

WHY DOES MANKIND ALLOW SO MUCH SUFFERING?

Open-Book Review - Cube 2: Why Does God Allow Suffering?

Instructions: Complete this review as you work through ThinkCube 2. Use the material to find each answer. The goal is to understand how human decisions, responsibility, and moral choices contribute to suffering and how Christians can respond thoughtfully.

Premise 1: Much Suffering from Natural Disasters Could Be Avoided

Natural hazards cannot always be prevented, but decisions about where people live, how cities are built, and whether warnings are heeded can greatly increase or reduce the suffering they cause. Cube 2 uses Hurricane Katrina and the vulnerability of New Orleans to illustrate how known risks, planning, and human responsibility shape the consequences of disasters.

1. What question does Cube 2 urge us to ask alongside “Why did God allow this disaster?”

- ☐ A. Why do people ignore known hazards and warnings?
- ☐ B. Why does every storm occur at night?
- ☐ C. Why do scientists study weather?
- ☐ D. Why do all cities have the same risks?

2. Why is New Orleans used as an example?

- ☐ A. Its location and flood vulnerabilities were well known before Katrina
- ☐ B. It had never experienced a hurricane
- ☐ C. Its elevation made flooding impossible
- ☐ D. No experts had studied its flood risk

3. Which decision can increase disaster-related suffering?

- ☐ A. Ignoring warnings and building without adequate protections
- ☐ B. Preparing evacuation plans
- ☐ C. Improving flood defenses
- ☐ D. Using accurate hazard maps

4. What larger principle does this premise emphasize?

- ☐ A. Human stewardship and wise planning can reduce preventable harm
- ☐ B. Every disaster victim is personally to blame
- ☐ C. Natural hazards can always be stopped
- ☐ D. People have no responsibility for managing risk

Premise 2: Needless Suffering Caused by Human Evil

Human violence, exploitation, war, crime, and disregard for moral boundaries inflict enormous suffering. The ThinkCube argues that free will brings moral responsibility: when people choose cruelty rather than love of neighbor, their choices harm others. Scripture calls humanity to use freedom for goodness rather than destruction.

1. Which examples best illustrate suffering directly caused by people?

- ☐ A. War, trafficking, murder, and exploitation
- ☐ B. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions alone
- ☐ C. The changing seasons
- ☐ D. The movement of tectonic plates

2. According to Mark 12:31, what should guide our treatment of others?

- ☐ A. Love your neighbor as yourself
- ☐ B. Seek power over your neighbor
- ☐ C. Ignore the needs of others
- ☐ D. Avoid responsibility for others

3. What does the ThinkCube identify as a major contributor to human-caused suffering?

- ☐ A. Greed, hatred, violence, and rejection of moral restraint
- ☐ B. The absence of technology alone
- ☐ C. The inability to make choices
- ☐ D. A lack of natural resources in every country

4. What is the central responsibility associated with free will?

- ☐ A. People are accountable for the harm their decisions cause
- ☐ B. People cannot be held responsible for wrongdoing
- ☐ C. Every bad choice is unavoidable
- ☐ D. Moral boundaries have no purpose

Premise 3: Much Suffering Is Caused by Individual Choices

Personal decisions about relationships, health, money, substances, and responsibilities can have lasting consequences for individuals and families. Proverbs 19:3 warns that people may suffer through their own foolishness and then become angry with the Lord. The ThinkCube also acknowledges that not all suffering is self-inflicted.

1. What warning does Proverbs 19:3 give?

- ☐ A. Foolish choices can ruin lives, yet people may blame God
- ☐ B. Every hardship proves someone has sinned
- ☐ C. Wisdom guarantees a life without pain
- ☐ D. People never experience consequences

2. Which is an example of a decision that can produce avoidable suffering?

- ☐ A. Substance abuse or reckless financial choices
- ☐ B. Being born into difficult circumstances
- ☐ C. An unavoidable genetic illness
- ☐ D. An unexpected earthquake

3. How can individual decisions affect other people?

- ☐ A. Their consequences can ripple through families and communities
- ☐ B. They affect only the person making them
- ☐ C. They never influence children
- ☐ D. They have no social consequences

4. What important distinction does Cube 2 make?

- ☐ A. Some suffering results from choices, but not all suffering is self-inflicted
- ☐ B. Every person who suffers caused it
- ☐ C. Wise people never suffer
- ☐ D. Personal responsibility is irrelevant

Premise 4: Much Suffering Is Caused by Mankind's Greed

Despite tremendous wealth, technology, and productive capacity, many people lack food, clean water, shelter, and basic medical care. Cube 2 asks why societies allow preventable deprivation to continue when resources and knowledge could alleviate so much of it. Scripture calls people to generosity, compassion, and responsible stewardship.

1. What contrast lies at the heart of this premise?

- ☐ A. Abundant global resources exist alongside widespread preventable need
- ☐ B. The world has no agricultural technology
- ☐ C. Medicine has made all disease disappear
- ☐ D. No one has the means to help others

2. What does Deuteronomy 15:7–8 call God's people to do?

- ☐ A. Be openhanded and generous toward those in need
- ☐ B. Ignore the poor
- ☐ C. Keep all resources for themselves
- ☐ D. Refuse help to vulnerable people

3. Which human attitudes can prevent relief of suffering?

- ☐ A. Greed, corruption, indifference, and misplaced priorities
- ☐ B. Compassion and generosity
- ☐ C. Wise stewardship
- ☐ D. Cooperation and service

4. What question best summarizes Cube 2's challenge?

- ☐ A. Why does mankind allow suffering it has the means to reduce?
- ☐ B. Why does technology always cause suffering?
- ☐ C. Why is generosity impossible?
- ☐ D. Why do people never need help?

BE PREPARED TO SHARE

1. Someone asks: "If God is good, why does He allow so much suffering from natural disasters?" Explain how human planning, warnings, risk, and responsibility can affect the extent of the suffering, while recognizing the pain of victims.

2. Someone asks: "Why does God allow hunger, violence, and poverty when He has the power to stop them?" Using Cube 2, explain how human freedom, greed, moral choices, and our responsibility to love our neighbors relate to this question.
