

# Suffering, Sovereignty and a Man Named Job

*The following are the application highlights from this series. You can find more details [here](#)*

## **How Job Helps Us | Job 1:13-22**

I think it is really important to establish where we are going so that when we get into some tough questions you will know the resolution to the tension that you feel. We must see the whole to deal with the parts. How does Job, as a book, help us? Let me give you four ways:

1. It shows us that suffering, while mysterious, is never pointless
2. It reminds us that sorrow and tough questions are not signs of a weak faith
3. It calls us to live on "who?" and not "why?"
4. It pleads with us to choose to bless

## **Building an Altar for Pain-Filled Worship | Job 1:1-2:10**

Learning to live on God who is invisible means that you have determined that "who?" is more important, satisfying, and comforting than "why?" It means that you, like Job, determine that you will take what could have destroyed your faith, and instead you use it as a platform for worship. It means that you have already answered the question: Is God so good that He can be loved for Himself, and not just His gifts? The answer is eternally YES! But how?

The answer lies in four questions that serve as the foundation for pain-filled worship.

1. Focus: Why am I here?
2. Theology: What is my view of God?
3. Affections: What do I really love?
4. Trust: What will I rely upon?

## Let Us Beware! | Job 2:11-21:34

So what does this painful exchange between a hurting man and harsh friends teach us? What warnings should we heed?

1. Beware of faith without lament
2. Beware of fear couched in comfort
3. Beware of theology with no loose ends
4. Beware of looking at suffering through any lens but Christ

## Why Do the Righteous Suffer? | Job 32-37

You cannot understand suffering nor can you make it through suffering unless you know Jesus. He changes everything, including suffering. For the person who understands the beauty of the gospel, suffering becomes the means of becoming like the One who you love more than anything else in all the world. After I receive Christ, suffering makes me like Jesus.

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son..." (Rom 8:28-29)

"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4).

"...but Our Heavenly Father disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Heb 12:10-11).

**Suffering doesn't make any sense unless you know who Jesus is.** The answer to the "Who?" question is not just God! It is Jesus!

Why do the righteous suffer? Suffering comes as "individually designed, expert therapy by the loving hand of our great physician. Its aim is that our faith might be refined, our holiness might be enlarged, our soul might be saved, and our God might be glorified."<sup>2</sup>

**The righteous suffer to make them more like Christ!**

## The Eclipsing Answer | Job 38:1-42:6

Job has been overwhelmed with the majesty, power, and glory of God. The arguments of his friends have ceased; God has answered Job himself. What is Job's response? The book reaches its climax here.

Then Job answered the Lord and said: 2 "I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. 3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 'Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.' 5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; 6 therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes. (Job 42:1-6)

Notice four statements. Four statements that we need to remember when suffering comes:

1. "You can do all things" (v 2).
2. "I have uttered what I did not understand" (v 3).
3. "Now my eye sees you" (v 4).
4. "I repent" (v 6).

Job teaches us that humble worship of God is more valuable than answers and more valuable than his gifts. In the end, Job renounces all personal claims that would somehow put himself above God.<sup>9</sup>

Job found and embraced the eclipsing answer of God's sovereignty - his control. Sarah Edwards found and embraced it. George Mueller found and embraced it. We must as well.

Suffering calls us to humble ourselves before God believing that intimacy with him is more valuable than an easy life. In other words, we have to choose to bless.