

Abstract

Answering the Question by Finding 'the Way Out' from It

'The way out of suffering' is not to say that we are disregarding or belittling the pain and suffering of people, rather the purpose of this title is to provide an answer to theodicy by showing 'the way out' of the very question. Many approaches have sought to answer the age old question of why do we suffer if God is good, however, the reality of many of these questions is that they really rephrase, reform, or even change the question; in many ways they attempt to answer the question by not answering it at all. Jürgen Moltmann for example, may offer his approach as God 'suffers with' people or God joining in the protest of pain, but that still leaves questions as to why we suffer. It certainly provides a basis for comfort in times of suffering but does not answer the question. So too in our approach, we are seeking answers to the question of why do we suffer, but the reality is that such question is unanswerable to a great extent (though we shall see some biblical insights into possible reasons). The overarching result will be that we too like those before us will provide 'the way out of suffering', or if you will, an exodus to the question of suffering, by grounding it within the framework that there are things we cannot know or that Scripture is silent on, the unknown or the incomprehensible, and that which we can know, what God has revealed of Himself (that is, His character and promises). Exodus, for its emphasis on God's character and promises in the midst of severe pain and suffering, is an indelible source to examining the question of theodicy.

Key Words: (Im)passible; theodicy; character; promises; sovereignty; will; suffering; pain; Exodus.