

The Problem of Evil in Genesis 3

One of theological questions that many people often have when dealing with Genesis 1-3 is how we should address the problem of evil in a “very good” creation. The subquestions behind this are often things like:

- If Adam and Eve were created good, how could they sin?
- If creation was “very good”, where did the devil come from?
- Why did the devil rebel against God in the first place?
- Did God allow evil to happen, create evil Himself, or some combination of both?

It is important to recognize that the first sin in the world did not happen in Genesis 3. The first sin comes before Adam and Eve are created when satan, along with the fallen angels that followed him, sinfully rebelled against God and His design.¹

So, as theologian and scholar Gerry Breshears says, “Eden is created in a warzone. There’s a cosmic battle going on behind the scenes.”²

Now that leads to another question - How can Lucifer, created as an angel, rebel against God? Is God the creator of evil?

Richard Philips summarizes helpfully here:

“As God created all things good, including the fallen angels, we inevitably must come to grips with God’s sovereignty, omniscience, and omnipotence with respect to the origin of sin. God is not the author of sin, since in his holiness God is without any sin or evil of his own.³ God willed sin in such a way that he remains morally perfect: God is never the primary but only the secondary cause in human sin.⁴ The attempt to make rational sense of sin will always run aground on the inherent irrationality of sin. Yet, at the cross of Jesus Christ, where God willed that his Son would be handed over to death by the hands of guilty sinners, we discover the best answer to questions about the origin of sin in the sovereign grace of God that glorifies him in the redemption of sinners.”⁵

In other words - the origin of sin is a profound theological mystery. We know God foreknows and foreordains everything, including evil; nevertheless, he is not the author of sin, and wants to deal with all sin for His glory through the cross of Christ.

1 Ezekiel 38, Isaiah 14, 2 Peter 2:4

2 Taken from a lecture Dr. Breshears gave at Reality SF

3 1 John 1:5

4 James 1:13

5 <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-origin-of-sin/>

The Problem of Evil in Genesis 3

One of theological questions that many people often have when dealing with Genesis 1-3 is how we should address the problem of evil in a “very good” creation. The subquestions behind this are often things like:

- If Adam and Eve were created good, how could they sin?
- If creation was “very good”, where did the devil come from?
- Why did the devil rebel against God in the first place?
- Did God allow evil to happen, create evil Himself, or some combination of both?

It is important to recognize that the first sin in the world did not happen in Genesis 3. The first sin comes before Adam and Eve are created when satan, along with the fallen angels that followed him, sinfully rebelled against God and His design.¹

So, as theologian and scholar Gerry Breshears says, “Eden is created in a warzone. There’s a cosmic battle going on behind the scenes.”²

Now that leads to another question - How can Lucifer, created as an angel, rebel against God? Is God the creator of evil?

Richard Philips summarizes helpfully here:

“As God created all things good, including the fallen angels, we inevitably must come to grips with God’s sovereignty, omniscience, and omnipotence with respect to the origin of sin. God is not the author of sin, since in his holiness God is without any sin or evil of his own.³ God willed sin in such a way that he remains morally perfect: God is never the primary but only the secondary cause in human sin.⁴ The attempt to make rational sense of sin will always run aground on the inherent irrationality of sin. Yet, at the cross of Jesus Christ, where God willed that his Son would be handed over to death by the hands of guilty sinners, we discover the best answer to questions about the origin of sin in the sovereign grace of God that glorifies him in the redemption of sinners.”⁵

In other words - the origin of sin is a profound theological mystery. We know God foreknows and foreordains everything, including evil; nevertheless, he is not the author of sin, and wants to deal with all sin for His glory through the cross of Christ.

1 Ezekiel 38, Isaiah 14, 2 Peter 2:4

2 Taken from a lecture Dr. Breshears gave at Reality SF

3 1 John 1:5

4 James 1:13

5 <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-origin-of-sin/>