

“Primetime (9): ‘Is God to Blame?’”

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❖ Theodicy

- Sam Harris (atheist): “Of course, people of all faiths regularly assure one another that God is not responsible for human suffering. But how else can we understand the claim that God is both omniscient [all-knowing] and omnipotent [all-powerful]? This is the age-old question of _____, of course, and we should consider it solved. If God exists, either He can do nothing to stop the most egregious calamities, or He does not care to. God, therefore, is either _____ or _____.” (*Letter to a Christian Nation* 55)
- “Theodicy”—Gk, *theos* [God] + *dikē* [justice]—defending a _____ in an _____.
- Gregory A. Boyd (theist): “One of the chief problems in the Western philosophical tradition is reconciling the presence of evil with an all-good and all-powerful God. The problem, in a nutshell, is that if God is all-powerful, it seems he must have the ability to stop evil if he wants to. And if God is all-good, it seems he would want to. Yet _____.” (*Is God to Blame?* 55)

❖ I Corinthians 13:1-4—“Love _____.”

❖ Once upon a time . . .

- Isaiah 14:12-14—“How you are fallen from _____, O Lucifer, son of the morning! For you have said in your heart, ‘I will be like the _____.’”
- Ezekiel 28:12-17—“You were the anointed cherub who covers [the throne] on the holy mountain of God. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, until _____ was found in you. And you sinned; therefore I cast you out.”
- Revelation 12:7-12—“And _____ broke out in heaven. So that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who _____ the whole world, was cast to the earth, and his angels with him. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth! For the Devil has come down to you, having great _____.”
- Genesis 3:1-15—“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, “You shall not eat of every tree?” You will not surely _____. For God knows that in the day you eat of [this tree], you will be like _____.’ So she took of its fruit and also gave of it to her husband. And they hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God.”
- C. S. Lewis: “One of the things that surprised me when I first read the New Testament seriously was that it talked so much about a Dark Power in the universe—a mighty evil spirit who was held to be the Power behind death and disease, and sin. . . . Christianity thinks this Dark Power was created by God, and was good when he was created, and went wrong. Christianity agrees with Dualism that this universe is at war. But it does not think this is a war between independent powers. It thinks it is a _____ war, a rebellion, and that we are living in a part of the universe occupied by the rebel.” (*Mere Christianity* 50, 51)

❖ The Choice

- If the story we are telling is true—that Lucifer rebelled against his Father and shattered the peaceful tranquility of heaven . . . and then deceived the fledgling

- human race into joining him in his rebellion—why then didn't God just take him out and _____ him?
- Because the great and compelling truth about Love is that in order for it be love, it must not only grant you the right to say _____ —it must also give you the right to say _____ —otherwise it is not Love, but _____.
 - And a universe of force is a universe of _____.
 - “If love is the end, freedom must be the means to that end.” (Boyd 70)
 - “A recent development in science, _____ theory, . . . highlights the interconnected complexity of life and the impossibility of our ever exhaustively comprehending it. Put in simplest terms, it has been demonstrated recently that the slightest variation in a sufficiently complex process at one point may cause remarkable variations in that process at another point. The flap of a butterfly wing in one part of the globe can be, under the right conditions, the decisive variable that brings about a hurricane in another part of the globe several months later [“the butterfly effect”].” (Boyd 96)
 - “Because love requires _____, humans and angels have the power to affect others for better or for worse. Indeed, every decision we make affects other agents in some measure. . . . We are the heirs to an incomprehensibly vast array of human, angelic, and natural ripples throughout history about which we know next to nothing but which nevertheless significantly affect our lives.” (Boyd 97, 98)
 - “Though we can't know the ‘why’ of any particular instance of suffering, we can and must know that our whole environment is _____ by forces that hate God and all that is good.” (Boyd 104)
 - Jesus was brutally right: “An _____ has done this” (Matthew 13:28).
- ❖ “Few give thought to the suffering that sin has caused our Creator. All heaven suffered in Christ's agony; but that suffering did not begin or end with His manifestation in humanity. **The cross is a revelation to our dull senses of the pain that, from its very inception, sin has brought to the heart of God.** . . . As the ‘whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together’ (Romans 8:26, 22), the heart of the infinite Father is pained in sympathy.” (*Education* 263)

“Love suffers long”

theodicy, impotent, evil, good God, evil world, evil persists, suffers long, heaven, Most High, iniquity, war, deceives, wrath, die, God, civil, shoot, Yes, No, force, fear, chaos, choice, under siege, enemy