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PART I

Why Evil Is a Part of God's Creation



WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF EVIL?

Some say that God doesn't know evil, because they can't explain why a God who is good allows robberies, murders, disease, poverty, and other terrible happenings that are going on constantly on this earth. These

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misfortunes are certainly evil to us; but are they evil to God? If they are, why would God permit such evil? And if the evil did not come from Him who is the Supreme Creator of all things, where did it come from? Who created greed? Who created hate? Who created jealousy and anger? Who created harmful bacteria? Who created sex temptation, and the temptation of greed? These were not the invention of human beings. Man could never have experienced them if they had not first been created.

Some people try to explain that evil does not exist, or that it is merely a psychological factor. But this is not so. The evidence of evil is here in the world. You cannot deny it. If there is no evil, why would Jesus pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"?* He is saying plainly that evil does exist.

So the truth is, we do find evil in the world.

* *Matthew* 6:13.

And where did it come from? God.* Evil provides the contrast that enables us to recognize and experience goodness. Evil had to be, if there was to be any creation. If you wrote a message with white chalk on a white board, no one would see it. So without the blackboard of evil, the good things in the world could not be magnified at all. For instance, Judas was Jesus' best publicity agent. By his evil act, Judas made Christ eternally famous. Jesus knew the role he had to play, and all that was going to happen to him in order that he might demonstrate the love and greatness of God; and a villain was necessary to this enactment. But it was not good for Judas that he chose to be the one whose dark deed, by contrast, extolled the glories of Christ's triumph over evil.

* "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (*Isaiah* 45:6-7, Bible).

WHERE IS THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL?

It is hard to know where the dividing line is between good and evil. Certainly it is terrible that bacteria kill two billion people every hundred years. But think of the chaos of overpopulation if there were no death! And if everything here were good and perfect, no one would leave this earth of his own accord; no one would want to go back to God. So in a sense misery is your best friend, because it starts you seeking God. When you begin to see clearly the imperfection of the world, you will begin to seek the perfection of God. The truth is that God is using evil, not to destroy us, but to make us disillusioned with His toys, with the playthings of this world, so that we might seek Him.

This is why the Lord Himself permits injustices and evil. But I have said to Him, "Lord, You have never suffered. You have always

been perfect. How do You know what suffering is? Yet You have put us through these tests; and You had no business doing it. We didn't ask to be born as mortals and to suffer." (He doesn't mind that I argue with Him. He is very patient.) The Lord answers, "You don't have to go on suffering; I have given everyone the free will to choose good instead of evil, and thus come back to Me."

So evil is the test of God to see if we will choose Him or His gifts. He created us in His image and gave us the power to free ourselves. But we don't use that power.

