

# Why Does Evil Seem to go Unpunished?

## Questions Christians Ask

15 December 2023

When we see evil in the world, we may wonder why God allows it to happen. We may even think that He doesn't care. But the bible clearly teaches us that God does care and gives time and space for repentance so that He is free to forgive the sinner.

**Eccl 8:11** **"Sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily."** We learn from this verse that God does not bring immediate judgment upon sinners when they sin. If He did, we would all be condemned.

**"...therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."** When God shows mercy and longsuffering, we often convince ourselves that it's okay to sin because there's no punishment. In this sense, God's grace and mercy becomes a hindrance to the sinner.

**Prov 29:1** **"He, that being often reproved..."** To reprove is to tell someone they are wrong and they need to stop sinning or it will result in undesired consequences. Reproof should always precede judgment or punishment.

**"...hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed..."** When you are reproved, if you choose to harden your neck instead of humbling yourself and submitting to God's instruction, judgment is coming your way.

- Notice that the judgment is **"sudden."** It doesn't come a little bit at a time. It is sudden, swift, and decisive.
- Accidents and injuries and illness, etc. are not judgments from God. They are common things that happen to people in a sin cursed world.

**"—and that without remedy."** This is final judgment. If you continue to defy God's reproof, eternal hellfire awaits the unrepentant sinner.

**1 Pet 3:18-20** **"...when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing..."** In Noah's day, the thoughts, hearts, and deeds of the people were **"only evil continually"** (Gen. 6:5).

- God suffered (allowed) man's evil for a long time (longsuffering). He gave mankind reproof for 120 years to give them a chance to repent before He sent the flood.
  - Oftentimes we want to see wicked men destroyed.
  - God doesn't want to destroy anybody. He wants everybody saved.
    - That is why He sends many, many warnings (reproofs) and waits patiently for men to repent before sending judgment.

**Num 23:19** Men lie. God never lies. He promised that sinners would be judged. We may not see it happen, but God has good reason for delaying judgment.

**Rev 2:18-21** A woman in the church in Thyatira was teaching members of the church to fornicate and commit idolatry. The church was allowing it.

**"<sup>21</sup> And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."**

- The church has a responsibility to remove such a sinner from the assembly (1 Cor 5:2, 5:13)
- If God is giving her space, and she doesn't repent, you don't want her in your church until she does repent.

**2 Pet 3:7-9** **God is not slack concerning his promise.** He promised judgment; sinners shall be judged.

**“But is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”**

- This verse refutes Calvinism which teaches that God chooses to send some people to hell before they’re even born.
- When you tell people that God wants to punish sinners, that statement contradicts the clear words of scripture.
  - You might pray and ask God to destroy your enemy, but that is not His will.
    - Jesus shed His blood to provide a way for them to escape destruction.
  - Watching too much world news will lead you to hate certain people and desire to see them crushed by God. Turn off the news and preach the gospel.

**The example of Jonah:** Jonah preached **“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”** (Jonah 3:4).

- Notice that, though God hated the evil being done in Nineveh, He didn’t instantly destroy them. He sent a warning and gave them 40 days to repent, which they did.

**The example of the Prodigal Son:** God gave this young man plenty of time to come to his senses and repent of his sins and return to his father.

- The reason God doesn’t kill the sinners in your life is because He’s not willing that any should perish.
- God is going to punish evil, but He’s not in a hurry to do it.

**Rom 10:21** The Lord will punish the wicked at His Second Coming. But today He is stretching forth His hands to the disobedient and offering them forgiveness.

- Preach hard against sin, but never give people the idea that God is desiring to see them suffer in hell. He desires to bestow grace upon them and save their soul.

**Luke 9:51-56** Jesus sent preachers to Samaria to tell them to prepare themselves for His coming, but they refused to receive Him.

- James and John wanted the Lord to send fire down from heaven (See 1 Kings 1:1-14) to destroy the Samaritans (vs 54).
- Jesus rebuked James and John for this (vs 55). He doesn’t want to destroy men; He wants to save them.

**Acts 8:1-8** When the Church was scattered because of persecution, Philip went to Samaria and preached Christ unto them (vs 5).

- They gave heed to Philip’s preaching (vs 6).
- Unclean spirits came out of them (vs 7).
- The sick and the lame were healed (vs 7).
- Samaria was full of joy (vs 8).

None of these things would have been possible if James and John had convinced Jesus to call down fire from heaven and burn up all the Samaritans.

Why doesn’t God’s judgment fall upon wicked sinners? Why doesn’t God swiftly destroy bad men? Because He’d rather save them than destroy them. He patiently waits for lost men and women to repent and be saved.

Aren’t you glad God gave you more than one chance to receive Jesus Christ? Don’t give up on people too easily. Jesus wants them to be saved.