

Perhaps we are asking the wrong question if we assume that suffering starts with a God. A God does not make instruments of torture or weapons of mass destruction like atomic bombs, or people to do bad things. Maybe human beings create suffering, not a God.

Perhaps suffering is a great mystery, so we cannot hope to understand it. A God alone could fully understand its purpose, not human minds.

Some suffering can act as a warning, so perhaps the existence of bodily pain can be seen as a helpful thing. It might give us a warning that we need medical treatment.

Perhaps suffering is the result of sin. In the Bible, when Adam and Eve decided to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they were defying what God had ordered them to do. Maybe all humans share in a tendency to do the wrong thing.

Suffering may be a test that a God uses to discover people's character or test their faith. Maybe its purpose is to strengthen them, making them a better person, more fit for heaven.

Perhaps suffering has no purpose. It is just the way that the world is. There should be no attempt to see a purpose, but we can respond by supporting those going through suffering.

Suffering might be a punishment sent by a God on people who have disobeyed his rules. They might be being punished until they change their ways.

Perhaps people create the causes of their suffering themselves through wrong things which they have done in the past.