



You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Isaac,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions. You wondered why God allows misery and death to befall an innocent person, especially an innocent child.

Your question is an excellent one which has been asked repeatedly by believers for hundreds of years. Why would a merciful God allow the innocent to suffer? It certainly seems incredibly cruel and unjust if we look at the situation purely from a human perspective. First, it must be acknowledged that there is no such condition as an innocent human being. "All have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Therefore, no one is innocent in the sense of being sinless. Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden, and mankind has been in rebellion ever since. Sin's effects permeate everything, and the suffering we see all around us is a direct result of that sin.

In order to answer your question we need to look at the big picture - the reason Jesus died on the cross, which was to redeem all humanity from the curse of sin, sickness, and death. If God had not planned to send his only begotten Son as a Ransom for Adam, all humanity (the good as well as the evil) would have been doomed to die with no chance of redemption. But Jesus paid the price at Calvary, assuring us that every person who has ever lived will have the opportunity for everlasting life on earth during the Day of Judgment. Knowing that God had a well-devised and thought out plan in place since the foundation of the earth (Revelation 13:8) helps us understand why He permits misery and death in this present evil world where Satan is the prince.

However, just knowing and believing that a better age is coming when all will come forth from their graves to enjoy health and happiness is often not enough when a loved one, especially a child, is suffering and dying in our midst. Our pain can be agonizing. We earnestly pray for healing, but our prayers are not answered. Why would God not grant our request?

To answer that question we need to ask ourselves if we are praying for God's will or for our own wills to be done. It is not God's purpose to heal in this age. The Gospel Age is an age of faith and trust, not miracles. It is not the time to be asking for physical healing for others or ourselves. Healing will take place in the next age - the Millennial Age. The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation [testing] has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not





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let you be tempted [tested] beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted [tested], he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." The way out or way of escape is a way to endure the pain by embracing it! Stop fighting God's will and He will give you the strength to bear up under the pain. We know that our loving, merciful Father would not have us suffer pointlessly. The suffering and pain we go through is to draw us closer to Him, so that we will cling to Him. Jesus said, "In the world you shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). No matter how severe the storms of life, we have an anchor in Christ. In times of despair and sorrow we reach out to Him and He is always ready to comfort and uphold us. As we experience His comfort through trials, we are then able to comfort others in the same way (2 Corinthians 1:4).

How we respond to suffering is determined by the genuineness of our faith. If our faith is genuine, we will come through the testing. "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These are come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Peter 1:6-7). Therefore, we are to consider it pure joy (James 1:2), knowing that the trials prove that we are children of God. "Blessed is the man that endures temptation [testing], because having been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12).

Lastly, God allows suffering so that we may focus our minds on the kingdom of heaven and the world to come. The Bible continually exhorts us to not get caught up in the things of this world. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). The sufferings we endure, which seem so terrible, "are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Should we pray for the healing of a child? We can ask that the child be healed ONLY if it is God's will to do so. But, if it is not His will, we should not get discouraged. Instead, we should ask God for strength to bear the outcome. The death of the child is not the end of the child. The child will come back in the next age. We should pray for wisdom to see the experience from God's perspective and go through the misery with hope because "all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). So, even suffering is part of the "all things" that God is using to accomplish His good purposes. God's plan for the human race is





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perfect. It is bigger than the moment. His plan is the hope for all eternity. Let us embrace it and grow spiritually from our experiences as we encourage others through our example.

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.com. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

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