



How Could God?

- Allow Cain to kill righteous Able?
- Allow John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, be beheaded?
- Allow James the Apostle be killed?
- Allow Herod to kill innocent baby boys?
- Allow the tower of Siloam to fall on innocent people?

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To attempt to answer these questions is a fruitless endeavor. Unless and until we are informed, we cannot and will not know. Speculation is futile.

One thing we do know for certain is that “allowing” and “causing” are two different actions. God may choose not to intervene and thereby “allow.” God may choose to act and thereby “intervene.” He has done both in the history as recorded in the Old and New Testaments. Why and how He acts is beyond our comprehension. His thoughts are not our thoughts and His ways are above our ways of thinking.

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.*

*“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways,  
And My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Isaiah 55:8-9

Job demanded answers from God. God’s only answer was that He was the Almighty One and Job was in no position to make demands.

We are not counselors of God, nor has anyone instructed Him. Mankind’s only option is to trust in the Lord for help and salvation.

*Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or as His counselor has informed Him? With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge, and informed Him of the way of understanding?*

Isaiah 40:13-14

# ANGER

Anger: a strong feeling of displeasure or hostility.

*Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."*

Genesis 4:4-7

Cain was warned to "master" his anger. It was his decision: master it or be mastered by it.

## ANGER

It is not a sin to be angry! Anger is an emotion that can be aroused in us. It's not a matter of "if it can happen." There are numerous places in the Bible where the words "the anger of God" are found. Jesus became angry (Mark 3:5: *After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.*)

## CONTROLLING ANGER

Anger, unless controlled, is a springboard to sin. We must control our anger. If not, it will control us. The words spoken to Cain "sin is crouching at the door" makes it very clear that unless one's anger is controlled, sin will follow.

*Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.*

Proverbs 25:28

*He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.*

Proverbs 14:29

*He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

Proverbs 16:32

## ADMONITIONS

### BE SLOW TO ANGER

*"But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger."*

James 1:19

### KEEP IT IN CHECK

Avoid "outbursts of anger"

Galatians 5:20

### DON'T LET IT FESTER

*Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.*

Ephesians 4:26-27

### REMOVE IT!

*Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.*

Ephesians 4:31

## WARNING

**Control your anger or your anger will control you.**

**BEEN THERE —**  
**DONE THAT**  
Learning from the Successes  
and Mistakes of Others

## CHANCE OPPORTUNITY

*When it was day, the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who formed this plot. They came to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have bound ourselves under a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. Now therefore, you and the Council notify the commander to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case by a more thorough investigation; and we for our part are ready to slay him before he comes near the place." But the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, and he came and entered the barracks and told Paul.*

Acts 23:12-16

This young man (Paul's sister's son) heard about the attempt by the rulers to kill the Apostle. By his actions the plot by the Jews was thwarted. He was the only person who could!

## LESSON

We may be the one person who can help. Be it a neighbor, friend, or stranger. To aid, to teach, to comfort, to encourage, to admonish. It may be the only opportunity anyone has. We must not fail to act. Missed opportunities may never come again.

*So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

Galatians 6:10

**DO**  
**what you can**  
**where you are**  
**with what you have!**



## WORD STUDY

enhance your  
Bible knowledge

## Amen

**Said by God: "It is and shall be so."**

**Said by man: "So let it be."**

The word **amen** is a transliteration into Greek and English of a Hebrew word (meaning "sure; abstractly faithfulness; adverbially truly: so be it, truth") signifying something as certain, sure and valid, truthful and faithful.

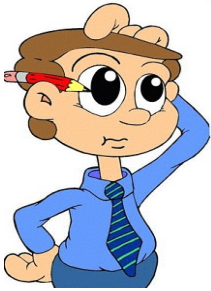
As John records Christ's discourses on the deeper things of God, which man is slow to believe, the double **amen** is appropriately found at the beginning of such discourses 25 times. **Amen** was the proper response to a prayer, an oath, or a solemn promise.

In the gospels, Jesus used **amen** to affirm the truth of His own statements. English translations often use "verily," "truly," "I tell you the truth" to translate Jesus' **amen**. He never said it at the end of a statement, but always at the beginning: "**Amen**, I say to you" (Matthew 5:18, 16:28; Mark 8:12, 11:23; Luke 4:24, 21:32; John 1:51, 5:19). In John's Gospel, Jesus said "**Amen, amen.**" That Jesus prefaced His own words with **amen** is especially important, for He affirmed that the kingdom of God is bound up with His own person and emphasized the authority of what He said.

In Revelation 3:14, Jesus is called "**The Amen**," meaning that He Himself is the reliable and true witness of God.

**Said by God: "It is and shall be so."**

**Said by man: "So let it be."**



# Ponder This

## Calling It like It Is

Euphemisms are used to soften harsh realities. “Passed away” is softer than “died.” “Miscue” is softer than “wrongdoing.” In a society that does not like to think in terms of good and evil, they are often employed to alleviate feelings of guilt. Here are a few heard almost every day.

### **An Affair**

it’s more appealing to the ears than committing adultery.

### **Sexually Active**

makes fornication seem like normal teen activity.

### **A Woman’s Choice**

makes taking of a human life simply a matter of preference.

### **Gay**

has an upbeat connotation that makes homosexuality (a deviant lifestyle) seem normal.

### **Living Together**

is easier on the ears than living in sin.

### **Do Your Own Thing**

makes anarchy sound downright appealing.

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*Woe to those who call evil good,
and good evil; Who substitute
darkness for light and light for
darkness; Who substitute bitter
for sweet and sweet for bitter!
Woe to those who are wise in
their own eyes and clever in their
own sight!*

Isaiah 5:20-21



Musings of a Preacher

What to Preach?

The weekend was fast approaching, and I hadn’t come up with an idea for my Sunday morning’s sermon. What shall I say to the church at the morning worship?

Let’s see, I have plenty of old outlines on file in my computer (by last count

there are 1,572 in the archive folder), so it should be easy just to pick one and dust it off. Maybe it should be one that received a lot of comments. Maybe it should be one that is easy to deliver. Or maybe I should come up with a fresh new lesson – I have dozens of ideas in my “seed” folder.

Whoa! The question should not be “What shall I preach?” but “*What do the members need to hear this week?*” This puts the emphasis where it needs to be—on the hearers. The topic may be one that hasn’t been presented in a long time, or it may be one that was delivered not long ago but needs to be brought up again. Maybe they need encouragement or strengthening. Maybe they need to be informed of current problems. Or,...?

The hardest part of preaching is answering the “what” question. I must be aware of the members’ current needs. I must be convinced that what I have decided to say is timely and important. Otherwise, it will not come across very well. Once the “what” question is answered it is relatively easy to prepare the material

Thoughtful consideration, prayer, and fresh study – as well as being aware of the needs of the hearers is paramount!

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Articles written by others are duly noted.

Bible references are from the NASB except where another translation is referenced.

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