

A Kingdom Established: Job and the Dilemma of Suffering

Job 1:6-12,20-22

I. Why do God's people suffer? Job 1:6-12, 20-22

Psalm 103:20 - "Bless the Lord, you His angels, Mighty in strength, who perform His word, Obeying the voice of His word!"

Thomas Watson (1620-1686)- "None but the godly are capable of desertion...being deserted, evidences you to be a child of God. How could you complain that God has estranged Himself, if you had not sometimes received smiles and tokens of love from Him?"

1. Job did not suffer because God was angry with him.

2. Job did not suffer because he had sinned.

3. Job suffered to strengthen and reveal his faith.

Romans 8:28-29 - "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 become conformed to the image of His Son..."

1 Peter 1:6-7 - "For a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed."

1 Peter 4:12-13 - "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing... but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation."

II. How do we respond to bad advice and accusations? Job 16:1-5,18-22

III. How do we wait in suffering while God waits to respond? Job 42:7-9

1. Be honest

Psalm 109:22 - "I am afflicted and needy...my heart is wounded within me."

2. Seek Him

Psalm 50:15 - "Call on Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me."

3. Stay in Community

Psalm 35:18 - "I will praise You in the great congregation; I will exalt You among many people."

Isaiah 53:4-5 - "Our griefs He Himself bore... our sorrows He carried; Struck down of God, and afflicted...He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities... by His scourging we are healed."

Faith Sheet for Friends and Family This Week

1. What are some overused clichés or phrases that Christians tend to use during times of suffering?
2. Why should we avoid being quick to give easy answers in trials?
3. What are some ways your friends have best encouraged you during your suffering?
4. How does the story of Job give insight regarding the problem of evil? How does Jesus' death on the cross and His second coming shape our understanding of the problem of evil?
5. How is suffering an effective means of spiritual growth? (James 1:1-4, 1 Peter 4:14, Psalm 50:15)
6. How does Job's response to his circumstances in 1:20-22, in 2:10, and in 13:15 model faith and humility for us? Pray.