

Answering the problem of suffering and evil

A major argument against the existence of God is the problem of suffering and evil in the world. Why would a loving and kind God permit atrocities to go unchecked on such a massive scale? Why would God allow so many innocent children to be born into extreme poverty and/or suffer so many horrible abuses? Why are there so many natural disasters? Why do extreme forms of evil seemed to go unchecked nearly everywhere. If you believe in reincarnation, what possible good reasons would there be for so many billions of spirits in heaven choose to incarnate into such vile and miserable circumstances? What possible lessons could be learned that would make this kind of existence worthwhile, no matter how temporary or transitory it might be from an eternal perspective? When God created this world, did He not foresee what would happen? If you want to blame it all on Satan, why would a loving and caring God permit such a vile creature to dominate the earth and wreak such extreme havoc on nearly everyone in existence? Why would a just and loving God answer my prayer for good health and prosperity, and at the same time completely ignore the miserable plight of billions of poor, needy, and abused people in third world countries?

I'm 72 years old, and I have been a committed Christian for all of my adult life, and remain so today. I have heard every possible answer to the above questions, including the most common answer, which is that we aren't supposed to know. None of the other answers are very satisfying. The "we are not supposed to know" answer is probably right. It must be true that God doesn't want us to know, or else He would clue us in.

Here's what I think might really be going on. It is very possible that the scary world out there actually does not exist and that our experience of it is nothing more than a vivid dream, a grand illusion, or simulated reality, designed by ourselves, or God if you will, for the purpose of teaching us valuable life lessons and broadening our life experiences in a perfectly safe, virtual environment. In my book I have gone to great lengths to describe the true nature of reality, as described by many physicists, as well as religious mystics of all faiths. The world we live in technically does not exist, except in our minds, or consciousness, if you will. Please take time to read the chapter entitled, "The Nature of Reality." Or you can watch in in video format.

The best way to learn how to fly an airplane is in a flight simulator. Because the experience seems real, the lessons learned are very real indeed. The only thing that is truly real about flying in a simulator is the false perception that we are actually flying. The nice thing about a simulator is that we are in a perfectly safe environment. When we look down on the simulated runway, from the simulator, we see people milling around who don't actually exist. The real reason God doesn't want us to know that we are living in a simulated reality is that this would destroy the "illusion" and defeat the purpose of the experience.

Here's the question I have been asking myself. Is this simulated reality that we call life a "shared" reality in which all those people out there also exist. Or, are they only simulations? Perhaps only a few of the actors in our life are real, our soul mates as it were, and all the others not real? This would of course resolve the question of why God allows so much suffering and evil to exist. They don't actually exist.

Am I absolutely sure about all this? Of course not! That would be the height of arrogance. None of us knows for sure that these speculations are true, although you can find a lot of supporting evidence for them in certain scientific and religious communities. If we did know for sure, that would completely defeat the purpose of the simulation.

Please don't accuse me of not caring about the poor and needy. I do what I can to help the poor and feel just as guilty as the rest of you that I don't do more.