

Why Is There Suffering?

“I gave you empty stomachs in every city and lack of bread in every town, yet you have not returned to me,” declares the Lord.

Amos 4:6 (NIV)

Every generation in history it seems has asked the same question, “Why must the world suffer?” There are so many millions who are starving. Disease and war are everywhere. The world is in a dreadful state.

Sincere and compassionate people ask the inevitable question of why this must be so. Many even go so far as to deny there can be a God of love who tolerates such horrors in His world.

Yet, one of the answers God gives for the presence of suffering in His creation is that He is using calamity to have people repent for their sins and come back to Him. Suffering that is beyond our ability to remedy should have the effect of turning us away from our own resources and cause us to look to the sovereign God to intervene.

In our verse for today God claims to have been the source of famine, and that He sent the famine to drive the people back into His arms. Sadly, the Lord said the suffer-

ing did not cause a return to Himself.

C. S. Lewis commented once that pain is God’s megaphone to rouse a deaf world. He was right. God calls to us to return to Him, and if we do He has made a promise. Listen to Him speak, 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 (NIV)

“When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, 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 I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Why is there suffering in the land? Why do people suffer so much? One possible reason is that God is calling the people through suffering to come back to Him, confess their sin and be restored.

The reason for your personal suffering may or may not be

because of your own sins. You may suffer because of the sins of others as many Bible characters did. But, at least, you should pray to the Lord, and ask Him if you have sinned to cause this suffering. The Lord who gave you the ability to speak will answer you and through reading Scripture, consulting with wise Christians, through hearing God’s Word preached, the Lord will guide your thoughts to the proper answer.

Do not be afraid to come to Him and seek answers to your questions. If you humbly come to Him He will never turn you away for any reason. Come to Him and come today.

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