

Proverbs 16:4 (NIV)

"The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of disaster."

Part 1

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Welcome to this series where we explore profound biblical truths especially those difficult verses that challenge our understanding of God's nature and sovereignty.

Such passages have caused many to doubt God's goodness or question how an all-powerful and loving God could allow or even create evil. This series aims to provide clarity and peace by carefully examining the Scriptures.

Jesus' Words on Understanding God's Plan

Jesus once told His disciples:

“You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” (*John 13:7, NIV*)

This teaches us that God’s work is sometimes beyond our current understanding. While some things are revealed now through the Holy Spirit’s guidance (see Acts 17:27), the full picture often emerges later either in future events or in eternity.

Understanding Proverbs 16:4

Proverbs 16:4 (NIV):

“The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of disaster.”

This verse raises a difficult question: Did God create the wicked specifically to fulfill evil purposes?

The Bible answers yes, and this truth reveals several important theological themes:

Theological Foundations God's Sovereignty:

1. God is sovereign over all creation (Psalm 115:3; Isaiah 46:10). Nothing happens outside His will or purpose. This includes the existence and actions of the wicked. God ordains everything to fulfill His divine plan, even if some purposes are hidden from us (Romans 8:28).
The Problem of Evil and Free Will:
2. While God is sovereign, He also grants humans free will. The Bible teaches that evil arises from the misuse of this freedom (Genesis 3; James 1:13-15). God permitting evil is not the same as Him causing sin, but He sovereignly uses even sin and wickedness to bring about His purposes (Genesis 50:20).
3. God's Justice and Judgment:
God's allowance of evil serves to demonstrate His justice. The wicked face judgment because of their rebellion (Romans 1:18-32; 2 Peter 3:7). Their existence reveals the consequences of sin and the necessity of righteousness.

Three Main Purposes Behind God Allowing the Wicked:

1. To Teach

The existence and downfall of the wicked serve as a powerful warning. They reveal the seriousness of sin and encourage us to pursue righteousness. As Scripture says, the fate of the wicked is an example to us (Psalm 37; Hebrews 12:29).

2. To Discipline

God sometimes uses wicked rulers or nations as instruments of discipline

against His people when they stray (e.g., Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jeremiah 25). This is an act of loving correction, not abandonment (Hebrews 12:6).

3. To Display His Power

God's power is shown most clearly in His victory over evil. He allows opposition like Pharaoh's hardened heart or the magicians opposing Moses to reveal His miraculous power and glory (Exodus 9:16; Romans 9:17-22).

Romans 9:17-22 (NIV) on God's Sovereign Choice

“For Scripture says to Pharaoh: ‘I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.’ Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden... What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath prepared for destruction?”

This passage reminds us of God's absolute right as Creator (the potter)

to shape history and individuals according to His purpose.

What Does This Teach Us?

Humility We must accept that God's plans far exceed our understanding. We should seek to be vessels of honor, living righteous lives instead of becoming vessels of wrath (2 Timothy 2:20-21).

Everything, good or bad, happens under God's sovereign plan. Nothing is accidental or outside His control (Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 55:8-9). While evil still exists, we know it is temporary, and God's ultimate justice will prevail.

May the Lord richly bless you.

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