



SAVED TO SERVE
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DID GOD CREATE EVIL?

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will answer the question, "Did God create evil?" Many people have a distorted view of God's character. We will discover how sin came into existence, and if God is the cause of the evil which brings death and sorrow.
2. What does God say in Isaiah 45:7? _____
3. We will clearly see what God means by the phrase, "I...create evil." Many use this scripture to say that God created the devil and therefore is responsible for sin. What was Satan's original name in heaven, prior to him sinning? Isaiah 14:12

4. How did God create Lucifer? Ezekiel 28:13-15 (The answer is in verse 15)

5. What sin did Lucifer commit which led to his rebellion, and downfall? Proverbs 16:18; Ezekiel 28:17; Isaiah 14:13, 14

"Pride in his own glory nourished the desire for supremacy. The high honors conferred upon Lucifer were not appreciated as the gift of God and called forth no gratitude to the Creator. He gloried in his brightness and exaltation, and aspired to be equal with God. He was beloved and revered by the heavenly host. Angels delighted to execute his commands, and he was clothed with wisdom and glory above them all. Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father. In all the counsels of God, Christ was a participant, while Lucifer was not permitted thus to enter into the divine purposes. "Why," questioned this mighty angel, "should Christ have the supremacy? Why is He thus honored above Lucifer?" {GC 495.1}

6. **Note:** By manifesting pride and desiring worship which belongs to God, Lucifer broke the first commandment because he put his sinful desires above God's will.
7. What happened to Lucifer and his angels after he sinned? (Lucifer's name changed to Satan after he sinned).
Revelation 12:7-9; 3-4

8. When God created the world, what did He say about His work? Genesis 1:31

9. What did God call the tree which He used to test Adam and Eve's obedience? Genesis 2:9, 17

10. **Note:** God created all things good. The tree of knowledge of good and evil did not have evil intrinsically in it, but disobedience to God would bring sin upon the human race. Therefore, God left the decision to obey or disobey with Adam and Eve.
11. What did the serpent, Satan, use to influence Eve to disobey God and eat the fruit? Revelation 12:9; Genesis 3:1, 4, 5

12. Why was eating the fruit of the tree so bad that Adam and Eve were removed from the garden? James 4:17; 1 John 3:4

13. What did God say would be the result of committing sin? Genesis 2:17 ; Romans 6:23

14. **Note:** We can see that God created Lucifer perfect and without sin. It was by Lucifer's own choice why sin entered his heart. He then tempted our first parents to sin as well. He is the author of sin and the cause of evil (1 John 3:8; John 8:44). The Bible defines the word "evil" in two primary ways. We will now discover the meaning of the word evil and see what God means by the phrase "I create evil."
15. What is one way the Bible defines evil? Genesis 50:17; 1 Kings 15:26 _____
16. Is there any sin in God? Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 John 3:1, 5 _____
17. The meaning for the word "evil" in Isaiah 45:7 (see the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, Hebrew Number 7451) is affliction, adversity, distress, calamity, destruction. Based on the following scriptures, what kind of "evil" does God bring upon men?
- Answer:** He brings destruction as a consequence and punishment for sin. Notice also, that destruction would have never existed if Lucifer didn't originate sin and tempt mankind to do the same. See also 1 Kings 14:9-10 and Amos 3:6.
- a) Jeremiah 4:6; 6:19 _____
- b) Ezekiel 6:10,11 _____
- c) Nehemiah 13:17, 18 _____
18. **Note:** Notice that Isaiah 45:1-3, 6, 7 is revealing the fact that God used Cyrus, the Persian, to bring evil or destruction upon the unrepentant Babylonians. Read the following scriptures and discover the fall of Babylon by the Medes and Persians: Daniel 5:22-31 and Daniel 6:28.
19. **Note:** Here is an example to better understand the meaning of God saying, "I create evil." When parents decide to have children, they understand that their children will have the option to obey their parents in the Lord or to disobey and be rebellious. However, the parents still choose to bring children into the world, hoping that by godly training and proper loving care, their children will do what is right. For this example, the parents are not responsible if the children become way-ward. (Ezekiel 18:20) Likewise, God cannot be charged with being evil for choosing to create Lucifer and mankind.
20. What is the ultimate "evil" or destruction that God will bring upon unrepentant sinners? Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8
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Rebuttals

21. Why did God, who is all-knowing, still create Lucifer even though He knew Lucifer would sin? John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 13:5
- Answer:** God knew that Lucifer would sin, but He still created him because of love. 1 Corinthians 13:5 tells us that love or charity seeks not its own. Love is not selfish and love requires freedom of choice. So, God in His love chose to create the angels and mankind even though He knew they would sin. And even before mankind sinned, a plan was in place to save and redeem them from the penalty of sin which is death (Revelation 13:8). Therefore, God's intention has always been to promote life and to save, but He never forces our consciences.
22. If God did not create evil, then why didn't He immediately destroy Satan, and why does He allow bad things to happen to good people? 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:7
- Answer:**
- It is true that God has not yet destroyed sin and evil. God sometimes permits evil things to happen to good people so that all of mankind can see how grotesque and hideous sin is. This is why He also allowed Satan to live and why he was not immediately destroyed. The Bible defines sin as a mystery and it was not readily understood by the angels in heaven nor is it fully understood by mankind today (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Right now, there is a war over our lives between Christ and Satan. Just like in a courtroom, both sides of the argument must be presented so that the jurors can make a clear decision. The human race is viewing the controversy and based on the evidence, we must decide either to choose Jesus and eternal life or choose Satan and receive the second death (Deuteronomy 30:19). See also the following quotation.

"Satan is a deceiver. When he sinned in heaven, even the loyal angels did not fully discern his character. This was why God did not at once destroy Satan. Had He done so, the holy angels would not have perceived the justice and love of God. A doubt of God's goodness would have been as evil seed that would yield the bitter fruit of sin and woe. Therefore the author of evil was spared, fully to develop his character. Through long ages God has borne the anguish of beholding the work of evil, He has given the infinite Gift of Calvary, rather than leave any to be deceived by the misrepresentations of the wicked one; for the tares could not be plucked up without danger of uprooting the precious grain. And shall we not be as forbearing toward our fellow men as the Lord of heaven and earth is toward Satan?" {COL 72.2}

- Secondly, the account of Job is a clear example of God permitting the Devil to afflict humans. However, notice that God put limits on Satan's power (Job 1:11-12, 2:1-6). This allows everyone to see the works of God versus the works of Satan (Job 23:10; 38:11; 1 Corinthians 10:13).

23. There are people who say that God is evil and narcissistic because He wants everyone to worship Him, and if you don't, then you will die in hell for all eternity. What would be your response to that?

Answer: God created us because He wanted to share His love with His creations; He desired a larger family. Just like parents choose to have children and hope that their children will reciprocate the love that is shown to them, God made us with the same desire (1 John 4:19). It is clear from scripture that God gives us the power of choice and doesn't force us (Deuteronomy 30:19; Joshua 24:15; John 3:16). In order to maintain perfection and eradicate sin, which brings death and sorrow, God will have to destroy sin and those who choose to hold on to it. The idea of an eternally burning hell is an erroneous doctrine which we will cover in a later lesson.

24. Based on this lesson, we now understand that God did not create the evil which brings sin and death. However, since the fall of Adam and Eve, we live in a wicked world and struggle with choosing God's way over our sinful ways. What does the Bible say we need in order to choose good and resist evil? Isaiah 7:15

25. What did John the Baptist eat? Matthew 3:4 (Notice that the Bible calls it his meat).

26. What does the honey represent? Psalm 119:103

27. What was a foundational topic in John the Baptist's messages? Matthew 3:1, 2 _____

28. What is used by those who are unskillful in the word of righteousness? Hebrews 5:13 _____

a) **Note:** Butter is a more concentrated and denser form of milk (Isaiah 7:22). This shows us that we cannot subsist on the milk experience forever but advance in spiritual truth so that we can choose to do what is right and resist evil.

29. What foundational doctrines comprise the milk experience? Hebrews 6:1 _____

30. **Note:** Paul is telling us that we need to move from the milk experience, of sinning and repenting, to partake of the meat (butter, honey) which is perfection of Christian character.

31. How can we move on from the continual rounds of sinning and repenting so that we can choose good and refuse evil? John 1:29; 1 John 3:5
