

# We Don't Take Human Evil Seriously so We Don't Understand Why We Suffer

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I first began to study human evil so that no one could disqualify me for having glossed over the immense sufferings that people perpetrate on each other. I didn't want anyone to say that I had gotten God out of the problem of evil the easy way: by making evil seem less serious than it really is. But as I read about one sickening rape or torture or murder after another, something strange happened: I was struck that evil *is* human.<sup>1</sup> I realized that heinous evils weren't the doings of a few deranged individuals or even of hundreds or of thousands, but were done by humankind *en mass*. I studied continent after continent, country after country, torture after torture, murder after murder and was staggered to discover that I hadn't taken Scripture seriously enough: humankind *is* desperately wicked.

But, curiously, I found that the study of human evil, although gut-wrenching, is good. I'll explain that mostly later except to say now that the renowned Bible expositor D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was right: "We must contemplate men in sin until we are horrified, until we are alarmed, until we are desperate about them, until we pray for them, until having realized the marvel of our own deliverance from that terrible state, we are lost in a sense of wonder, love and praise."<sup>2</sup> Humans don't want to hear about the depths of human depravity, but, as it is for both drunks and cancer victims, the road to recovery begins by understanding the seriousness of the problem. That's why Jesus said that the well didn't need a doctor but the sick, and that he didn't "come to call the righteous, but sinners."<sup>3</sup> Jesus wasn't suggesting there were righteous, healthy people who didn't need Him, but that only those who regard themselves as sick sinners will come to Him. The others are no less sick or sinful; they just refuse to see it.

Let's briefly examine human evil from five aspects: what theologians agree on; examples of human evil; experiments revealing the human willingness to torture; observations of victims and researchers; and what the Scriptures reveal about human evil and niceness.

### ***Theologians***

We know that Calvinists teach that humans are totally depraved but let's not forget that on this point Arminius agreed. As R. C. Sproul points out:

James Arminius was emphatic in his rejection of Pelagianism, particularly with respect to the fall of Adam. The fall leaves man in a ruined state, under the dominion of sin. Arminius declares: "In this state, the Free Will of man towards the True Good is not only wounded, maimed, infirm, bent, and weakened [attenuatam]; but it is also imprisoned [captivatum], destroyed, and lost. And his powers are not only debilitated and useless unless they be assisted by grace, but it has no powers whatever except such as are excited by Divine grace."<sup>4</sup>

Sproul continues, "So far Arminius clearly seems to agree with Augustine, Luther, and Calvin. He affirms the ruination of the will, which is left in a state of captivity and can avail nothing apart from the grace of God."<sup>5</sup> Both sides of the theological spectrum agree: the notion that humans aren't born desperate sinners isn't a Christian one.

### ***Examples***

We prefer to think great evil is limited to a few depraved individuals, but that's not true. Large populations commit heinous crimes. In the examples that follow I am going to tell some violent stories but there is Biblical precedent for that.<sup>6</sup> Because of time constraints I limit my examples to only the last one hundred years.

### **Soviet Union**

In the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1989, the number of people killed for political reasons or who died in prisons or camps ranges from 20 to 26 million.<sup>7</sup> These staggering numbers

include the 6 million Ukrainian citizens whom the Soviets forced to die of starvation in 1932-1933.<sup>8</sup>

No mercy was shown the starving peasants. During the famine, detachments of workers and activists were marshaled in the countryside to take every last bit of produce or grain. Activists and officials went through peasant homes with rods, pushing them into walls and ceilings, seeking hidden stores of food or grain; yards were dug up or poked with rods in the search; and dogs were brought in to sniff out food... Baked bread was taken. All reserves and the seed grain needed for planting were seized. The peasants were left with nothing. To isolate the victims, the Ukrainian borders were sealed off to block the importation of food. The peasants simply starved slowly to death throughout the Ukraine.<sup>9</sup>

One party official wrote, “The most terrifying sights were the little children with skeleton limbs dangling from balloon-like abdomens. Starvation had wiped every trace of youth from their faces, turning them into tortured gargoyles; only in their eyes still lingered the reminder of childhood. Everywhere we found men and women lying prone, their faces and bellies bloated, their eyes utterly expressionless.”<sup>10</sup>

Was this inhuman? No. Humans did this.

## **Germany**

We read of millions of Jews and Slavs arrested in Europe by battalions of police and Gestapo. In some countries, like Poland, they were first forced into ghettos, but, sooner or later, millions of them were herded into sweltering rail cars so tightly that often there was no room to even sit. They traveled for days without food, without water, with not enough oxygen; often they urinated, defecated, and vomited standing up. Thousands died on the way. On one four-day transport in July 1944 of 2,521 prisoners from France to Dachau, 984 people perished.<sup>11</sup>

When they arrived at camps like Dachau, Treblinka, Mauthausen, Buchenwald, and Auschwitz, guards separated out those who could work and the others were sent to the gas

chambers. Children were almost always exterminated because they couldn't work and their mothers' attempts to hide them in their clothing failed.

We read of many thousands, often entire families, stripped naked and forced to lie on top of just-shot people; many of whom were still moaning and twitching. The newcomers often spoke in low voices and tried to comfort the dying until they too were shot, and on it went.

Of course, we know of gas chambers; of Zyklon-B gas dropped through small openings in the ceilings; of guards who said they knew the victims were dead when the screaming stopped. When the guards opened the doors they found piles of naked men, women, and children who had climbed on top of each other, in the corners of the room, attempting to flee the choking clouds. Other prisoners then took their bodies to the ovens.

We know of women raped. Of torture. Of medical experiments where people were almost frozen, put in decompression chambers, drained of blood, sterilized. Of Mengele's experiments on identical twins: injecting their eyes with chemicals in an attempt to turn them Aryan blue, or poisoning and then dissecting them to learn the poison's effect.

And on it goes.

But perhaps most frightening is that the Germans knew that Hitler wanted to exterminate the Jews long before he came into power. Consider that as early as August 13, 1920, almost two decades before the beginning of World War II and at the beginning of his political rise, Hitler gave a speech entitled, "Why Are We Anti-Semites?" He said Jews were "criminals" and "parasites" who should be punished with death. "The heaviest bolt is not heavy enough and the securest prison is not secure enough that a few million could not in the end open it. Only one bolt cannot be opened—and that is death."<sup>12</sup> Hitler released the two-volume *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle) in 1925 and 1926. In it he reflected on the role of German Jews during World War I:

“If at the beginning of the War and during the War twelve or fifteen thousand of these Hebrew corrupters of the people had been held under poison gas,” then millions of “real Germans” would not have died.<sup>13</sup> Many average Germans, then, may not have actually pulled the trigger or dropped Zyklon-B into the gas chambers, but they knew Hitler wanted to kill the Jews long before he came into power.<sup>14</sup>

And it wasn't a few Germans: 10,005 camps have been identified positively. The major camps had many satellite camps. For example, Dachau had 174 satellite camps and Auschwitz had 50 satellite camps and 7,000 guards. Mauthausen had 5,700 people staffing it and its satellite camps.<sup>15</sup> And what did these satellite camps do? They provided hundreds of thousands of slave laborers for corporations with names like Daimler-Benz, BMW, Volkswagen, Krupp, and I G. Farben, who produced the Zyklon-B used in the gas chambers. The Bayer Corporation was a subsidiary of I. G. Farben and sold Zyklon-B out of its sales office. Of course, countless administrators, typists, rail workers, policemen, truck drivers, and factory workers knew—and their families knew—what was going on.

Was this is inhuman?

## **China**

Under the Chinese communists a conservative estimate is that 26 to 30 million “counterrevolutionaries” were killed or died in the prison system.<sup>16</sup> Of course, a statistic doesn't capture the horror. Consider the words of Mao Tse Tung who boasted in a 1958 speech to the communist party, “What's so unusual about Emperor Shih Huang of the Chin Dynasty? He had buried alive 460 scholars only, but we have buried alive 46,000 scholars.”<sup>17</sup> When I first read this I thought it impossible! Burying people alive must be a metaphor! But further research proved that burying people alive was a common method of execution.

## Japan

Within a few weeks beginning in December of 1937, the Japanese army raped, tortured, and murdered over 300,000 Chinese in the city of Nanking.

The Rape of Nanking should be remembered not only for the number of people slaughtered but for the cruel manner in which many met their deaths. Chinese men were used for bayonet practice and in decapitation contests. An estimated 20,000–80,000 Chinese women were raped. Many soldiers went beyond rape to disembowel women, slice off their breasts, nail them alive to walls. Fathers were forced to rape their daughters, and sons their mothers, as other family members watched. Not only did live burials, castration, the carving of organs, and the roasting of people become routine, but more diabolical tortures were practiced, such as hanging people by their tongues on iron hooks or burying people to their waists and watching them get torn apart by German shepherds. So sickening was the spectacle that even the Nazis in the city were horrified, one proclaiming the massacre to be the work of “bestial machinery.”<sup>18</sup>

The Rape of Nanking, as it is called, was front-page news across the world, yet most of the world did nothing to stop it and Japan officially denies it today.<sup>19</sup>

But humans did it.

## Ad Nauseum

Ottoman **Turkey**'s Young Turks killed approximately 1.2 million Armenians from 1915 to 1923.<sup>20</sup> The phrase “crimes against humanity” was introduced in response to these murders. In **Cambodia** between 1975 and 1979, Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge killed 1,700,000 to 2,200,000 Cambodians out of a total population of about seven million to remove foreign influence and intellectuals in an attempt to return to an agrarian culture.<sup>21</sup> After defeating Marxist guerillas the **Guatemalan army** killed “tens of thousands” of Mayan Indians in the 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>22</sup> Most of us are familiar with **South Africa** and the apartheid there; the Reconciliation Commission found 36,935 cases of severe ill-treatment, abductions, tortures, and killings.<sup>23</sup> In 1971 **Pakistani** soldiers “killed, disabled, raped, or displaced” 3,000,000 people and created 10,000,000 refugees who fled to India.<sup>24</sup> From 1980-1985 **Uganda** targeted the Baganda causing the deaths of 300,000 people. From 1986 to 2003 they “indiscriminately terrorized” people of the

Acholi region killing another 100,000.<sup>25</sup> In Saddam's **Iraq** troops used nerve gas on the Kurds (many survivors suffer neurological disorders), frequently tortured average Iraqis, and tortured to death many Kuwaitis.<sup>26</sup> In **Argentina** tens of thousands disappeared to be systematically tortured, then drugged, stripped naked and thrown out of airplanes into the ocean.<sup>27</sup> During World War II 280,000 to 380,000 Jews perished in territories under **Romanian** administration.<sup>28</sup>

There isn't time to talk about the **French** military and police torturing thousands of Algerians<sup>29</sup>; ethnic cleansing in **Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina**; torture in **Brazil**, terror campaigns in **Ethiopia**, dismemberments in **Sierra Leone**, and the ongoing horrors in the **Sudan** and **Darfur** where over 300,000 have died.<sup>30</sup>

Human cruelty is *imaginable*. By that I mean that if a human set on hurting someone else can imagine a horrific torture and has the opportunity to do it, he or she will do it. I could go on and on and on with one sickening story after another and, sadly, none of this is inhuman. Also, in most of the horrors mentioned above the world knew what was going on and did nothing to stop them.<sup>31</sup>

## **United States**

But what about the United States? Since 1973, the United States has aborted 50,000,000 babies and continues abortion today.<sup>32</sup> Most aborted babies are suctioned to pieces, many are scalded to death by saline solutions, others are dismembered with a curette,<sup>33</sup> and, until recently, thousands of others, as late even as the ninth month, were partially delivered, only to have their heads' pierced and their brains suctioned out to collapse their skulls. One friend of mine encouraged me not to include a discussion about abortion because even many Christians see nothing wrong with abortion and so she feared it would weaken my argument. But isn't that the

point? Do we really think that the majority of any culture that participates in mass-murder considers it wrong while they do it?

We were all disgusted when we learned that a man named Jeffery Dahmer ate his victims. But how did Hollywood respond? It made *Silence of the Lambs* which film critic Michael Medved says centered on:

A transvestite serial killer who stuffs the larvae of a rare moth down the throats of his victims—after he has skinned them. He selects overweight women as the preferred targets of his wrath, holding them as prisoner and starving them for a time before slaughtering them so that their skin will hang loose on their frames, facilitating his work. The FBI's only hope for catching this murderous, maniacal monster rests with yet another murderous, maniacal monster—this one a former psychiatrist who lives for the thrill of consuming human flesh. He fondly recalls the incomparable pleasures of a delicacy prepared by cooking human liver together with fava beans, then elegantly served with “a nice Chianti.”<sup>34</sup>

One of the few film critics to pan it wrote “Yes, the picture is tactfully made, but the question remains, why make it at all? The skilled craftsmanship and the directorial restraint can't change what the film is—a thoroughly morbid and meaningless depiction of the *modus operandi* of a couple of sadists.... We know these kinds of madmen exist, but the film offers no insight into what makes them tick....”<sup>35</sup> Hollywood applauded by giving it the top five Academy awards (it's only the third movie to do this) and then making three sequels. When I have the time, I ask the audience how many have seen *Silence of the Lambs* and there has never been fewer than 75 percent that raised their hands. Why see a movie like that? When we consider the onslaught of slasher, chainsaw, torture, and snuff films, we must conclude that many Americans like watching terrified people writhe in agony.

Is this inhuman? No, this entertains us.



## ***Studies***

In trying to understand how it was possible for so many Germans to participate in the torture and execution of so many Jews in the Holocaust, from 1960 to 1963 psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted a study at Yale University. In response to a newspaper advertisement, two people at a time would arrive at a psychology laboratory to participate in what appeared to be a traditional learning study. One of them was then designated “teacher” and the other a “learner.”

The learner is told to learn a list of word-pairs and is then strapped into a chair and electrodes are attached to his wrists. When the learner makes a mistake, the “teacher” is instructed by the experimenter to give him a shock. In reality, however, the learner is a paid actor hired by the experimenter and receives no shock at all. The experiment actually concerns the “teacher” who administers the shocks. The teacher sits before an impressive shock generator with thirty switches ranging from 15 volts to 450 volts labeled from “SLIGHT SHOCK” to “DANGER—SEVERE SHOCK.” Before the experiment begins, a very real 45 volt shock is given to the “teachers” to impress them with the significance of their actions. Then, as the experiment continues the teacher is told to increase the shock dosages even though the learner begs and screams to be let out.<sup>36</sup>

The object of the experiment was to see how many people would administer dangerous shocks if instructed to do so by an authority figure. The result: 65% administered all shocks as instructed, including the possibly lethal shock, and Milgram found no difference between men or women.<sup>37</sup>

In 1970 David Mantell replicated it in Munich, West Germany, and found that 85 percent administered the maximum shock. Mantell concludes:

This experiment becomes more incredulous and senseless the further it is carried. It disqualifies and delegitimizes itself. It can only show how much pain one person will impose on another.... And yet, the subjects carry on.... That is at once the beauty and the

tragedy of this experiment. It proves that the most banal and superficial rationale is perhaps not even necessary, but surely is enough to produce destructive behavior in human beings. We thought we had learned this from our history books; perhaps now we have learned it in the laboratory.<sup>38</sup>

## ***Reflections***

Humans have an amazing capacity for evil, and for each person who pulled the trigger or scalded the unborn, there are family, friends, and even majority parties who knew of the slaughter and did nothing to stop it. We cannot argue that unusually depraved people perpetrate these evils. Difficulties may encourage their actions, but otherwise they're just ordinary folk—sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers.

Theologian Langdon Gilkey believed humans were basically good until he was interned by the Japanese with 2,000 other men, women, and children during World War II. As a result of that experience he concluded: “Nothing indicates so clearly the fixed belief in the innate goodness of humans as does this confidence that when the chips are down, and we are revealed for what we ‘really are,’ we will all be good to each other. Nothing could be so totally in error.”<sup>39</sup> Langdon Gilkey called our niceness “the thin polish of easy morality.”<sup>40</sup>

Likewise, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who suffered eight years in a Soviet gulag, asks:

Where did this wolf-tribe [officials who torture and kill] appear from among our people? Does it really stem from our own roots? Our own blood?

It is our own.

And just so we don't go around flaunting too proudly the white mantle of the just, let everyone ask himself: “If my life had turned out differently, might I myself not have become just such an executioner?”

It is a dreadful question if one answers it honestly.<sup>41</sup>

So, I think we must ask: if my life had turned out differently, might I have been a guard in Auschwitz? If we conclude that we were somehow born innately better than the millions who murdered or condoned murder, we should consider that the belief that we were born innately better than others is without logical or scientific foundation. How were we born innately superior

to all the millions of others who have murdered? We should also remind ourselves that a belief in one's innate superiority is the father of genocide. On the other hand, if we admit that we could have murdered, except for the grace of God, then we understand the depravity of humankind.

I was surprised to find that every genocide researcher I read concluded that the perpetrators are ordinary people. Consider the conclusion of historian George Kren and psychologist Leon Rappoport:

What remains is a central, deadening sense of despair over the human species. Where can one find an affirmative meaning in life if human beings can do such things? Along with this despair there may also come a desperate new feeling of vulnerability attached to the fact that one *is* human. If one keeps at the Holocaust long enough, then sooner or later the ultimate truth begins to reveal itself: one knows, finally, that one might either do it, or be done to. If it could happen on such a massive scale elsewhere, then it can happen anywhere; it is all within the range of human possibility, and like it or not, Auschwitz expands the universe of consciousness no less than landings on the moon.<sup>42</sup>

### ***Scripture***

That even nice people could staff Auschwitz, if their lives turned out differently, is well illustrated by the Lord's warning to Israel in Deuteronomy that if they disobeyed, they would come under siege and then: "The most gentle and sensitive woman among you—so sensitive and gentle that she would not venture to touch the ground with the sole of her foot—will begrudge the husband she loves and her own son or daughter the afterbirth from her womb and the children she bears. For she intends to eat them secretly during the siege and in the distress that your enemy will inflict on you in your cities."<sup>43</sup>

And we shouldn't be surprised by this because the Bible tells us that "There is *no one* who does good, not even one... Their throats are open graves... Their mouths are full of cursing... Their feet are swift to shed blood."<sup>44</sup> No one.

Scripture declares that corruption is primarily a matter of the heart. For example, the apostle John wrote, "he who hates his brother is a murderer."<sup>45</sup> In other words, if you hate, writes

John, you are a murderer even if you don't actually kill. This is true because those who hate but don't physically kill refrain only for selfish reasons—certainly not because they care for the person they hate. And refraining for selfish reasons doesn't make you good. Jesus said that the one who lusts commits adultery in his or her heart. Why? Because those who fantasize about sex with a neighbor, but don't actually do it, refrain either from lack of opportunity or from fear of consequences and not because they honor God or have determined to only cherish their spouse. Taking these verses seriously, then, does anyone get through life without being an adulterous murderer?

Many misunderstand the Pharisees: they were the good people. They regularly attended church, taught Bible studies, tithed, lent their possessions and money to those they trusted, and warmly greeted their friends. But Jesus called them whitewashed tombs, blind guides, vipers. Outwardly they looked good but inwardly they were “full of dead men's bones.”<sup>46</sup> And, contrary to popular belief, Jesus never criticized them for condemning sin; He criticized them for doing what they condemned—the leaven of the Pharisee was hypocrisy.<sup>47</sup> One horrifying realization about murderers is that they can be otherwise nice. Adolph Eichmann, the administrator of Auschwitz, was a family man who never killed anyone himself; Pol Pot, who orchestrated the killing fields of Cambodia, had a warm smile.<sup>48</sup> When you read genocide studies you find that most murderers also did many nice things: walked the family dog, baked cookies, gave gifts, helped a friend in need, or played with their children just before or after they committed atrocities.<sup>49</sup>

Of course Scripture tells us that the wages of sin is death<sup>1</sup> and we need to take that very seriously. Jesus did. Consider Luke 13 where Jesus addresses the problem of evil most clearly: “Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 6:23.

Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, ‘Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.’”<sup>50</sup>

Here, then, we have an amazing parallel to the 9-11 tragedy. Some are murdered and others are killed by a tower’s fall. D. A. Carson explains Jesus’ teaching:

First, Jesus does not assume that those who suffered under Pilate, or those who were killed in the collapse of the tower, did not deserve their fate. Indeed, the fact that he can tell those contemporaries that unless they repent they too will perish shows that Jesus assumes that all death is in one way or another the result of sin, and therefore deserved.

Second, Jesus does insist that death by such means is no evidence whatsoever that those who suffer in this way are any more wicked than those who escape such a fate. The assumption seems to be that all deserve to die. If some die under a barbarous governor, and others in a tragic accident, it is not more than they deserve. But that does not mean that others deserve any less. Rather, the implication is that it is only God’s mercy that has kept them alive. There is certainly no moral superiority on their part.

Third, Jesus treats wars and natural disasters not as agenda items in a discussion of the mysterious ways of God, but as incentives to repentance. It is as if he is saying that God uses disaster as a megaphone to call attention to our guilt and destination, to the imminence of his righteous judgment if he sees no repentance. This is an argument developed at great length in Amos 4. Disaster is a call to repentance. Jesus might have added (as he does elsewhere) that peace and tranquility, which we do not deserve, show us God’s goodness and forbearance.

It is a mark of our lostness that we invert these two. We think we deserve the times of blessing and prosperity, and that the times of war and disaster are not only unfair but come perilously close to calling into question God’s goodness or his power—even, perhaps, his very existence. Jesus simply did not see it that way.

A student asked me if this was a message we wanted to get out. I replied that Jesus said in Jn. 7:7 that the reason the world “hates me because I testify that what it does is evil.”<sup>51</sup> If we want to be like Jesus, then, we too must proclaim the unpopular message that since Adam, humankind is desperately sinful.<sup>52</sup>

### ***How This Knowledge Helps Us***

I have found that understanding the depths of human evil has twelve benefits but for time's sake, I will mention only four. First, it demonstrates that we have gotten the problem of evil exactly backward. There is a problem of evil alright. But it isn't God's problem—He is only good and doesn't do any evil. It's humankind's problem because we are the ones who do evil. As C. S. Lewis put it, "The Christian answer—that we have used our free will to become very bad—is so well known that it hardly needs to be stated. But to bring this doctrine into real life in the minds of modern men, and even modern Christians, is very hard."<sup>53</sup> Indeed. And a Christian won't understand why God allows evil unless he or she thinks these things through.

Second, a hard look at human evil puts our suffering into perspective. Many of us, especially in the West, think extreme suffering strikes only the unlucky. But not only does much of the world suffer more sickness and disease, many millions have suffered prison, torture, and murder or have had loved ones who did.

Third, it justifies God's judgment and even Hell.<sup>54</sup> After all, if humans are basically good, God's judgment seems barbaric but once we understand how evil we are, God's wrath, as Lewis put it, appears "inevitable, a mere corollary from God's goodness."<sup>55</sup>

Fourth, understanding the depth of human evil provides the emotional answer to the emotional problem of evil. What I mean is this: when skeptics ask why bad things happen to good people, the Christian often replies with detached, cerebral answers which, though often logically correct, are emotionally empty. But once we fully comprehend human depravity, the problem of evil melts away because no one *ever* asks why bad things happen to bad people.

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<sup>1</sup> Philosophically (and certainly, theologically) the "universal nature of the atrocities" is because all human persons share in the same nature. For postmodernists and naturalists – who deny that we have a 'human nature' or who say that human nature is able to be constructed – it would be hypocritical of them to affirm the universal nature of atrocities because they deny that human natures are real.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in Ephesians Chapter 2* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1972), 12. Lloyd-Jones later comments that “our troubles are due to the fact that we are guilty of a double failure; we fail on the one hand to realize the depth of sin, and on the other hand we fail to realize the greatness and the height and the glory of our salvation.... It is because we never realize the depth of the pit out of which we have been brought by the grace of God that we do not thank God as we ought.” 82.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 9:12-13.

<sup>4</sup> R. C. Sproul, *Willing to Believe: the Controversy Over Free Will* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997), 125.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 126. Sproul is quoting from James Arminius, “Disputation 11.”

<sup>6</sup> Bible doesn’t flinch at revealing evil deeds. Consider Judges 19 where we read of a Levite who visited a town with his concubine and was invited to stay in a man’s house. Once there, the men of the city surrounded the house and demanded the Levite be sent outside so that they could have sex with him. Although the householder begged the men not to act so wickedly, they persisted, and finally the Levite sent his concubine out to the men of the city. They raped her all night long. In the morning the Levite found his concubine lying dead on the steps and the Bible very matter of fact: he cut her into twelve pieces and sent the twelve body parts to the twelve tribes of Israel. Israel they made war against that city and the tribe of Benjamin who protected them, resulting in a great slaughter.

<sup>7</sup> The 20 million figure comes from Stéphane Courtois, “Introduction: The Crimes of Communism,” from Stéphane Courtois, et. al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, Jonathan Murphy and Mark Kramer, trans., (Cambridge, Harvard, 1999), 4 and Alexander N. Yakovlev, *A Century of Violence in Soviet Russia*, Anthony Austin, trans. (New Haven: Yale, 2002), 234. Of course, these are estimates. Some like, R. J. Rummel, estimate that the number of total Soviet murders of civilians from 1917 to 1989 may reach 54,800,000. R. J. Rummel, “Soviet Union, Genocide In” *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, Israel W. Charny, ed., (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1999), vol. 2, 520. Estimates vary widely. For example, the number of deaths attributed to the Great Terror of 1937-1938 according to Nicolas Werth comes to 700,000 while Robert Conquest estimates that there were about 7 million arrests, 1 million executed, and another 2 million died in camps. Conquest says that there were about 8 million in the camps as of 1938. See Nicolas Werth, “From Tambov to the Great Famine” in Stéphane Courtois, et. al., *The Black Book of Communism*, 202; and Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment*, 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ed., (Oxford: Oxford, 2008), 485-486. Conquest comments about his estimates: “The respected A. Adamovich has lately criticized me in a historians’ ‘round table’ in *Literaturnaya gazeta*: ‘always lowering the numbers of the repressed, he is simple unable to understand the true size of the fearful figures, to understand that one’s own government could so torment the people.’ It is true that I always described my figures as conservative; but hitherto, I have been more use to objectors finding them unbelievably large” (487). Although there are some, who for various reasons inflate the numbers of genocide and crimes against humanity, after studying this subject for many years, I would argue that most of the time the higher figures are more likely to be true. There is a revisionist move afoot that wants to minimize the numbers of genocide either because of their liberal political leanings or because they want to downplay man’s inhumanity to man.

<sup>8</sup> James E. Mace, “Ukrainian Genocide,” *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, vol. 2, 565. Roman Serbyn says the most plausible estimate is six million dead. Roman Serbyn “Ukraine (Famine)” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 3, 1059. Although it is difficult to prove Stalin’s intent during the famine, as Serbyn puts it, “Stalin was not only well informed about the famine, he was its chief architect and overseer.” Serbyn, 1059. Six million is also the number by Nicolas Werth “From Tambov to the Great Famine” in Stéphane Courtois, et. al., *The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression*, Jonathan Murphy and Mark Kramer, trans., (Cambridge, Harvard, 1999), 167. Werth says it is “undeniable” that Stalin suffered from “Ukrainophobia” (168).

<sup>9</sup> R. J. Rummel, *Lethal Politics: Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder since 1917* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990), 87-88. This is also well documented by Jasper Becker: “In 1931, Stalin allowed relief grain to be delivered to drought-stricken areas and took other steps to alleviate the suffering caused by famine in all regions except the Ukraine. Instead, officials there went from house to house, ripping up the walls and floors and testing the ground for hidden reserves to find grain to meet procurement quotas.... When the Ukrainian peasants became desperate in their search for food, militia were deployed to guard the grain stores and protect shipments of grain.” Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: Mao’s Secret Famine* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 42.

<sup>10</sup> Victor Kravchenko, *I Chose Freedom: The Personal and Political Life of a Soviet Official* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1946), 118. Kravchenko tells of a woman who said, “A wagon goes around now and then to pick up the corpses. We’ve eaten everything we could lay our hands on—cats, dogs, field mice, birds. When it’s light tomorrow you will see that the trees have been stripped of their bark, for that too has been eaten. And the horse manure has been eaten.... Yes, the horse manure. We fight over it. Sometimes there are whole grains in it.” 113.

<sup>11</sup> Centre for Bavarian History: [http://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/09/09\\_05/09\\_05\\_02.PDF](http://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/09/09_05/09_05_02.PDF). Accessed 23 January 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Ronald H. Phelps, "Hitler's 'Grundlegende' Rede über den Antisemitismus," *VfZ* 16, no. 4 (1968): 412 as quoted in Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 424.

Hitler's 1925/1926 *Mein Kampf*: "Today it is not princes and princes' mistresses who haggle and bargain over state borders; it is the inexorable Jew who struggles for his domination over the nations. No nation can remove this hand from its throat except by the sword. Only the assembled and concentrated might of a national passion rearing up in its strength can defy the international enslavement of peoples. Such a process is and remains a bloody one." Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971), 651.

<sup>13</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 679.

<sup>14</sup> Konrad Heiden's introduction to *Mein Kampf* begins: "For years *Mein Kampf* stood as proof of the blindness and complacency of the world. For in its pages Hitler announced—long before he came to power—a program of blood and terror in a self-revelation of such overwhelming frankness that few among its readers had the courage to believe it. Once again it was demonstrated that there was no more effective method of concealment than the broadest publicity." xv.

<sup>15</sup> Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 167. These numbers do not include all the other support needed to carry out the murders like railway workers and Germans who rounded up the Jews, Slavs, Serbs, Czechs, Poles, French, Ukrainians, handicapped and others from their neighborhoods. Although Goldhagen's thesis, that the Germans murderous tendencies were unique to Germany, is completely false, the statistics he provides undisputed (except by Holocaust deniers). As Christopher R. Browning puts it, Goldhagen "offers numerous graphic and chilling descriptions of German cruelty toward Jews and then simply asserts to the numbed and horrified reader that such behavior is clearly unprecedented. If only that were the case. Unfortunately, accounts of Romanian and Croatian killings would readily demonstrate that these collaborators not only equaled but routinely surpassed the Germans in cruelty. And that leaves myriad possible non-Holocaust examples from Cambodia to Rwanda totally aside." Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), 207.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Louis Margolin "China: A long March into Night" in Courtois, et. al., *The Black Book of Communism*, 463-464. Margolin estimates that six to ten million were killed outright with another 20 dying in the camps.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Li Cheng-Chung, *The Question of Human Rights on China Mainland* (Republic of China: World Anti-Communist League, China Chapter, September, 1979), 12 as quoted in Becker, *Hungry Ghosts*, 145. Becker cites many cases of live burial.

<sup>18</sup> Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1998), p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Chang, *Rape of Nanking*, 221.

<sup>20</sup> Vahakn N. Dadrian, "Armenians in Ottoman Turkey and the Armenian Genocide" *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 75.

<sup>21</sup> Craig Etcheson, "Khmer Rouge Victim Numbers, Estimating" *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol 2, 617. See also, Steve Heder, "Cambodia" *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 142. See also David Lamb, "Khmer Rouge Defections Put Cambodia at Crossroads," *Los Angeles Times*, 31 December 1998, sec. A, 2. The killings took place between 1975-1979.

<sup>22</sup> David Stoll, "Guatemala" *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 419. Samuel Totten estimates that the number may be between 100,000 and 140,000. See Samuel Totten, "Guatemala, Genocide In," *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, vol. 1, 281. See also, "In the wake of a four-decade old war, the Commission for Historical Clarification issued 'Guatemala: Memory of Silence.' Even for those who know the story well, the report's findings are shocking: More than 200,000 people were killed or disappeared during a period of armed conflict. In particular, between 1981 and 1983, a deliberate policy of genocide against the Mayan population was carried out by the Guatemalan state." From Michael Shifter, "Guatemala: Can Genocide End in Forgiveness?" *Los Angeles Times*, 7 March 1999, sec. M, 2.

<sup>23</sup> In South Africa "the commission received 21,296 statements involving 28,750 victims and 46,696 violations, of which 36,935 were deemed gross violations which involving killings, torture, severe ill treatment and abduction. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report*, vol. 3, 3. Available online: [http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/trc\\_frameset.htm](http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/trc_frameset.htm). Accessed 8-1-07. Over 2,900 people reported 5,002 instances of torture which included beatings, being forced into painful postures, electric shocks often to the genitals, and suffocations. (vol. 3, 7) Most South African torturers were security police who "clearly perceived themselves as authorized from above. Such people were praised, promoted, and received awards for such



activities.... It was not a job done unwillingly.” (vol. 5, 300). The commission received reports of more than 1,500 disappearances and the fate of 477 remains uncertain. (vol. 6, 519).

<sup>24</sup> Craig Baxter, “Bangladesh/East Pakistan” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 118, John P. Thorp, “Bangladesh, Genocide In,” *Encyclopedia of Genocide*, vol. 1, 115. Thorp estimates that 250,000 women were raped. Bangladesh became a nation after this genocide.

<sup>25</sup> A. B. Kasozi, “Uganda” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 3, 1053.

<sup>26</sup> “Ahmad Qabazard was a nineteen-year-old Kuwaiti held by the Iraqis. An Iraqi officer hold his parents he was about to be released. ‘They were overjoyed, cooked wonderful things, and when they heard cars approaching went to the door. When Ahmad was taken out of the car, they saw that his ears, his nose, and his genitalia had been cut off. He was coming out of the car with his eyes in his hands. Then the Iraqis shot him, once in the stomach and once in the head, and told his mother to be sure not to move the body for three days.’” Report by Julie Flint, *Observer* (3 March 1991) as quoted in Jonathan Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale, 1999), 32.

<sup>27</sup> Between 15,000 and 25,000 people “disappeared” between 1976 and 1983. Typically they were tortured (often naked with electric shocks delivered to the most sensitive parts of their bodies), and then most of them, on Wednesday nights, were flown out to sea on military aircraft, where they were drugged, stripped, and then hurled to their deaths never to be seen again (a few did later wash up on shore). Juan E. Mendez, “Argentina” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 63, and James Brennan, “Argentina’s Dirty Warriors” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 65. (Brennan gives the figure of 9,000 to 30,000). Patrick J. McDonnell, “Argentines Remember a Mother Who Joined the ‘Disappeared.’” *Los Angeles Times*, 24 March 2006, sec. A, 4. For a personal account of torture see Olga Talamante, “Surviving to tell the tale of torture” *Los Angeles Times*, 25 March 2006, sec. B, 17. Courtois puts the total number of deaths due to communism in Latin America at 150,000. Courtois, *The Black Book of Communism*, 4.

<sup>28</sup> International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania, *Final Report*, 11 November 2004. Available online: [http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/presentations/features/details/2005-03-10/pdf/english/chapter\\_05.pdf](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/presentations/features/details/2005-03-10/pdf/english/chapter_05.pdf), Accessed 25 July 2007. Romania was second only to Germany for murder of Jews.

<sup>29</sup> “In 1957 the International Red Cross disclosed the widespread use of torture by the French army and police against thousands of Algerians.” Azzedine Layachi, “Algeria” *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*, vol. 1, 17.

<sup>30</sup> United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Available online:

<http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/darfur/contents/01-overview/>. Accessed 25 July 2007.

<sup>31</sup> For a thorough analysis regarding how much the world has known about particular genocides while they were going on but failed to act see Samantha Power, *A Problem From Hell* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003).

<sup>32</sup> National Right to Life estimates that there have been 49,551,703 abortions since 1973.

<http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/facts/abortionstats.html>. Accessed 7 November 2009. One common abortion method: “[saline abortion] is usually carried out after sixteen weeks of pregnancy, when enough amniotic fluid has accumulated in the sac around the baby. A long needle is inserted through the mother’s abdomen directly into the sac, and a solution of concentrated salt is injected into the amniotic fluid. The salt solution is absorbed both through the lungs and the gastrointestinal tract, producing changes in the osmotic pressure. The outer layer of skin is burned off by the high concentration of salt. It takes about an hour to kill the baby by this slow method. The mother usually goes into labor about a day later and delivers a dead, shriveled baby.” C. Everett Koop, M.D., and Francis A. Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1979), 41.

<sup>33</sup> A tiny, hoe-like instrument used to scrape the walls of the uterus and cut the baby to pieces.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Medved, *Hollywood vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values* (New York: HarperCollins, 1992), 161-162.

<sup>35</sup> Stephen Farber, “Why do Critics Love These Repellent Movies?,” *Los Angeles Times*, 17 March 1991, sec. E, 5, as quoted in Medved, *Hollywood vs. America*, 162.

<sup>36</sup> In one of the experiments Milgram records that at 330 volts the learner/actor responds: “(Intense and prolonged agonized scream.) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. My heart’s bothering me. Let me out, I tell you. (Hysterically) Let me out of here. Let me out of here. You have no right to hold me here....” But, says Milgram, even the mention of a heart condition makes no difference in the shocks administered by the ‘teacher.’” 57.

<sup>37</sup> Milgram also found no difference between the sexes: 65% of females also administered the highest level of shock. Arthur G. Miller in his review of Milgram’s work comments: “One cannot fail to be impressed with the sheer scope of Milgram’s research effort. Approximately 1,000 individuals participated in the obedience research program.... These individuals were, in virtually all instances, observed on an individual basis! It is perhaps unmatched in the

social sciences for a single investigator to obtain this kind of extensive data from one paradigm, within the relatively brief time frame (three years) in which the experiments took place. Whatever reservations the reader might have concerning one or another aspect of Milgram's procedures or interpretations, there is, at least, an abundance of empirical evidence. One is thus not likely to be uncertain as to the reliability of his results...." Arthur G. Miller, *The Obedience Experiments: A Case Study of the Controversy in Social Science* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 63.

<sup>38</sup> David Mark Mantell, "The Potential for Violence in Germany" *Journal of Social Issues* 27, vol. 4, 111. Mantell: "It would seem that nearly everyone is willing to commit acts of aggression against other people. The differences which appear in their behavior have less to do with whether they will hurt others or not, but rather under what conditions. (110)." Mantell provides some chilling explanation of the base-line experiment in which 85% administered all shocks: "During the experiment, if the Teacher obeyed and read the questions in order and punished errors with increasingly more intensive shocks, he heard grunts and exclamations between 75 and 150 volts; surprised and painful cries between 165 and 230 volts; furious protests and painful pleas between 245 and 300 volts; desperate screams, moaning, sobbing, and searching pleas between 315 and 375 volts. Between 390 and 450 volts there was silence; the Student neither answered the questions nor responded when punished. The Teacher was instructed to regard silence after 10 seconds as an incorrect answer and to punish it" (104). Mantell later calls it "striking" that "there were virtually no people who refused on principle to administer any shocks at all to the victim.... The overwhelming majority of all subjects in all experimental conditions administered a sufficient number of shocks so that at least several grunts and cries of pain were heard" (110). Contrary to Milgram's conclusion that the teachers shocked in response to authority, in 1976 Mantell reported additional analysis of his 1971 study where he asked the teachers "Given 100 per cent responsibility in all, how much responsibility do you feel is yours and how much do you feel is ours?" His conclusion was that "A monolithic view of obedient persons as a purely passive agent who invariably relinquishes personal responsibility is a false view." D. M. Mantell and R. Panzarella, "Obedience and Responsibility," *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 1976 15:239-45 as quoted in Miller, *The Obedience Experiments*, 225.

<sup>39</sup> Langdon Gilkey, *Shantung Compound: The Story of Men and Women Under Pressure* (San Francisco: Harper, 1966), 92. Gilkey continues, "What is unique about human existence 'on the margin' is not that people's characters change for better or worse, for they do not. It is that the importance and so the 'emotional voltage' of every issue is increased greatly. Now much more vulnerable than before, we are more inclined to be aware of our own interests, more frightened if they are threatened, and thus much more determined to protect them. A marginal existence neither improves men nor makes them wicked; it places a premium on every action, and in doing so reveals the actual inward character that every man has always possessed."

<sup>40</sup> Langdon Gilkey, *Shantung Compound: The Story of Men and Women Under Pressure* (San Francisco: Harper, 1966), 92.

<sup>41</sup> Solzhenitsyn, 160.

<sup>42</sup> George M. Kren and Leon Rappoport, *The Holocaust and the Crisis of Human Behavior* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1980), 126.

<sup>43</sup> Deut. 28:56-57

<sup>44</sup> Rom. 3:12. See also Psa. 14:1-3, 53:1-3.

<sup>45</sup> 1 Jn. 3:15.

<sup>46</sup> Matt. 23:27.

<sup>47</sup> Luke 12:1. This is important because I've heard many Christians warn that we must not preach against sin lest we be like the Pharisees.

<sup>48</sup> William T. Vollmann in the *New York Times* wrote, "In David P. Chandler's excellent biography, 'Brother Number One' (1992), there is an eerie photograph of Pol Pot applauding and smiling in a crowd. What do we know about him, except that he smiles? Oh, that smile of his! Short quotes his henchman, Ieng Sary: 'His face was always smooth. . . . Many people misunderstood that—he would smile his unruffled smile, and then they would be taken away and executed.'" "Pol Pot: The Killer's Smile," *The New York Times*, 2-27-05. Internet. Available online.

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<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/02/27/books/review/27VOLLMAN.html?ex=1141534800&en=fde412c428733afb&ei=5070>. Accessed 3 March 2006. Chandler writes: "Schoolmates remembered him as a mediocre student but pleasant company, a reputation that persisted among those who knew him in France. As a teacher, he was remembered as calm, self-assured, smooth featured... honest, and persuasive, even hypnotic when speaking to small groups.... A man who met him in the late 1950s, for example, said, 'I saw immediately that I could become his friend for life.'" David P. Chandler, *Brother Number One: A Political Biography of Pol Pot* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), 5.

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<sup>49</sup> “Power is a poison well known for thousands of years. If only no one were ever to acquire material power over others! But to the human being who has faith in some force that holds dominion over all of us, and who is therefore conscious of his own limitations, power is not necessarily fatal. For those, however, who are unaware of any higher sphere, it is a deadly poison. For them there is no antidote.” Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago*, 147.

<sup>50</sup> Luke 13:1-5.

<sup>51</sup> In Jesus time, and the ages prior to Jesus, all one needed to do to understand human depravity was look at the nations surrounding Israel. The early Christians because of their condemnation of sin were known as “haters of humankind.” Tacitus’ *Annals* 15.44 <http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/annals.11.xv.html>. This is also the proper way to handle the Gospel. As C. F. W. Walther put it, “The Law is to be preached to secure sinners and the Gospel to alarmed sinners.... As long as a person is at ease in his sins, as long as he is unwilling to quit some particular sin, so long only the Law, which curses and condemns him, is to be preached to him. However the moment he becomes frightened at his condition, the Gospel is to be promptly administered to him; for from that moment on he no longer can be classified with secure sinners.” C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel*, W. H. T. Dau Trans. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1929), 17.

<sup>52</sup> Of course this message is completely at odds with the self-esteem movement. As self-esteem advocate and psychologist Nathaniel Brandon wrote, “The idea of Original Sin is anti-self-esteem by its very nature.” Nathaniel Brandon, *Six Pillars of Self-Esteem* (New York: Bantam, 1994), 148. Even many Christians reject talk about human wickedness. Robert Schuller wrote that original sin “could be considered an innate inability to adequately value ourselves. Label it a ‘negative self-image,’ but do not say that the central core of the human soul is wickedness. If this were so, then truly, the human being is totally depraved. But positive Christianity does not hold to human depravity, but to human inability. I am humanly unable to correct my negative self-image until I encounter a life-changing experience with nonjudgmental love bestowed upon me by a Person whom I admire so much that to be unconditionally accepted by him is to be born again.” Robert H. Schuller, *Self Esteem: the New Reformation* (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 67. In a 10/5/84 letter to the editor of *Christianity Today*, Schuller wrote, “I don’t think anything has been done in the name of Christ and under the banner of Christianity that has proven more destructive to human personality and, hence, counterproductive to the evangelism enterprise than the often crude, uncouth, and unchristian strategy of attempting to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition.” Robert H. Schuller, Eutychus & His Kin, *Christianity Today* (Carol Stream, IL, 12. But, after having spent years in a Japanese interment camp in China and being constantly confronted with human evil, Langdon Gilkey writes that he began to recall some theological ideas of his past and “among the most relevant, it now seemed, was the old idea of original sin.... Few of us wish to or can believe that their [Adam and Eve’s] one act of disobedience brought about a fall for the whole race continued in us by inheritance.... Yet, when one looks at the actual social behavior of people, this theological notion of a common, pervasive warping of our wills away from the good we wish to achieve is more descriptive of our actual experience of ourselves than is any other assessment of our situation. What the doctrine of sin has said about man’s present state seemed to fit the facts as I found them.” Langdon Gilkey, *Shantung Compound: The Story of Men and Women Under Pressure* (San Francisco: Harper, 1966), 115-116.

<sup>53</sup> Lewis, *Problem of Pain*, 43.

<sup>54</sup> This is examined in the chapter on hell.

<sup>55</sup> Lewis, *Problem of Pain*, 46.