The Problem of Heaven

Is heaven going to be a white, boring place where we pluck harp strings forever?

Answer: NO!!! Heaven is going to be a radiantly colorful place (see Rev 21:18-21 to see that even the wall surrounding the city of God will be vibrantly colored).

Heaven won't just be beautiful; we will also have purpose and fulfilment. We will co-reign with Christ over the land and animals (2 Tim 2:11-12; Gen 1:26; Psalm 8). Side note: not even the angels are sitting around heaven plucking harp strings. They have various occupations that we know about (Gen 3:24; Dan 6:22; Ps 91:11; Ex 23:20; 2 Kg 19:35; Is 6:1-7; Rev 8:4; Dan 8:16-19).

Most importantly we will be living in community with the people we love, face to face with our loving creator. There will be no more pain; no more crying; no more chains of addiction; no more anxiety. The former things of this world will pass away and all things will be made new. Heaven is so much greater than our wildest expectations: "what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no mind has conceived- the things God has prepared for those who love him" -1 Corinthians 2:9

Related Topic: The Problem of Hell

How can a good God send people to hell?

Answer: It is because of God's love that he cannot embrace evil. Instead he conquered evil for us and died the death we should have died so that we can be in a loving relationship with him. But not everyone wants to be in a relationship with God. Many people hate the idea of God and would rather be left alone to do life their way on their own terms. So God gives those people the freedom to choose to live apart from him.

Why is hell eternal?

Answer: Because people are eternally unrepentant.

Suggested Reading:

Burke, John J., and Don Piper. *Imagine Heaven: Near-death Experiences.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, a Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2015.

Jones, Clay. *Why Does God Allow Evil?: Compelling Answers for Life's Toughest Questions.* Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2017.

Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism.* New York: Penguin, 2016.

Turek, Frank. *Stealing from God: Why Atheists Need God to Make Their Case.* Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2015

Answering the Problem of Evil Cheat Sheet

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Logical Problem of Evil

Premise 1: If an all powerful, all loving, and all knowing god exists, then evil does not.
Premise 2: There is evil in the world.
Conclusion: Therefore, an all powerful, all loving, and all knowing god does not exist.

Answer: It is a logical fallacy (a logical argument built on faulty reasoning), because premise one is false. Premise one is false, because 1. God, in all his power, does not have to do something (such as eliminate all evil in the world) in order to prove he has the power to do it. See Matt 4 where Jesus does not exercise his power to turn stones into bread even though he is capable of doing it. Personal restraint does not equal incapability. 2. God in all his goodness and wisdom has good reasons for allowing evil.

OR, ask: "How do you know that there is evil in the world?" Calling something evil requires an objective standard for morality by which to call something evil. And God is the only objective, transcendent (outside of time, space, and matter) standard for morality.

*For paper on "Killing the Canaanites" go to www.clayjones.net > Menu > Resources

Evidential Problem of Evil

Given the evil in the world, how can there be a good God?

Answer (Moral Evils): God gives humans free will over their words and actions. Unfortunately, the cost of this free will is that humans continually use it to hurt and kill others.

Answer (Natural Evils): We are currently experiencing the consequences of the fall (see Genesis 3). But Jesus says that how you die is irrelevant; what matters is if you have repented of your sins and know where you are going to spend eternity after you die (Luke 13:1-5).

Evil for the Christian

Why would God allow his children to suffer?

Answer: Our suffering here on earth is preparing us for our permanent home in heaven. Suffering: 1. Develops our character as discipline properly develops a child 2. Molds us into vessels of glory (suffering and glory are closely associated in the Bible and God has amazing plans to glorify you in the way you were made to be glorified) 3. Distinguishes us as Christians like an athlete is distinguished by his uniform.