



WHY?



WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SIN AND SUFFERING TO EXIST?

Although the Psalter does not explicitly address this question, Psalms 74 and 79, written by the house of Asaph after the destruction of Jerusalem, draw on these concerns. Between these two psalms, we see some notable similarities regarding sin and suffering:

Lament for the desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple

Psalm 74:1-9

Psalm 79:1-4



Lament over God's apparent inactivity

Psalm 74:10-11

Psalm 79:5-7



Recognition of Israel's sin and request for forgiveness

Psalm 79:8-10



Recognition of the power of God, the Great King

Psalm 74:12-17

Psalm 79:11



Confidence that God will reverse the situation

Psalm 74:18-23

Psalm 79:12-13

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW THE INNOCENT TO SUFFER?

Psalm 88:1-2

Prayer crying out for an answer from God.

Psalm 88:3-5

Story of a distressing situation, close to death

Psalm 88:6-8

God's responsibility for this situation

Psalm 88:9

desperate prayer

Psalm 88:10-12

What benefit can God obtain if I die?

Psalm 88:13

Continuous prayer

Psalm 88:14

Feeling of divine abandonment in the face of suffering

Psalm 88:15-18

God's responsibility for this situation

The psalm does not answer the question, nor does it clarify the uncertainties. However, it makes clear the psalmist's confidence in God: “in the morning my prayer will appear before you” (Ps.88:13)

WHY DOESN'T GOD END OUR CURRENT SUFFERING?

**Psalm 69:1-2 →
Brief description of
the psalmist's
suffering**

**Psalm 69:3 → Cry
out to God, but get
no answer**

**Psalm 69:4 →
Suffering from the
unfair treatment of
the wicked**

**Psalm 69:5 →
Suffering for one's
own sin**

**Psalm 69:6 →
Suffering from the
fear of not being a
good witness of
the truth**

**Psalm 69:7-13 →
Declaration of his
deep love for God**

**Psalm 69:14-18 →
Cry out to God for
restoration and
forgiveness**

**Psalm 69:19 →
God is no stranger
to suffering. He
knows my
problems**

**Psalm 69:20-28 →
Request for God to
punish the evil of
those who make
him suffer**

**Psalm 69:29 →
Request for God to
save him**

**Psalm 69:30-33 →
Result of divine action:
praise and testimony
that invite others to
worship God**

**Psalm 69:34-36 →
When God finally
acts, he will be
praised by his
children**

HAVE THEIR PROMISES FAILED IN THE SCRIPTURES?

Psalm 77:1-6

For many days,
the psalmist
searches for
answers to his
doubts about
God



Psalm 77:7-9

Finally, openly
raise his
doubts

Psalm 77:10-20

Solve his
doubts by
remembering
how God
fulfilled his
promises in
the past



He sent plagues
to free Israel from
Egypt (v. 13-15)



He divided the
Red Sea (v. 16-19)



He led the people
by the hand of
Moses and Aaron
(v. 20)

WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER?

In Psalm 73 Asaph presents us with the prosperity of the wicked and tells us how his days will end “in the end.” However, Psalm 37 tells us how to face our perplexity about the welfare of the wicked and how we must live to avoid our feet slipping as Asaph almost did:



Do not be impatient with evildoers (v. 1-2)

Trust in God and do good (v. 3)

Delight yourself in the Lord (v. 4)

Commit your way to the Lord (v. 5)

Trust in God and He will do (v. 6)

Wait calmly on God (v. 7a)

Do not be upset if the wicked prosper (v. 7b)

Leave anger and forsake anger (v. 8a)

Do not be impatient and do evil (v. 8b)

Think that the evil ones will be destroyed (v. 9a)

Think that the righteous will inherit the earth (v. 9b)

