

Did God Create Evil?

The following is a quote that appears on a number of atheist web sites. It has been in atheist literature for decades:

Either God wants to abolish evil, and cannot, or he can but does not want to, or he cannot and does not want to, or lastly he can and wants to. If he wants to remove evil, and cannot, he is not omnipotent. If he can, but does not want to, he is not benevolent. If he neither can nor wants to, he is neither omnipotent nor benevolent; but if God can abolish evil and wants to, and if evil still exists, then God must not be God. God does not exist.

How can God be benevolent and omnipotent and still allow evil to exist? Richard Dawkins, perhaps the leading twenty-first century spokesman for atheism says:

In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reason to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good. Nothing but blind pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is, and we dance to its music.

Out of Eden, page 133.

So if evil is not a product and creation of God, why does it exist and why does God allow it to exist? Why is evil not a proof that God is not really God but rather a creation of man.

The problem is that atheists and many believers have never stopped to deal with the questions, "What is the purpose of man's existence?" "Why are we here?" "Why do we exist?" If you assume that man is a chance event, then you automatically deny there is a purpose in our existence. Julian Huxley, representing the atheist view, said it well:

We are as much a product of blind forces as is the falling of a stone to Earth, or the ebb and flow of the tides. We have just happened, and man was made flesh by a long series of singularly beneficial accidents.

The Human Degree, J.B. Lippincott Co., 1976.

The views of Huxley and Dawkins and their followers demean man and offer a very negative and pessimistic view of man with no hope and no value placed on human life above that of any other life on the planet.

The biblical concept of man is just the opposite. Man is presented in the Bible as something created in the image of God. This component enables man to encounter evil. Evil results from our capacity to choose to reject good.

In biblical terms, man has capacity to make choices that affect other humans. Evil involves making choices, and mankind has uniquely been given the capacity to make choices that involve good and evil. How we make these choices is a reflection of what we believe about ourselves and our relationship to everything in the cosmos. An atheist like Carl Sagan would limit what he believes about that cosmic relationship. Sagan was fond of saying, "The cosmos is everything that is or was or ever will be" (*Cosmos*, Random House, New York, 1980, page 257).

That is the easy way out. In the Bible there are references to things beyond what our senses perceive. Ephesians 6:12 says it best: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The purpose of man's existence involves the battle Ephesians 6:12 describes. The book of Job gives us a spectator's view of man's existence and how one man's existence serves as a battle ground for the struggle between good and evil. Job was created for this purpose, and in Job 42:5 he rejoices in having come to an understanding of why he was created. This is quite a contrast to Job 3:3-11 where Job laments the fact that he was ever born. We are all Job! The atheist statement at the start of our article then radiates a failure to have any comprehension of why we exist. It is not that God is not omnipotent. It is not that He does not care. What God is focused on is His purpose in creating man. He will not compromise that purpose by interfering in the natural consequences of the choices that humans make. Claiming that the existence of evil is a proof that there is no God is an unfortunate demonstration of a lack of understanding of why

we are here.

The ultimate beauty of the picture the Bible gives us of God and the question of evil is that when God came to the Earth in a physical form and saw how much sin pains, and what agony humans suffer because of the consequences of sin, God burst into tears (John 11:35).

We serve a God who cares. As the writer of Hebrews states it, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). - *John N. Clayton*

http://www.whypain.org/did_god_create_evil.html – adapted

Potluck today after A.M. Services – in the annex.

Don and Jen Wilson will be with us this Wednesday. Don will tell us about his family's experiences in Indonesia. We'll share deserts and punch afterwards.

Area-Wide Singing: Plan to attend the area wide singing on the afternoon of July 22 at the Safford church facility. Micky Harrison, the minister at the Morenci church, will deliver the lesson during the evening worship assembly.

Prayer List

Healing: *Nicolas Self, Douglas Gardner, Brandon (Gerry Clark's grandson), Diane Cocke's brother-in-law, Ben Atchley, Dave Morris, Martha Winkler, Richard and Ethel Tuey.*

Personal: *Richard and Skeet Posey, Members of the Morenci church – as they are in transition. Travels: Ben and Esther Atchley, John and Sharon Cunningham, Cody Bo and Ella Marie Brooks, Joy Gibson.*

CHURCH OF CHRIST

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

17 June 2012

Sermon Topics

A.M. The Role of Fathers

Eph 5:21-6:4

P.M. Entertaining Strangers and Angels

Heb 13:2

Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-5974

Elders

Ben Atchley: 428-2246

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.