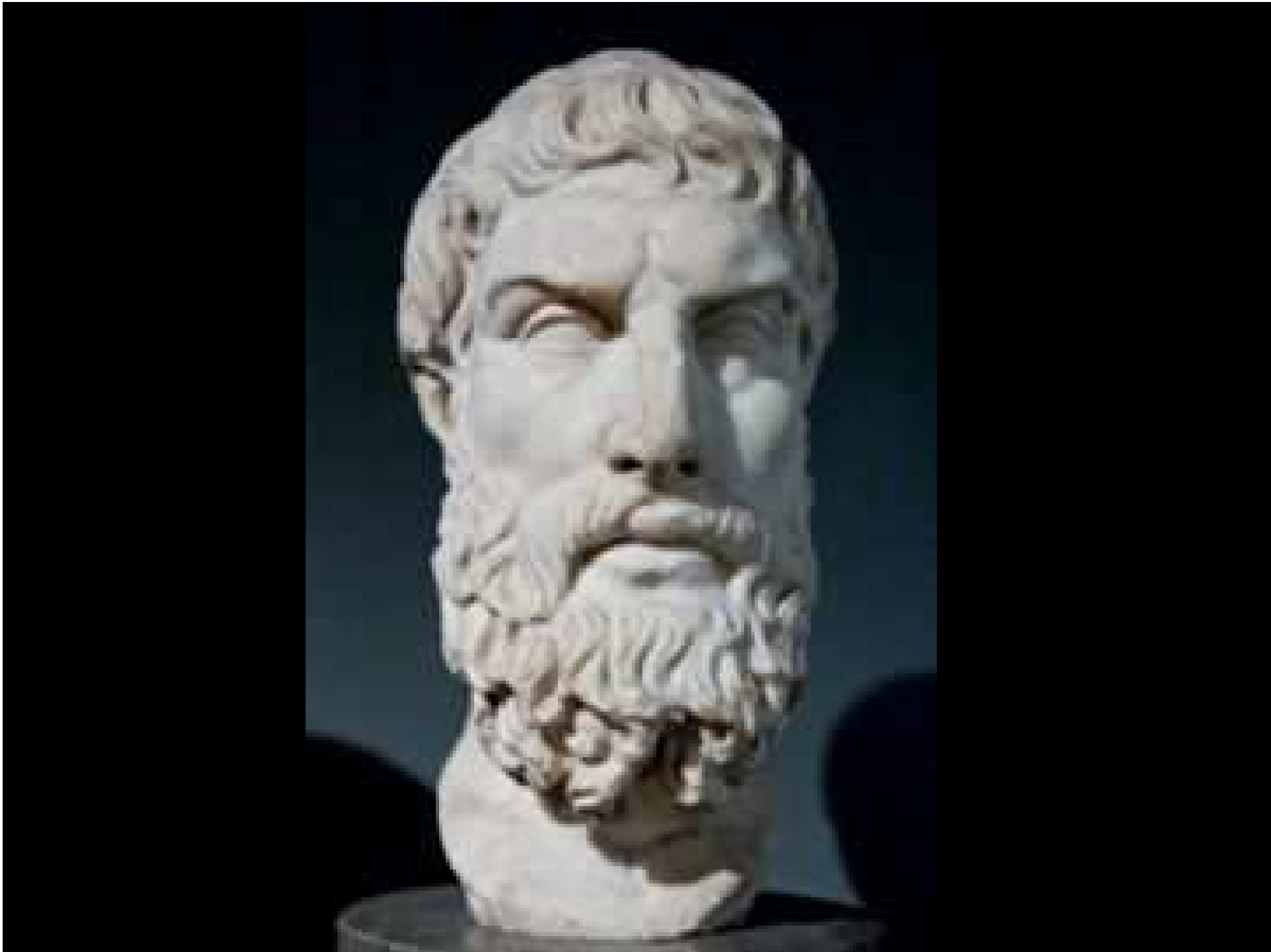


***Where is God in
Suffering?***

Job 1:6-22;

James 5:7-11





"Either God wants to abolish evil, and cannot; or he can, but does not want to. If he wants to, but cannot, he is impotent. If he can, but does not want to, he is wicked. If God can abolish evil, and God really wants to do it, why is there evil in the world?"

~ Epicurus, as quoted in 2000 Years of Disbelief

The “Inconsistent Triad”

- **God is all-powerful**
- **God is all-loving**
- **Evil and suffering exist in the world.**

Concl'n: Therefore, an all-powerful and all-loving God cannot exist

***If God were good, He would wish to
make His creatures perfectly
happy***

***If God were almighty, He would be
able to do what He wished.***

But the creatures are not happy.

***Therefore, God lacks either
goodness or power, or both.***

~ C.S. Lewis

Argue *with him,*
but not **blame him**

Ask questions of him,
but not demand answers

Get angry *with him,*

but not **push him away**

Doubting God's love

doesn't diminish it

***So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?***

1. It's God's will

***Objection: What kind of God could
allow the suffering so many people
have to bear?***

So, how do we make sense of our suffering?

2. It's God's punishment

Objection: What kind of world is this? How can it be a place where the innocent suffer and the guilty are rewarded? If suffering is the wages of sin, why are some people paid overtime?

**To think suffering means sin
and success means goodness
is an obscenity.**

~ John Stackhouse

***So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?***

***3. Suffering makes me
grow***

***Objection: Isn't there a better way
to teach us? Is excruciating pain
the only way to learn what we
should know?***

*So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?*

*4. God will bring good out
of it*

*Objection: Does the ends justifies
the means?*

*So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?*

*5. God will judge in the
next life*

The “Inconsistent Triad” Revisited

- **God is all-powerful**
- **God is all-loving**
- **Evil and suffering exist in the world.**

Concl'n: Therefore, an all-powerful and all-loving God will eliminate all evil and suffering from this world one day.

*So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?*

*5. God will judge in the
next world*

*Objection: But what about life in
this world?*

***So, how do we make
sense of our suffering?***

***6. Life is a mystery, but God
is with us***

***Objection: Is believing better than
not believing? Does not believing
help people cope with life in a
world like this?***

Feeling **God's absence**

Doesn't **negate his**

presence

So What?

- *Have you come to a place in your journey where you have entered into a personal relationship with the living God and invited him to forgive you and lead you?*

So What?

- *Are you honest in your relationship with God? How might you become more honest with respect to the joy and sadness that you experience?*

So What?

Are you stuck trying to make sense out of your pain? Have you allowed layers of cynicism or apathy to become like scabs over your wounds? Ask for God's mercies & healing in deep places by coming to receive prayer ministry after communion.