



*“Now a certain man was there who
had an infirmity thirty-eight years.”
(John 5:5)*

The presence of suffering
and evil in a world created
by god

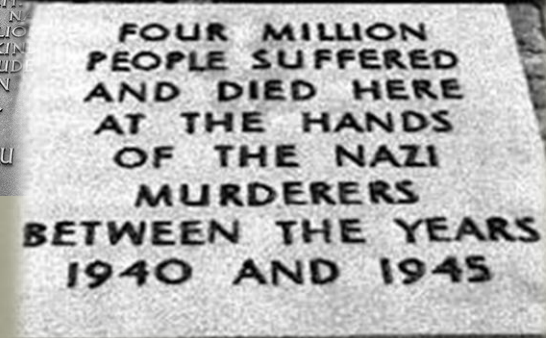
Preliminary thoughts about evil

- Evil is the absence or privation of something good.
- *“It [evil] is not an actual entity but a real corruption in an actual entity.”*
(Norman Geisler)



How can such evil exist in A world created by god?

- Two types of evil:
 - Moral
 - Natural
- Three important concepts:
 - God's power
 - God's goodness
 - Presence of evil in the world
- *“Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he able and willing: whence then is evil?”* (David Hume)



Philosophical consideration

- What are the criteria for determining what is evil or good?
- We need an infinite reference point that is absolutely good
- “...let God be true but every man a liar.” (Rom. 3:4)
- “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Origin of evil

- God created everything good
 - “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.” (Gen. 1:31)
- Evil entered the world when mankind freely chose to disobey God.
- Why couldn't God create us in such a way that we would never sin?
 - “God apparently thought it worth the risk of creating us as we are.” (Paul Little)



Origin of evil

- *“Forced love is rape; and God is not a divine rapist. He will not do anything to coerce their decision.”* (Norman Geisler)
- Free choice leaves the possibility of a wrong choice
 - *“Evil is inherent in the risky gift of free will.”* (JB Phillips)
- *“God’s plan had the potential for evil when he bestowed on humans the freedom of choice, but the actual origin of evil came as a result of a man who directed his will away from God and towards his own selfish desires.”* (Ronald Rhodes)
- ***“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.”*** (Jam. 1:14)
- *“Whereas God created the fact of freedom, humans perform the acts of freedom. God made evil possible; creatures make it actual.”* (Norman Geisler)

What is god's ultimate purpose for allowing evil?

- *“A theist does not have to claim that our present world is the best of all possible worlds, but it is **the best way** to the best possible world.”* (Norman Geisler)
- With the correct understanding of God, we both preserve freedom and defeat evil
- God is not finished yet

How to face a suffering world?

- Trust in His divine providence
- Ex: Joseph
 - “...you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.” (Gen. 50:20)
 - *“I have seen God take the broken pieces of my life and make it into something beautiful.”* (Nick Vujicic)
- Evaluate present sufferings in the light of eternity
 - “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Rom. 8:18)

