

## God, Evil, and Repentance

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### Job and evil:

**Job 38:1–5, 40:2:** Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind: “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know!.... Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Anyone who argues with God must respond.”

**Job 42:3–6:** I [Job] have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. I had heard of you [God] by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore, I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

[**Lesson:** We humans shouldn’t expect to be able now to explain God’s purposes in allowing evil, because God hasn’t told us all of those purposes. Our misplaced expectations here can call for our repentance.]

### Paul and evil:

**Romans 8:20–23:** The creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

**Romans 5:3–5:** We boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

[**Lesson:** God plans to bring good out of evil, at God’s preferred time, and we have an experienced ground for hope in this kind of redemption, courtesy of God’s self-revelation to us.]

### Jesus and evil:

**Luke 13:1–5:** At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.”

**John 9:1–4:** As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day.”

[**Lesson:** Jesus valued our relationship with God over our ability to explain God’s purposes. His talk of repentance is a call to the kind of interpersonal relationship with God illustrated in the parable of the prodigal child (Luke 15). If we don’t put this relationship first, we will make Job’s initial mistake.]