

God's Love and Justice

The Problem of Evil

Lesson #7 for February 15, 2025

Scriptures: Job 30:26; 38:1-12; Matthew 27:46; Psalm 73; Genesis 2:16-17; Revelation 21:3-4.

1. If God is loving and just and all-powerful, why is there evil?

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Perhaps the greatest problem facing Christianity is the problem of evil—how to reconcile the fact that God is perfectly good and loving, with the fact of evil in this world. In brief terms, **if God is all-good and all-powerful, why is there evil, and so much of it, too?**

This is not merely an academic problem but something that deeply troubles many people and that keeps some from coming to know and love God.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, February 8.†

2. Ellen White had wise words regarding the origin of sin.

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] **To many minds the origin of sin and the reason for its existence are a source of great perplexity. They see the work of evil, with its terrible results of woe and desolation, and they question how all this can exist under the sovereignty of One who is infinite in wisdom, in power, and in love. Here is a mystery of which they find no explanation.** And in their uncertainty and doubt they are blinded to truths plainly revealed in God's word and essential to salvation. There are those who, in their inquiries concerning the existence of sin, endeavor to search into that which God has never revealed; hence they find no solution of their difficulties; and such as are actuated by a disposition to doubt and cavil seize upon this as an excuse for rejecting the words of Holy Writ. Others, however, fail of a satisfactory understanding of the great problem of evil, from the fact that tradition and misinterpretation have obscured the teaching of the Bible concerning the character of God, the nature of His government, and the principles of His dealing with sin. **[Does this include some translators of the Bible?** A careful and thorough reading of the entire Bible will solve that problem.]

It is impossible to explain the origin of sin so as to give a reason for its existence. Yet enough may be understood concerning both the origin and the final disposition of sin to make fully manifest the justice and benevolence of God in all His dealings with evil. **Nothing is more plainly taught in Scripture than that God was in no wise responsible for the entrance of sin; that there was no arbitrary withdrawal of divine grace, no deficiency in the divine government, that gave occasion for the uprising of rebellion. Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. It is mysterious, unaccountable; to excuse it is to defend it. Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin. Our only definition of sin is that given in the word of God; it is "the transgression of the law," [1 John 3:4, KJV*] it is the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.**—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 492.1-493.0.†† <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p132.2228&index=0>†

3. The Bible does give other definitions of *sin*.

4. The Greek of 1 John 3:4 says simply that “sin is lawlessness” or “rebellion” against God.
5. Another biblical **definition of *sin*** is found in James 4:17.

James 4:17: So then, those who do not do the good they know they should do are guilty of sin.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., James 4:17). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{††} [These are described as *sins of omission*.][‡]

6. **However, the most basic and comprehensive definition of *sin*** is given in Romans 14:23.

Romans 14:23: But if they have doubts about what they eat, God condemns them when they eat it, because their action is not based on faith. And anything that is not based on faith is sin.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†} [Italic type is added.][‡]

7. ***This simply states that anything that leads away from God is sin; anything that brings us closer to God is based on faith.***

8. We should be so thankful that we have been able to see the truth about God and understand the source of evil as described in Scripture.

9. There are many atheists in the world who blame God for all the evil they see around them. A correct understanding of Scripture teaches clearly that God is good, and evil is not His responsibility, even though He created freedom that made evil possible.

Job 30:26: I hoped for happiness and light,
but trouble and darkness came instead.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

Jeremiah 12:1: “LORD, if I argued my case with you,
you would prove to be right.
Yet I must question you about matters of justice.
Why are the wicked so prosperous?
Why do dishonest people succeed?”—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

Jeremiah 13:22-23: ²² If you [Jerusalem] ask why all this has happened to you — why your clothes have been torn off and you have been raped — it is because your sin is so terrible. ²³Can a Nubian change the colour [*sic-Br*] of his skin, or a leopard remove its spots? If they could, then you that do nothing but evil could learn to do what is right.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

Malachi 2:17: You have tired the LORD out with your talk. But you ask, “How have we tired him?” By saying, “The LORD Almighty thinks all evildoers are good; in fact he likes them.” Or by asking, “Where is the God who is supposed to be just?”—*Good News Bible*.^{*} [People must be given freedom to choose, and many choose evil! See the handout entitled “Love” posted on www.theox.org. (https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Love_16.pdf)][‡]

10. Does it seem to you that the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer, even in our world today? Is that God’s fault? At the second coming of Jesus, good will be eternally separated from evil. At the third coming, evil will be destroyed finally and completely; sin and sinners will be no more!
11. Seventh-day Adventists are so blessed because Ellen White has given us the opportunity to see the issues and history of the great controversy over God’s character and government as described in Scripture and how it has worked itself out in history.

12. Let us not even suggest that evil is not a big problem. It is! Evil is very bad! Many people in the Scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, have essentially asked: **“How long, O LORD, can you put up with this?”**

Revelation 6:9-10: ⁹ Then the Lamb broke open the fifth seal. I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because they had proclaimed God’s word and had been faithful in their witnessing. ¹⁰They shouted in a loud voice, “Almighty Lord, holy and true! **How long will it be** until you judge the people on earth and punish them for killing us?”—*Good News Bible*.*†

[BSG:] In the book of Revelation, the opening of the fifth seal reveals the figurative image of the people “who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held” (*Rev. 6:9, NKJV*). More specifically, they are “under the altar” and loudly cry to God using the question *how long*—“ ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ ” (*Rev. 6:10, NKJV*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 94.†§ [This pre-advent judgment which is occurring now in heaven will only be finalized at the second coming of Jesus.]‡

[BSG:] Overall, these *how long* questions imply perplexity in face of the problem of evil and convey a deep longing for divine justice. Whereas Psalm 10:1, 2 does not employ the expression *how long*, the same perplexity and the strong expectation of divine action is present in the question articulated to God in this passage. “Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide in times of trouble? The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; let them be caught in the plots which they have devised” (*Ps. 10:1, 2, NKJV*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 94.†§

Psalm 10:1-2: ¹ Why are you so far away, O LORD?

Why do you hide yourself when we are in trouble?

²The wicked are proud and persecute the poor;
catch them in the traps they have made.—*Good News Bible*.*

13. We only have to look at the life and death of Jesus to realize how evil has touched even God Himself.

Matthew 27:46: At about three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, “*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*” which means, **“My God, my God, why did you abandon me?”**—*Good News Bible*.*†§

14. Jesus Christ died because of a broken heart which resulted from His realization that God the Father had hidden Himself from Jesus, according to Their agreed-upon plan set up before the creation of this earth.

[EGW:] **The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour [sic-Br] in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.** [His back was bleeding. His head had a crown of thorns. He had been crucified and was hanging on a cross. But, His greatest “agony” was that He could not perceive His Father’s presence!]

.... **He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was to be eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall**

no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God. [Isaiah 59:2]

[See https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Gods_Wrath_or_Anger_16.pdf]

.... The sun refused to look upon the awful scene. Its full, bright rays were illuminating the earth at midday, when suddenly it seemed to be blotted out. Complete darkness, like a funeral pall, enveloped the cross. "There was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."...

In that thick darkness God's presence was hidden.... God and His holy angels were beside the cross. The Father was with His Son. Yet His presence was not revealed....

In that dreadful hour Christ was not to be comforted with the Father's presence. He trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with Him.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 753.1-4.†‡

[<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3718&index=0>]‡

15. However, even on the cross Jesus looked forward to God's solution to the problem of evil.
16. **The story of Job** is a clear example of the challenges that face people on this earth who believe in God. Think of all the awful things Job's friends said to him and about him. Did Job or any of his friends know anything about what we read in Job 1&2?
17. Finally, God Himself spoke in Job 38-41. Was He speaking only to Job? **Or, was He speaking also to Job's friends?**

[BSG:] God's response to Job is striking. Specifically, "the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: 'Who is this who darkens counsel by words without knowledge?' " (*Job 38:1, 2, NKJV*). One translation puts it this way: "Why do you talk so much when you know so little?" (*Job 38:2, CEV*). And, God adds in Job 38:4, " 'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding' " (*NKJV*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, February 10.‡§

[BSG:] By His responses to Job, God made it clear to Job that there are many things that Job [and especially his friends] did not know and did not understand. Like Job, we, too, should humbly recognize that there are many things going on in the world, and behind the scenes, that we know nothing about. The fact that we may not know the answers to our questions does not mean there are no good answers or that one day [in the earth made new] everything will not be resolved. Until then, we need to trust in the goodness of God, which has been revealed to us in so many ways.

Think about how little we know about anything. Why, then, should we learn to live with unanswered questions about the most difficult of subjects: evil and suffering?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, February 10.‡

18. One could never possibly understand all the issues in the book of Job with a single reading. Why did God end up, as recorded in Job 38-39, by asking so many questions of Job? Were those questions addressed also to Job's friends?

19. It is clear that Job was somewhat overwhelmed by God's responses. Clearly, he realized that there were many, many, many things about God that he did not understand. So, he responded as recorded in Job 42:3.

Job 42:3: You ask how I dare question your wisdom
when I am so very ignorant.
I talked about things I did not understand,
about marvels too great for me to know.—*Good News Bible*.*

20. God had revealed to Job and his friends the many things that He created and did, things of which they knew nothing. However, after that response from Job, how do you explain these final words from God?

Job 42:7-8: ⁷ After the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because **you did not speak the truth about me, as my servant Job did.** ⁸ Now take seven bulls and seven rams to Job and offer them as a sacrifice for yourselves. Job will pray for you, and I will answer his prayer and not disgrace you as you deserve. **You did not speak the truth about me as he did.**"—*Good News Bible*.*†

21. ***Could we explain Job 42:3 in light of Job 42:7-8?***

Job 1:8: "Did you notice my servant Job?" the LORD asked [as He was speaking to Satan]. "There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil."—*Good News Bible*.*†

22. ***By remaining faithful to his relationship with God, Job had vindicated God before the entire universe! If Job had failed, would it have proven that God was not a good judge of character?***

23. ***God risked His own reputation before the entire universe by making that statement about Job!***

24. Behind the scenes, there was a question about God's judgment and His fairness. That question was answered in Job 42:7-8. (See Item #20 above where it is quoted.) God had made a correct judgment of Job, and thus, we can trust that He will make a correct and fair judgment of each of us in the final judgment.

25. ***Have you ever been through an experience that seemed to you like you were in a "Job experience"?***

26. ***Should Christians expect to understand everything that God has done and the reasons for evil while still living on this earth?***

27. Several different approaches have been taken to the question of evil. Let us consider at least two of them: (1) **The skeptical theist**, and (2) **The freewill defense**.

28. **Let us first discuss "the skeptical theist" approach to the question of evil.**

Isaiah 55:8-9: ⁸ "My thoughts," says the LORD, "are not like yours,
and my ways are different from yours.
⁹ As high as the heavens are above the earth,
so high are my ways and thoughts above yours."—*Good News Bible*.*

[BSG:] The skeptical theist is skeptical regarding the human capacity to be aware of or to understand fully God's reasons relative to the evil in this world. Just because one cannot see, for instance, germs floating in the air all around us does not mean there are no germs floating in the air all around us. **The fact that one does not know what God's reasons are certainly does not mean that God has no good reasons.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, February 11.^{†‡}

[EGW:] **Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing.** Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet.—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 330.1.^{†‡}

[\[https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.1587&index=0\]](https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.1587&index=0)[‡]

29. Read Psalm 73. In this chapter, it seems that evil people were winning, and even God's faithful people did not seem to understand why. But, finally, the psalmist realized what God will do in the end, bringing everything into a fair trial and judgment; he was satisfied. There is no reason to question the righteousness of God in His judgment. And how does that judgment take place? Can we be absolutely certain that it will be fair to everyone?

Zechariah 3:1-5: ¹ In another vision the LORD showed me the High Priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD. And **there beside Joshua stood Satan, ready to bring an accusation against him.** ²The angel of the LORD said to Satan, "May the LORD condemn you, Satan! May the LORD, who loves Jerusalem, condemn you. This man is like a stick snatched from the fire."

³ Joshua was standing there, wearing filthy clothes. ⁴The angel said to his heavenly attendants, "Take away the filthy clothes this man is wearing." Then he said to Joshua, "I have taken away your sin and will give you new clothes to wear."

⁵ He commanded the attendants to put a clean turban on Joshua's head. They did so, and then they put the new clothes on him while the angel of the LORD stood there.—*Good News Bible.*†*

30. **Who are the members of the jury in that most important of all trials where each of us will stand before the judgment seat of God? Who wins that argument?**

Daniel 7:9-10: ⁹ While I was looking, thrones were put in place. One who had been living for ever [*sic-Br*] sat down on one of the thrones. [This is a description of God the Father.] His clothes were white as snow, and his hair was like pure wool. His throne, mounted on fiery wheels, was blazing with fire, ¹⁰and a stream of fire was pouring out from it. There were many thousands of people there to serve him, and millions of people stood before him. The court began its session, and the books were opened.—*Good News Bible.*†* [That pre-advent judgment began on October 22, 1844, at the end of the prophecy of 2300 days/years.][‡]

31. When all is completed and sin is eliminated, every being in the universe, even the Devil, will bow down and proclaim that God has done everything that He possibly could to save every individual in the universe. No one will have any more questions about how God has dealt with evil.

Philippians 2:10-11: ¹⁰ And so, in honour [*sic-Br*] of the name of Jesus all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below

will fall on their knees, [That includes the Devil and all of his associates.]

¹¹ and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

[EGW:] Christ did not yield up His life till He had accomplished the work which He came to do, and with His parting breath He exclaimed, “It is finished.” John 19:30....

To the angels and the unfallen worlds the cry, “It is finished,” had a deep significance. **It was for them as well as for us that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. They with us share the fruits of Christ’s victory.**

Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or to the unfallen worlds. The archapostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion....

God could have destroyed Satan and his sympathizers as easily as one can cast a pebble to the earth; but He did not do this. **Rebellion was not to be overcome by force. Compelling power is found only under Satan’s government.** The Lord’s principles are not of this order. His authority rests upon goodness, mercy, and love; and the presentation of these principles is the means to be used. God’s government is moral, and truth and love are to be the prevailing power.

It was God’s purpose to place things on **an eternal basis of security**, and **in the councils of heaven it was decided that time must be given for Satan to develop the principles which were the foundation of his system of government.** He had claimed that these were superior to God’s principles. Time was given for the working of Satan’s principles, that they might be seen by the heavenly universe. [Imagine how the angels felt as they watched Satan’s attacks on Christ!]

Satan led men into sin, and the plan of redemption was put in operation. For four thousand years, Christ was working for man’s uplifting, and Satan for his ruin and degradation. And **the heavenly universe beheld it all.**—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*^{* 758.1-759.3.†}

<https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.3743&index=0>[‡]

32. **Let us turn to discuss “the freewill defense” approach to the question of evil.**
33. God gives us enough information in Scripture so that we can at least begin to understand why things are the way they are.

[BSG:] **The freewill defense is the view that evil is the result of the misuse of creaturely free will.** God, then, is not to blame for evil, because **evil is the result of creatures misusing the free will that God has given us for good reasons.** Why, however, would God give such free will? In this regard, C. S. Lewis once wrote that “free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having. A world of automata—of creatures that worked like machines—would hardly be worth creating. The happiness which God designs for His higher creatures is the happiness of being freely, voluntarily united to Him and to each other. . . . And for that they must be

free.”—*Mere Christianity* (New York: MacMillan, 1960), p. 52.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, February 12.^{†§}

34. Without freedom, love would not be possible. Again see the handout: “Love” posted on www.theox.org. (https://www.theox.org/images/uploads/bbk/KHart_BTGG_PDF_Gnrl_Love_16.pdf)

[BSG:] Without free will, there could be no love, and if God is love, then it seems clear that it is not really an option for God to negate love or the freedom needed for love to exist. One could suppose, too, that if we knew the end from the beginning, as God does, we would not want Him to get rid of our freedom. After all, who would want to live in a loveless universe?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, February 13.[‡]

35. Look at the instructions which God gave to Adam and Eve in the beginning.

Genesis 2:16-17: ¹⁶He said to him, “You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, ¹⁷except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.”—*Good News Bible*.*

36. There was no reason for God to have so clearly instructed them and warned them if they did not have the ability to choose. The results of bad choices were shown almost immediately—in the next chapter, Genesis 4.

37. Consider again the quotation from page 492 of *The Great Controversy* by Ellen G. White, quoted in Item #2 above.

[BSG:] All through Scripture, we see the reality of free moral will. (See *Deut. 7:12, 13; Josh. 24:14, 15; Ps. 81:11–14; and Isa. 66:4.*) Every day of our lives, to one degree or another, we ourselves exercise the free will given to us by our Creator. Without free will, we would not be recognizably human. We would be more like a machine, or even a mindless robot.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, February 12.^{†§}

Deuteronomy 7:12-13: ¹² “If you listen to these commands and obey them faithfully, then the LORD your God will continue to keep his covenant with you and will show you his constant love, as he promised your ancestors. ¹³He will love you and bless you, so that you will increase in number and have many children; he will bless your fields, so that you will have corn, wine, and olive oil; and he will bless you by giving you a lot of cattle and sheep. He will give you all these blessings in the land that he promised your ancestors he would give to you.”—*Good News Bible*.*

[EGW:] As Creator of heaven and earth and thousands of world[s] that have never fallen, God is governor over all, and bound to exercise a moral government throughout the universe. To exact less than obedience to his law from moral agents, would be to abandon them to ruin. Should he not enforce his law by the penalty of death, the whole universe would be in confusion. **The moral law is God’s barrier between the moral agent and sin. Infinite wisdom places before man the distinction between right and wrong, between sin and holiness; but God’s government is a government of free will, and there is no act of rebellion or obedience which is not a free will act.**—Ellen G. White, *Manuscript 79*, 1896,* par. 6. [*Letters and Manuscripts*,* vol. 11, (1896) 1.5054].^{†‡}
<https://egwritings.org/read?panels=p14061.13814012&index=0>[‡]

38. Consider how highly you value free will in determining love in view of the following story.

[BSG:] Sony Corporation has created a robot dog called Aibo. It will not get sick, not get fleas, not bite, not need shots, and not shed fur. Would you trade your flesh-and-blood dog for an Aibo? If not, how might your choice help you better understand why God created us as He did, with free will—despite the risks?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, February 12.†

[BSG:] **God has granted creatures free will because it is necessary for love; misuse of this free will is the cause of evil.** Again, many questions remain. God allows evil (for a time), while passionately despising it, because to exclude its possibility would exclude love, and to destroy it prematurely would damage the trust necessary for love.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, February 13.††

39. How are Satan's powers over the inhabitants of this earth to be broken?

[EGW:] **The earth was dark through misapprehension of God. That the gloomy shadows might be lightened, that the world might be brought back to God, Satan's deceptive power was to be broken. This could not be done by force. The exercise of force is contrary to the principles of God's government; He desires only the service of love; and love cannot be commanded; it cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love is love awakened. To know God is to love Him; His character must be manifested in contrast to the character of Satan.** This work only one Being in all the universe could do. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it known. Upon the world's dark night the Sun of Righteousness must rise, "with healing in His wings." Malachi 4:2—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages** 22.1.†† <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p130.35&index=0>† [How many people, and even religions, understand this truth?]

[BSG:] Also, so sacred, so foundational, was love, and the freedom inherent in love, that rather than deny it to us, Jesus knew it would send Him to the cross, where He would suffer greatly. Yet, He granted this freedom to us anyway, knowing what it would cost Him. Why is this such a crucial thought to keep before us always?

How does keeping in mind the fact that God grants us free will help protect us from thinking that everything that happens is God's will?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, February 13.††

40. How has God won the allegiance of the unfallen inhabitants of the universe?

[EGW:] **Even when he was cast out of heaven, Infinite Wisdom did not destroy Satan.** Since only the service of love can be acceptable to God, **the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of His justice and benevolence.** The inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not then have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan. **Had he been immediately blotted out of existence, some would have served God from fear rather than from love.** The influence of the deceiver would not have been fully destroyed, nor would the spirit of rebellion have been utterly eradicated. **For the good of the entire universe through ceaseless**

ages, he [Satan] must more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, and that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might be forever placed beyond all question.

Satan's rebellion was to be a lesson to the universe through all coming ages—a *perpetual testimony* to the nature of sin and its terrible results. The working out of Satan's rule, its effects upon both men and angels, would show what must be the fruit of setting aside the divine authority. It would testify that with the existence of God's government is bound up the well-being of all the creatures He has made. **Thus the history of this terrible experiment of rebellion was to be a perpetual safeguard to all holy beings, to prevent them from being deceived as to the nature of transgression, to save them from committing sin, and suffering its penalty.**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 42.3-4.†‡ [Italic type is added for the words *perpetual testimony* in the Ellen G. White quotation above.]‡ <https://egwwritings.org/read?panels=p84.111&index=0>‡

41. ***So, how do you understand God in light of the presence of evil? Are you sure that you could give a clear explanation of why evil exists, even if you believe in a good God?***
42. So, what should we conclude? The Bible contains open questions about the problem of evil. It does not provide immediate explanations or answers to those questions!
43. Our explanations about the problems of evil are limited but may be good enough for us at the present time.
44. We who more fully understand Scripture and realize how God will finally conclude in a fair judgment with a jury of the entire universe watching, know that the judgment will be fair.
45. ***So, how do you feel about all these arguments?***
46. ***Is it clear to you that the problem of evil has resulted from created beings misusing the freedom that God has given them? Is it also clear to you that freedom is necessary in order for love to exist?***
47. ***Aren't you glad that we can focus on the faithfulness and love of God, even if we still have questions about the origin and existence of evil?***

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*Electronic version. †Bold type is added. ‡Brackets and content in brackets are added. §Italic type is in the source. [sic-Br]=This is correct as quoted; it is the British spelling.

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