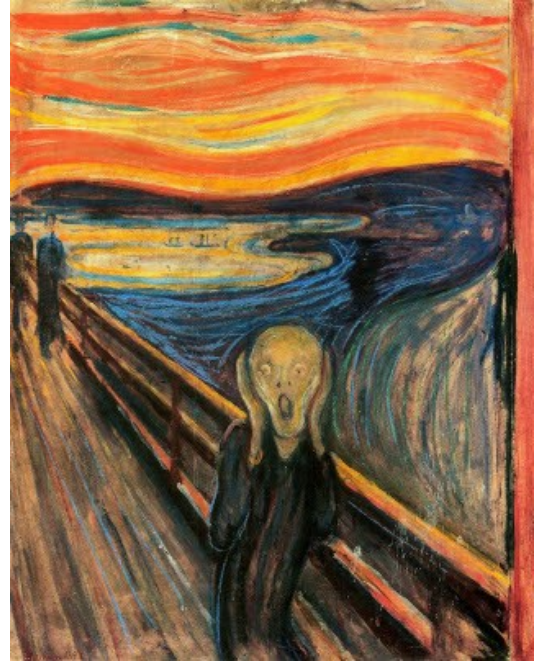


# The Problem of Pain

"If God created humanity, why does God allow humanity to suffer?"



## THE OBJECTION:-

- If God is good, He would NOT want anyone to suffer.
- If God is strong, He COULD stop all suffering.
- Suffering exists, therefore God is either bad, or weak, or does not exist.

But we do suffer, so God is either

Not G \_ \_ \_ or Not S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

or Not T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

## 1. PAIN IS NOT A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ EVIL

- The nail
- the needle
- and the sharp stone



## 2. PAIN IS THE RESULT OF HUMAN W \_\_\_\_\_

- PARADISE LOST. (God is not the author of needless pain)

- D \_\_\_\_\_ - Genesis 3 and 4, and all that follows on. Last century \_\_\_\_\_ million people died because of our wars.
- indirectly - for Adam's sake (he was the king) all creation was C \_\_\_\_\_ Genesis 3:17-19, Ps 90:10.



- What if God were to stop all evil A \_\_\_\_\_? (but evil hearts still remain - Matthew 15:19-20).

## 3. PAIN IS NOT GOD'S U \_\_\_\_\_ INTENTION

- Lamentations chapter 3 verse 33
- Suffering of Job, where God allows Satan, the prince of evil, to cruelly afflict Job. Why?
- To S \_\_\_\_\_ Satan Job 1:9-12
- To shame Job's F \_\_\_\_\_ Job 42:7-9
- To T \_\_\_\_\_ Job Job 42:1-6
- To B \_\_\_\_\_ Job Job 42:10-17
- John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*
- For our G \_\_\_\_\_ "an ounce of sin can harm us more than a ton of suffering. Sin can harden our hearts so we lose everything, but suffering, if handled rightly, can make us

wiser, happier, and deeper."(from "My Rock, My Refuge",by Tim Keller on Psalm 121) - and see Romans 5:3-5

- **For O \_ \_ \_ \_ \_' good.** "Nothing but our own sufferings equip us to help and sympathise with those who suffer." 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

#### 4. PAIN WAS E \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ BY GOD

##### - JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE SUFFERER

- *"surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering,"* Isaiah ch. 53
- On the cross He cried out *"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"* Mk 15:34
- We can only really comprehend suffering by looking to Jesus. *"For God, who said 'let light shine out of darkness', has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ".* 2 Corinthians 4:6.
- In Jesus, *"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"* (and nowhere else!) - Psalm 85:10 (indeed, all of the psalm)



#### 5. PAIN WILL E \_ \_ - PARADISE RESTORED

*"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death" or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

- Revelation 21:3-4



“Entering the Celestial City” – from “The Pilgrim’s Progress” by John Bunyan

**The various major faiths of the world have different sorts of answers. Here is a brief summary.**

<b>Belief</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>What do you do?</b>
Atheism	It's a dog-eat-dog world, then you die	Just get used to it
Hinduism	Suffering is caused by the accumulated bad actions of our past lives (the principle of "karma")	Avoid bad actions, do good ones
Buddhism	Suffering is caused by desire - desire nothing (even to love and be loved) and you will not suffer	Learn to live without desires, and strive to shed self and be merged into Nirvana, as one drop in the ocean
Islam	Suffering is the result of our sins, or a test from God	Confess your sins, trust in God
Judaism	Suffering is the result of our sins, or a test from God	Confess your sins, trust in God
"Health, Wealth and Prosperity Gospel"	Suffering is caused by the Devil	Cast out the demon of pain, or depression, etc. and claim the good things
The Bible	Suffering is the result of Adam's fall, permitted by God for good in the end	Confess any real (not imaginary) sins, trust in God, Who loves you, and has entered fully into suffering for you

GOOD  
STRONG  
THERE  
ALWAYS  
WICKEDNESS  
DIRECTLY  
INDIRECTLY  
230  
CURSED  
ACTIONS  
ULTIMATE  
SHAME  
FRIENDS  
TEACH  
BLESS  
GOOD  
OTHERS  
EMBRACED  
END

Images:

1. "The Scream", by Edvard Munch, 1897
2. "Void of War", by Paul Ryan, 1918  
<https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/the-war-art-of-paul-nash-1917-1944/>
3. Easter Crosses, from <https://pixabay.com/illustrations/art-artistic-painting-digital-2092530/>
4. "Entering the Celestial City", illustration by W. Guilford for a series on "The Pilgrim's Progress" by John Bunyan.