

If God IS, Why Evil?

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The most serious challenge those searching for God and even religious people must face is the problem of evil and the cause of suffering which seems to affect also the innocents. How can we reconcile the reality of an all-loving and all powerful Being active in our lives with the pervasiveness of distressing and painful conditions? This problem has been present since recorded time but it has become increasingly relevant by man's inhumanity and the monstrous tragedies of our age. How can the Creator who has counted the hairs on our head remain strangely silent while Hell appears in all its hideousness and transfers itself from below the earth to its surface?

This has made possible to draw up an indictment against God and led to the acceptance of the forces of darkness as part of the metaphysical fabric of life itself. The Almighty cannot avoid the ultimate responsibility because it is He/She who made such a wretched world and allows widespread prevalence of horror and depravity. It makes our existence "a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." One cannot help thinking of being forsaken and alone in an unfeeling universe rather than in the presence of a Personal god.

If we turn to the most authoritative Scripture in the Western civilization, the Bible, we do not find a clear answer to the problem of evil, rather several explanations that seem to contradict one another. Suffering, according to the prophets, is the consequence of the disobedience to the divine law, it is punishment for the sins of man's wickedness and his worship of other gods. However, once one pays for his sins he can atone for them. Thus God, by bringing suffering, forces man to return to Him and thus to lead a righteous existence.

The book of Job has two authors with contradictory views. In the prose narrative the issue is that the innocent may suffer as a test of faith, to determine whether he is sincere and disinterested in his devotion. At the end, after enduring undeserved misery and terrible losses, Job surrenders and patience is amply rewarded. In the section which comprises the poetic dialogues suffering is explained as punishment for sin. Job tends to question and to rebel, but is severely rebuked. God himself states to him that no one has a right to challenge the workings of the Creator of the universe. Job is overpowered by the divine majesty and falls on his knees in humble submission. Ultimately for the author of the poetic section of Job suffering is a mystery. For the book of Proverbs life is essentially good and meaningful purporting that evil is punished and the righteous rewarded. On the other hand, according to the author of Ecclesiastes all is vanity, and there is no sense of purpose because everything is temporary, fleeting, and impermanent. In the end, whether wiseman or fool, rich or poor, all must die. In this book we do not have any answer to why we suffer, however God is not responsible for it; it is something caused by circumstances beyond our control and understanding. All we can do is to avoid it and relieve it in others whenever possible, trying to find contentment in the short span of life on earth that God gives us. "For this is our lot." We turn now to the apocalyptic tradition (the Greek term "apocalypses" means "revealing") as another explanation of the problem of evil. According to the old prophetic view the Almighty interacted with the patriarchs to warn the children of Israel and, if they repented, His promises were fulfilled. However, these beneficent interventions seemed at times to contradict the historical events surrounding the chosen people. Thus we have the paradox that the cause of their distress is not their disobedience but the opposite; they endure persecution and all kinds of afflictions because they were following the laws given by Moses. The explanation is that they were punished by God's enemies. Apocalypses are literary works, usually symbolic visions, and for them the cause of suffering is not God but evil forces opposed to the forces of good. This is the thought-form out of which the Judeo – Christian Devil or Satan arose. The prophetic view could not explain why the people of the "promised land" had to suffer under foreign domination for more than half a millennium. According to the apocalypticists there is the dark power of evil trying to impose their

destruction and misery upon the people of God. Therefore, sin is no more an act of disobedience or rebellion caused by a demonic power intent to enslave the individual, and forcing him to do what is contrary to his own and the divine will. God has relinquished His control of this world to the adversary which exerts its dominion over the minds and the emotions of mankind imposing on them their destructive activities. But not forever; God will intervene by a cosmic act of judgment and redeem the world. The Final Fiat will affect not only the living but also the dead because the apocalypticists believed in the resurrection and eternal life. When will this happen? Very soon. This was the hope announced by them to encourage the people and strengthen their faith during times of unbearable distress. The eschatological vision of a transformed earth is at the center of the Gospels' message. For John the Baptist the judgment is imminent: the ax is already "lying at the root of the trees". And Jesus reiterated even more forcibly the same message: "the time has been fulfilled". The coming Kingdom is a real place on earth and, as it is clearly stated in the Beatitudes, God will reverse the way things are at present. The first will be the last and the last first; the exalted will be humbled and the humble exalted. We are exhorted to "Watch!" It was Jesus' passion for the Kingdom of God that led to His execution. And Paul believed that the second coming was at hand. The question of how and when the manifestation would come about or whether the Kingdom is within or without is not pertinent here. An alternative view of the plan of salvation finds its culmination in the afterlife; the righteous will enjoy eternal life in Heaven and the wicked will be tortured in Hell which is the second death. Therefore, the apocalyptic answer to suffering is the notion that although evil seems to rule the world, the day will come when it is destroyed and God will reassert His power as Sovereign over all creation. Although all have sinned, Christ himself brought the atonement by shedding His blood for others; "this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith". The Book of Revelation, more than any other in the Bible is filled, chapter after chapter with all kinds of disasters and catastrophes before the final victory of the coming Savior. Then, every tear will be wiped from the eyes, death will be no more, and all things will be made new. "It is done! I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end". The light of Christ's redemptive suffering shines above the conflicting biblical responses to evil. His passion as the

expression of the streaming love of God offering Himself, bears in compassion the consequences of the world's dereliction.

Nevertheless, the problem of evil is still shrouded in mystery. This is the favorite ground on which skeptics and atheists construct their acerbic criticism of religious apologetics trying to prove their principles are deficient both in logic and evidence. They argue not merely because we have an appendix which is useless and can even become dangerous. According to them people continue to believe out of ignorance and psychological need and also because most are blindly clinging to inherited doctrines. However, we must turn to other sources for an understanding of the cause of evil. The first point that must be addressed is the startling differences and inequality of mind, talents, physical conditions, and circumstances among human beings. Moreover, there are those who are born with disabilities and limited capacity to live a normal existence.

Who is responsible for it, God or the individual? The most common answer would be that it is "the will of God", which is difficult to reconcile with the nature of an all-loving Father or believe that He regards with special favor anyone over another. In fact, theologians have struggled to explain God's preference for Jacob instead of Esau, the twins born from Isaac and Rebekah. The only explanation given by the rabbis of ancient times, beside the dogmatic assertion that God's ways are mysterious, is that Esau sinned in a previous existence. According to Christian doctrine evil is allowed to exist in order to bring about greater good, or that a temporary condition of suffering will be rewarded with everlasting happiness when shared with Christ's redemptive work. If we accept it the former view makes God depend on evil to fulfill His plan of perfection, which is not only a patent contradiction but an act of profanity. According to the latter, one may believe that his present sorrow will be exchanged with a crown after death, but this does not explain why one's cross is heavier than another's. A second answer would be that distressing conditions, whether at birth or later, are a tragic accident or a misfortune, a matter of chance. This implies, that we are really

incapable of knowing the truth, as if people were helpless victims in the grasp of circumstances they can neither understand nor control. Then nothing can be done except submit to them with stoic resignation or rebel with bitter resentment. But there is a real solution to the existence of evil: the principle of reincarnation. Being related to the law of karma or cause and effect, it is the sensible and coherent explanation of all the discord and problems of mankind. It teaches that we are not punished by God for our actions, we are punished or rewarded by them according to their qualities. Everyone constantly and unerringly meets himself or herself in each life's experiences. Karma is the one Law by which the Cosmos (which means order) as a unity of interconnected parts and mutual interrelations of beings, things, and events is kept in perfect balance and harmony. The cause of everything is within us, it all depends on the effects and consequences of our own choice and decision. We are the self-consciousness of life, the infinite universe is conscious of itself in and through us; moreover, the individual has the capacity to acknowledge his Source by the understanding of the divine "I AM" as his true identity. How do we set into motion the Cosmic Law of Karma? By the power of our free will and the use of our faculties of thoughts, feelings and spoken words. Whatever form of energy and vibration emanates from our body is an effect producing cause. It goes out into the atmosphere and, as it magnetizes its environment, is bound to come back attracting more of its kind. Thus, while positive thought becomes a beneficent power for good, a discordant or negative one generates a maleficent force affecting first the individual and then the rest of life. What we sow we reap. Very few of us realize that we create something every moment, thus forming our character and shaping our destiny. What we thought and felt yesterday is manifested in our life today, and what we think and feel now determines our experiences tomorrow. Only mankind is responsible for the presence of evil in the world. The concept that God can create anything different from the perfection of Its own nature is absurd. We are endowed with the power of choice and how to use or misuse our life-energy. The freedom of our will is the gift of love because love cannot be forced or commanded. The personality can do what he or she wants but by injuring others he compels himself to experience the cause and effect of the same action. Reincarnation also takes away the tragic and immeasurable disproportionateness

from the belief that decisions made in the fleeting duration of human existence will have consequences which last for all eternity. The Karmic record is carried over to a new embodiment and becomes a fresh opportunity for the newborn to once again make the effort to reach a higher level of consciousness which he may have failed to attain in the past. Therefore, each life is not only the summation of past experiences, but an opportunity to take on new obligations, balance old debts, recover old relations, make restitution and awakens innate qualities to the final goal of becoming again who the individual really is, a divine being.

The Law is not external or imposed on us, it is embedded in our very life, and if it may seem our master because of our past errors, we can make it our servant by using our faculties according to the Law of the One, Love. If by Law we suffer, by the same Law we triumph because we can change the qualification of our energy, and it takes no more effort to create a good thought than an evil one. Since the feeling of love is the highest rate of vibration in the universe, it will dissolve every negativity and free the individual from the chain of his past Karma. That is why it has been stated, "All is Law, all is Love". There is a book with the title: "Why Bad Things Happen to Good People", a premise which seems to contradict the Law of cause and affect. But is there anyone who has the boldness or daring to assert that he is good? If one can claim that, he does not know what it means to be good. In the book of Ecclesiastes (7:20) we read: "Surely there is no one on earth so righteous as to do good without sinning", and the same idea is repeated in the Bible. All the saints considered themselves the greatest sinners because the closer one is to the Light, the more evident the imperfections become. Indeed, there is a passage in the Gospel where Jesus was addressed by a man with the words, "Good Master," and he retorted: "Why do you call me good? Only God is good". (Matthew, 10-16) Now, is anyone above it?

It should be mentioned that there is a collective Karma by which innocents may suffer, for instance in war, but in such cases they will be compensated for it by the retributive Law of balance. Or someone may choose to take on himself the

afflictions which belong to another out of love. Therefore, we should never judge anyone by their appearance because we don't know the inner cause of any condition. One more thought: if mankind is the creator of evil, what about natural disasters, and cataclysmic upheaval? They are also the effect of mankind's destructive misuse of energy. What we call Nature is eternally pure because it is a divine manifestation, and when discordant, negative energy is imposed on Her, especially through war, it returns to destroy mankind. This is not a far-fetched notion. For Instance, the experiments of Dr. Emoto have proved by thousands of photographs how water responds to our attitudes towards it. He discovered that crystals formed in frozen water reveal changes according to the quality of our thoughts, the patterns being brilliant and beautiful or distorted with dull colors. Obviously this applies to the other elements, air, earth and fire, are also part of our body.

The main objection to reincarnation is that people do not remember their past lives, although there are cases when they do. Similarly, we can imagine someone who fell and injured himself as a child, but although he still lives with the consequences, he cannot recall the incident itself. Moreover, without the benefit of forgetfulness, the pull of memories would hold back the individual, and some events might be so terrifying and tragic that one would lose his sanity by remembering them. Besides, the inner record would force him, if contacted again, to repeat the same action. It is an act of mercy to close the door of memory, so that possibility of freedom is always present without the tremendous burden of the past. There is the episode in the Gospel of a man blind from birth that seem to deny the principle of reincarnation. When the disciples ask Jesus about the cause of who sinned, the man or his parents, the Master replied, "He was born blind so that God's works would be revealed in him". (John, 9:2). By their question the disciples were aware of reincarnation and asked for clarification. Also the Pharisees knew it when they rebuked the man, afterward with the words, "You were born entirely in sin, and are trying to teach us?" (9:34) Jesus did not disregard the inquiry as meaningless; however, it would be blasphemy to say that His Father inflicted an innocent child with blindness in

order to manifest his works. The man was, indeed, born blind because of his past Karma but Jesus, as the bearer of Grace, transcends the judgment of the Karmic Law; rather He fulfills it by love. Once we understand that every problem and limitation is self-created and seems to exist because of lack of love, we will decide to live according to the Law of Life, which Love is, and, thus, attain our immortal freedom.

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Dr. Bizzicari is the author of the book, Dialogues with my God Self: Understanding the Law of Love. To Obtain a copy of "Dialogues with My God Self" contact Dr Bizzicari at www.alvarobizzicari.com, alvarobizzicari@yahoo.com, or write to him at 775 Oak Street, East Hartford, CT 06118, 860 578-9038

About Dr. Alvaro Bizzicari

In my growing awareness of the impermanence of our human existence, where all of our experiences have beginning and end as the only certainty is death, I turned to the study of philosophy. After receiving my doctorate at the University of Rome, Italy, I realized that thoughts, which are developed only on the intellectual plane, did not fulfill my desire for the knowledge of the purpose of life and its source. I was attracted to the sacred texts of East and West, and they helped me to penetrate closer to the core of ultimate reality or God; but I felt that something was missing, the truth was still enveloped by some dark veils. In my quest, I travelled and visited many countries until I came into contact with a new teaching given in America by those Divine Masters who brought Light to unawakened mankind in every age. They said that there is a God Law which, by its application, can free the individual from all earthly limitations of mind and body. It is brought forth in America as the last effort to save mankind from its self-destructive creations of the past and present in the New or "I AM" Age in which we have entered. My book is an introduction to that transcendent Truth, which conveys the understanding of our true Self, and the real nature of our Source of life and love. It is the final revelation of the way each individual is indissolubly connected and at one with his or her God Self for all eternity.

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