

Questions About Why God Allows Suffering of Innocent Given Karma

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Why does God allow so much suffering, especially for the innocent, if all is karma? Karma of cause-effect does not seem to be fair. What about children who suffer without seeming cause? Is every tragedy in life just punishment for a past life I can't remember? Where is compassion and grace in a purely karmic universe?

Answer:

That is an honest, heartfelt, and deeply important question. You are not alone in asking it. Millions have wrestled with the justice of karma when suffering seems random or cruel — especially when it falls on the innocent. But this is where **the gospel of Jesus Christ shines a radically different light** on the nature of God, suffering, justice, and grace.

The Limits of Karma: Why It Fails to Explain Innocent Suffering

In Hindu thought, **karma** teaches that every suffering is the effect of a past action — perhaps even in a former life. So, when a child is born with illness, or a good person dies in tragedy, karma suggests they are “repaying” some forgotten moral debt.

But this raises painful questions:

- *What kind of justice punishes someone for a life they cannot remember?*
- *Why should a baby bear guilt for something done in a past life?*
- *Where is love, compassion, or mercy in such a system?*

In a **purely karmic universe**, there is no grace — only *repayment*.

There is no room for *innocent suffering* — only *deserved reaping*.

There is no **compassionate God** — only the impersonal law of cause and effect.

This is where **the gospel gives a better answer**.

The Gospel's Answer: God Enters Our Suffering — and Redeems It

The Bible presents **not a karmic universe**, but a **relational one** — created by a **personal, loving God** who does not merely balance moral equations, but draws near in compassion and truth.

1. Suffering Is Not Always a Punishment

The Bible rejects the idea that all suffering is payback.

Jesus said, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.”

— *John 9:3*

God doesn’t look at us as guilty debtors to punish, but as broken children to heal.

2. The Innocent Do Suffer — and God Weeps With Them

Unlike karma, which makes suffering your fault, the gospel says:

- This world is broken by sin.
- Evil and suffering exist because of **human rebellion** and a fallen creation.
- But God does not stand far away.

He enters the suffering through **Jesus**, who Himself was:

- **Betrayed**
- **Tortured**
- **Unjustly executed**

“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.”

— *Isaiah 53:4*

God suffers **with us** — and **for us**.

3. God Is Just — But He Is Also Gracious

Karma says: “*You get what you deserve.*”

The Gospel says: “*You get what Jesus deserved — if you trust Him.*”

“The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love... He does not treat us as our sins deserve.”

— *Psalm 103:8–10*

God’s justice does not erase His mercy.

In fact, He satisfies justice **through mercy** — by sending His Son to carry the burden of our sin.

4. Suffering Has Purpose — Even When We Can’t See It

“God causes **all things** to work together for good to those who love Him.”

— *Romans 8:28*

Not all things **are** good — but God can use even pain to shape us, save us, or awaken others.

Suffering becomes **redemptive** — not just retributive.

In Christ, **no tear is wasted**.

5. There Is Hope for Restoration — Not Just Repetition

Karma offers no final healing — only another try.

But the gospel offers a **new heaven and new earth**, where:

“He will wipe away every tear... There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”

— *Revelation 21:4*

That’s not karma. That’s **compassion**.

Comparison: Karma vs. Gospel

Topic	Karma (Cause–Effect)	Gospel of Jesus Christ
Source of suffering	Result of your past actions	Result of sin in a broken world
Innocent suffering	Deserved (from past life)	Not always deserved — Jesus weeps too
Purpose of suffering	Repay debt	Refine, redeem, awaken, restore

Response to suffering	Detachment or endurance	Compassion, healing, and purpose
Justice	Strict moral balance	Justice satisfied through grace
Final outcome	More lifetimes	Eternal life, no more pain or death

Final Answer: Where Is Compassion and Grace?

In karma — you won't find them.

But in Jesus — you find both **justice and grace, truth and compassion, suffering and victory.**

God doesn't explain all suffering — He **enters** it.

And He promises:

"I have seen your tears. I have heard your cry."

— *2 Kings 20:5*

If you are suffering and longing for liberation — Jesus doesn't say "*try harder next life.*"

He says, "*Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*"
(Matthew 11:28)

That's not karma.

That's **love eternal.**