

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sermon: Why Does God Allow Evil Part 2

Topic: Whatever God Does it is not Evil

Scripture Text: Isaiah 45:4-7

10/14/2018

“What if...you woke up this today with only the things you thanked God for yesterday - Jody Files

Isaiah 45:5-7 (KJV 1900) ⁵ I am the LORD, and *there is none else, There is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:* ⁶ That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, That *there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.* ⁷ I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

Definition - The/od/ I/ cy - the vindication of divine goodness and providence in view of the existence of evil.
2. defense of God's goodness and omnipotence in view of the existence of evil (MW)

For the purpose of this series I am going to reduce the categories down to just three.

1. Natural/Physical Evil
2. Moral evil
3. Demonic evil which includes evil from Hell

If we look at all the synonyms for “evil” none of them seem to be related to any natural or physical event or action.

Synonyms: Adjective

bad, black, dark, immoral, iniquitous, nefarious, rotten, sinful, unethical, unlawful, unrighteous, unsavory, vicious, vile, villainous, wicked, wrong

Synonyms: Noun

bad, evildoing, ill, immorality, iniquity, sin, villainy, wrong

Now it seems that based on some of the Biblical translations of the root word, the definition coverage of evil is very broad to also include such words as calamity and disaster perhaps from the definition translated “trouble”. Or, when defined as a noun (**something that brings sorrow**) It can be broaden to cover almost anything we think that brings sorrow even if it is of our own making.

My definition---Evil is any intentional harm or hurt done to any person, place, or thing.

Evil does not just happen. There must be an impetus for it.

I believe that the use of the word “evil” has too broad of a definition when used to describe a “natural” disaster, calamity, plague, illness or any and all things or events cause as a result of a natural occurrence. It is true that all these things cause suffering but nearly all of the time they are caused by the act of nature.

In looking at our focus passage when read in the KJV the word “evil” was used.

⁷ I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

This causes many people to ask the questions:

1. Why does God create evil?
2. If God planned everything, why does He plan for really evil things to happen?

As we heard in the video message by John MacArthur, his friend Larry King, and I am sure many others, cannot except God as God because He allows so much evil and suffering in the world. How can He be this omnipotent, all powerful God and allow so much evil?

Well, on the way to answering these questions we did what I think is correct and that is to define what evil is. Today I want to finish up on the topic of natural evil.

Let me rephrase the first question to say;
Why did God create NATURAL evil?

Natural events should not be called evil. In most cases it is never created by God out of harmful intentions as it can be if created by Satan. (*see Job 1:18*)

First lets us be clear, God did not create any natural evil. Everything God created was “GOOD”. In Genesis Chapter 1, recording the creation, 6 times after God created something He said “it was good”. (*Gen 1: 4,10,12,18,21, and 25*).

Prior to the fall of man everything was “good”. Everything lived together man and animals alike. Food was in abundance. The weather was perfect without a hint of rain. Death had no place on earth.

After the fall everything in creation was changed by God. I think enmity between man and animals began. Adam and Eve wore animal skins for clothes and I believe those that followed did the same creating a different relationship between man and the animals.
Genesis 3:21 (NKJV) ²¹ *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

Food became scarce because of the curse on the ground. This curse affected both man and animals. This may have caused animals to look for another food source.
Genesis 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “**Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.***

There is no mention of a change in the weather system. Key point is that there was no rain.
Genesis 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. **For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth,** and there was no man to till the ground;*

Death entered the world where there was no death before.
Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—*
 Examples: the death of animals for covering. Death of Able by the hand of Cain.

God did bring suffering into the world after the fall. Although suffering has been linked to evil, I do not think it applies here. The suffering, although caused and intended by God was not an act with evil intentions but the **result of punishment/chastisement** by a sovereign God.
Genesis 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *To the woman He said: “**I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;** (a natural occurrence) *In pain you shall bring forth children; ...**

Even with the curse of pain in childbirth there is a blessing.

John 16:21 (NKJV) ²¹ *A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.*

Genesis 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. (a Natural occurrence)*

The administration of punishment is not an act of evil but an act of justice and order.

Is a loving parent evil because he/she spans their child or are they trying to produce good in the child?

The next major change in creation was the flood. There is no question that it was God that sent the flood. God sent the rain and released the waters under the earth to cause the flood of "Biblical portion." It could be called a calamity, a disaster but can we call it evil?

God controls the universe and everything in it. At times He may use anything in the universe for His purpose be it rain, wind, diseases or people to accomplish His will. His will could be to punish, chastise, deliver His wrath, or even to bless. But for sure God does nothing that could be called evil. For to do evil one must be evil and how can a good God be evil. **Even one evil act discounts His goodness.**

Let me sum it up about what is called "natural evil". There are instances in the Bible where God has used "nature"

TO CHASTISE - as recorded in our Responsive reading, (the plague sent to Israel because of David's disobedience; *2 Samuel 24:10-15*)

TO PUNISH - Because of the wickedness of man God sent the flood (*Genesis 6:5-8*).

Because of the evil of Ahab, (*1 Kings 16:33*) God sent a drought to the land through the prayers of Elijah. (*1 Kings 17:1 James 5:17-18 (NKJV)* ¹⁷ *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.*

TO BLESS – by (sending rain to grow crops after a drought) God never does so to bring evil.

Later, through the prayers of Elijah God send the rain. *James 5: 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

TO DEMONSTRATE THE HE IS THE ALL-POWERFUL GOD – (Hardened Pharaoh's heart)

Exodus 11:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ *But the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." ¹⁰ ... and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.*

Exodus 9:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

On the other hand, Satan the prince of this world has power to use natural events to do his evil. (Evil is any **intentional** harm or hurt done to any undeserving person, place, or thing.). He used it to do all three in the book of Job.

Contrast Gods use with that of the devils use of his control over nature as recorded in job.

SATAN’S USE OF DEMONIC INFLUNCE TO THE HEART – influencing the minds of raiders with the intent to do harm to Jobs property and possessions. (*Job 1:13–17*)

SATAN’S USE OF NATURE (Wind) – with the intent to do harm to Jobs children. (*Job 1:18–19*)

SATAN’S USE OF DISEASE – With the intent to do harm to Jobs health.

Job 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ *So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.*

And last but true there are natural events we call evil because they affect us in a harmful way yet there is a good reason for their occurrence and often as the result of our own doing. Diseases occur often because of our own unclean habits.

One last point to kill the idea that God does anything with the intent to do us harm.

Why would a God who loves us so and spared not His Son, be intent on doing us harm?

Romans 8:32 (NKJV) ³² *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

END

Message Scriptures: **Isaiah 45:4–7**, (*Gen 1: 4,10,12,18,21, and 25*), *Genesis 3:21, Genesis 3:17, Genesis 2:5, Romans 5:12, Genesis 3:16, John 16:21, Genesis 3:17, 2 Samuel 24:10–15, Genesis 6:5–8, 1 Kings 16:33, 1 Kings 17:1, James 5:17–18, Exodus 11:9–10, Exodus 9:16, Job 1:13–17, Job 1:18–19, Job 2:7, Romans 8:32, Very harsh punishment from the Lord - Lev. 26:14-39, Deut. 28:21-26, Jer. 14:12.*

The Use of Natural Events Which Have Been Mistakenly Called Evil Done by God.

1. Natural Events

If a man builds a house on sand and it is washed away by a Natural storm, is that an evil act by God. I can't even blame Satan for that happening.

Matthew 7:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ *“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”*

2. As Sovereign Punishment

There is a distinct difference between God's punishment and Gods chastisement. Gods punishment flows from Gods wrath while His chastening flows from Gods love.

One example is Nineveh, a wicked city facing the judgment of a sovereign God.

Jonah 1:2 (NKJV) ² *“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.”*

Jonah 3:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”*

Nineveh repented and God relented. Later in history Nineveh resumed its wickedness and was destroyed.

3. To Deliver His Wrath

In Numbers 16:22–33 we can read where God's wrath was kindled against Israel for the sins of Korah and Dathan. At the intercession of Moses and Aaron God poured out His wrath on only Korah and Dathan, their families and those that followed them.

4. *Numbers 16:31–33 (NKJV)* ³¹ *Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, ³² and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods. ³³ So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.* (Sounds like an earthquake)

5. Then there is the total destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 13:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.*

Genesis 19:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”*

Some say that the fire and brimstone was from some sort of volcanic eruption that rained down upon them.

6. Sovereign Chastisement

Hebrews 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.”*

Besides the account given in our responsive reading there are other instances of God using nature to chastise His people

2 Chronicles 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.*

7. To Display His Power

We referred to Egypt in the message

Exodus 9:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. ¹⁶ But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.*

Exodus 14:31 (NKJV) ³¹ *Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.*

The power God displayed by opening the Red Sea, giving Israel victory over kings Sihon and Og, reached the ears of the people of Jericho and they were afraid.

Joshua 2:8–11 (NKJV) ⁸ ... ¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. ¹¹ And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.