

GOD, WHAT IS GOING ON?

Does God Care About Your Pain?

- It's not fair that my sister was killed by a drunk driver. She was so young.
- My husband was getting ready to retire. Why did he have to suffer and die from cancer?
- Why did God allow my child to be murdered?

Does God care about your pain?

It's a fair question. Does God really understand what you are going through after your loss? In the Bible, you'll find assurance that God does understand and wants to help you:

- He is described as "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3).
- He knows what is happening to you: "But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand" (Psalm 10:14a).
- God wants you to talk about your hurts, to "pour out your heart to him" (Psalm 62:8 NLT).

Do you see? He hears your cries for help and He invites you to come to Him for comfort.

God's plan to end your suffering

Not only does God want to ease your suffering, He actually relates to it. How can God understand a human problem like grief? He can relate because He grieved the unjust execution of His Son, Jesus.

As painful as it was, God allowed Jesus to die as part of His plan to end suffering and death. He wanted to bring comfort, hope, and healing to you. But to appreciate this plan, you have to understand the reason suffering and death exist.

The reason we suffer

All of us have disobeyed God. This is not a new problem. It stretches all the way back to Adam and Eve. The Bible calls this disobedience "sin" and describes its ultimate consequence:

- "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)
- "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23a)

This creates a seemingly hopeless future for us:

- Because God is pure and holy, He cannot tolerate sin.
- He punishes sin. It's the only possible response consistent with His righteous character.
- The penalty for our sin is suffering in this life and physical death followed by eternal punishment.

The reason you can have hope

Even in His holiness, God is compassionate. He does not want us to meet our deserved fate. The Bible describes another side of God's character, one that should encourage you:

- “God is love.” (1 John 4:8b)
- He is patient with us: “The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love” (Psalm 103:8).
- He is “rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2:4).

God’s love and mercy are so deep that He wants to rescue each of us from the consequences of our disobedience (sin). He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross to pay the penalty for that sin. Jesus experienced death and separation from God, on our behalf, even though He was perfect. It is the ultimate expression of God’s love:

- “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Claiming God’s hope for your life

Ultimately God’s plan will put an end to murder, cancer, tragic accidents, loneliness, sadness, depression, and grief. One day *“there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain”* (Revelation 21:4). So even in the sorrow you feel right now, you can look forward with hope to the fulfillment of this plan.

But to benefit from God’s plan, you have to let Him know that you want to be an active part of it.

This involves agreeing that you disobey God and that you need Christ to die in your place to save you from experiencing the full penalty of your sin (eternal punishment and separation from God). Surrendering to Christ (Salvation) is accepting Christ’s sacrifice to save you from sin and give you eternal peace and life with Him. That’s the joy that lays ahead. That’s the hope you can find in Christ, even in the midst of your suffering and grief.

Adapted from a *Griefshare* resource