _____?"

20. What is wrong, if anything, with this Dawkins quote? "In a universe of electrons and selfish genes, blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won't find any rhyme or reason in it, nor any justice. The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference."

a. _____

b. _____

21. Malcolm Muggeridge offers a number of illustrations of the self-defeating logic of the skeptic's arguments regarding evil. It seems that philosophers, politicians and scientists have a hard time agreeing. Which illustration is your favorite?

a. _____

22. “It is a world of systemic contradiction. If morality is nothing more than evolution’s _____, there is no way to measure when we have _____ the _____. ... there was no _____ in the _____ collocation of atoms.”

23. What was his point when Sartre wrote, “If the beloved is transformed into an automaton, the lover finds himself alone.” ?

a. _____

24. Extra credit: Why might the quote in the last question by a bit surprising?

a. _____

25. Speaking of Hinduism, “By declaring everything in the physical world to be non-real, _____, changing, _____, it ends up with philosophical problems beyond _____.”

26. Extra credit: What is the Bhagavad-Gita?

a. _____



Krishna manifesting his full glory to Arjuna

https://www.ancient.eu/Bhagavad_Gita/

27. Speaking of what we call ‘karma’, Buddhism teaches that, “Whatever _____ I do, good or bad, I shall become their _____.”

28. How, then, would Buddhism answer the disciples' question regarding the cause of the blind man's predicament.?

a. _____

29. "In the state of 'Enlightenment,' the self is _____ and all desire, and therefore, _____, is gone. That is the goal of Buddhism. ... In fact, the very word nirvana means the _____ of the jungle of _____ to which our rebirths have condemned us."

30. Why is the idea of an 'infinite regress' illogical?

a. _____

31. Summarize the six elements of the Christian message regarding the problem of evil:

a. **First,** _____

b. **Second,** _____

c. **Third,** _____

d. **Fourth,** _____

i. "Goodness in the face of evil is magnificent, because it is more than _____; it is the _____ of God."

ii. Muggeridge: "... everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through _____ and not through _____ ... This, of course is what the Cross signifies."

- iii. Ghandi – "... the cross ... the innocent dying for the _____, the pure exchanged for the _____"

e. **Fifth,** _____

- i. How did Chesterton reply to the article, 'What's wrong with the world'? Dear Sir: ... _____. Yours truly, GKC

f. **Sixth,** _____

32. "It is not pain that has driven the West into emptiness; it has been the drowning of _____ in the oceans of our _____. Pleasure gone wrong is a greater curse than _____ blindness. The blindness to the _____ is the _____ of all evil."
33. "The problem of evil has ultimately one source. It is the _____ to God's holiness that blanketed all of creation. It is a _____ because we are engulfed in it—_____ blindness."
34. "And there is ultimately only one antidote, the glorious display of God at work _____ a human soul, bringing about His work of _____. That transformation _____ the heart to become part of the solution and not part of the problem. Such a transformation _____ at the cross."
35. "When God restores our _____ sight through the _____ of evil, we are then able to see the work of God displayed within the framework of our most difficult question."

36. “In summary, for the Christian, evil is _____, this world is _____, and time is _____. ... And upon the anvil of time beats the hammer of _____ until time ultimately reflects the _____ of the eternal ... from within which ultimate truths will be _____ embraced. ... we will find out that the real anvil was _____, that time provided the _____, and that God’s _____ and _____ will be what remains.”

37. So, what did we learn about the problem of evil and suffering?

- a. _____

38. And what did we learn about Hinduism and Buddhism?

- a. _____

- b. _____

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