help those going through great storms—whether physical or spiritual—in their lives. It’s written to help us understand that “God is love” (1 John 4:8) even in the midst of the storm.

My vision to write this little booklet came only after visiting the gulf coast shortly after Katrina displaced hundreds of thousands of people. Many skeptics took advantage of this disaster to put the blame on God. After all, they couldn’t blame man. This tragedy was not another September 11. This time human beings apparently had nothing to do with the lost lives and utter destruction.

In the next few pages we will examine who and how: Who is to blame for all these storms? And How do we find hope after the storm?

Danny Shelton
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Why do bad things happen to good people?

Back in 1982 my wife, Kay, and my eleven-year-old daughter, Melody, headed into our nearby town to run some errands that should have taken about an hour. Only three blocks from our house they were involved in an accident with another car. My wife was killed instantly. Melody was thrown through the windshield and suffered a broken arm and lots of cuts and bruises.

How could this happen? Kay was a devoted wife and mother of three girls. She had a beautiful singing voice and used it often in church to bless many, many people.

I was a carpenter at that time, but almost every weekend my family and I were out singing gospel music in churches. This tragedy was the kind that I had heard about on the television news or read about in the local paper, but it could never happen to my family!

Nearly every second of every day someone around the world is going through a similar experience dealing with accidents, sickness, or death of family or friends. Natural disasters such
Who is to blame for all the suffering in the world? God? Satan? Or do these things just happen?

as the tsunami in southeast Asia or hurricane Katrina in the United States get much more publicity because millions of lives are affected in a localized area and at the same approximate time. Then we must not forget all of the people who are killed every day because of wars and strife between the nations of the world. This has been going on for thousands of years.

Whose fault is it?

So, in the midst of all the storms of suffering, the questions remain: Who is to blame? Is all this suffering God’s fault? Is it Satan’s fault? Or are suffering and death just things that happen because they are associated with life?

In order to understand these questions and find answers, we first need to take a look at what the Bible says about sin and its consequences to the human race. Let’s look first at 1 John 3:4. “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” The Bible tells us that “sin is the transgression of the law”—or in modern English, the “breaking” of God’s law. In other words, when we sin against God’s law, we are in rebellion against the principles of life. Rebellion against God’s law can only result in death.

Let’s see what the Bible says will happen to those who rebel against God’s law of life. Romans 6:23 says, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (emphasis supplied).

Next we should ask: Who, then, is guilty of breaking God’s moral law—the Ten Commandments, also called the Decalogue? Romans 3:23 gives us the answer: “For all have sinned