

Mary's Suffering | Matthew 2:13-18; Luke 23:18-27 | 12/15/24 | Geldart | Tru

1. Announcements

- a. (Finance Update – Mark, Cole/DC)
- b. Welcome
 - i. Connect Cards
 - ii. Giving
- c. Announcements
 - i. Xmas Bureau Big Give Weekend
 - ii. Xmas Eve Svc (fliers)
 - iii. Wear a Pair Share a Pair – Pizza and Movie party Dec 29 - RSVP

2. [1] Series Introduction

- a. Over the last two weeks of Advent, we have been looking at Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is one of the greatest examples in Scripture of what it means to faithfully serve the Lord.
 - i. We're reclaiming permission to look to and learn from Mary and her life.
 - ii. Just like we do with the rest of the major characters in the Bible
- b. So far, we've learned how she is a model of what it means to live **surrendered** to the will of God as she accepts her role as the mother of the messiah.
 - i. After hearing the announcement from the angel Gabriel, that she would conceive in her womb by the Holy Spirit and bear a son – not just any son, but the Son of God – her response to this was amazing.
 - ii. She simply said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your word."
 - 1. Three simple words of faith - let it be.
- c. **Mary exemplified an unwavering and quiet devotion to obey the will of God, no matter the situation and no matter the cost.**
 - i. She continued to model surrender to God throughout her life, and Jesus Himself learned the same thing from her.
 - ii. **It's worth taking a deeper look at another feature of her story, and it is this...**

3. Mary's surrender to God's plan led her to a life marked with suffering.

- a. [2] **Mary's Suffering is going to be the focus of our Advent study together today**
 - i. Willingness to follow God even when that involves suffering is a core part of the Christmas Story – and is an inescapable aspect of the Christian life
- b. We're introduced to a greater vision of Mary's journey of suffering in Luke chapter 2.
 - i. As Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the Temple to be circumcised when he was just eight days old, an old man named Simeon began to prophecy as he was holding Jesus, that this child was God's salvation to both Israel and the Gentiles.
 - 1. Amazing words!
 - ii. But what Simeon said next, was even more revealing, when he looked at Mary and spoke directly to her,
 - 1. [3] **LUKE 2:34-35 "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of**

many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too”.

- c. What Mary heard was, not only would her Son’s life be marked by difficulty and suffering, but hers would be as well.
 - i. In fact, it wasn’t just one sword that would pierce her, but many.
 - 1. Many sword-piercings of suffering and pain as she continued to follow God’s will – as she continued to say “I am the Lord’s servant, let it be done unto me, according to your word.”
 - ii. In truth, suffering is inherent to the call to follow God.
 - 1. For Mary, and for us today.
 - 2. [4] So we do well to look to and learn from Mary’s suffering.
- d. As we study Mary’s Suffering this morning,
 - i. Allow me to share two examples of Mary’s suffering
 - 1. one near the beginning of Jesus’ life and one near the end.

4. PRAY

5. [5] Mary’s Suffering as she and her family lived for a time as refugees.

- a. Magi, wise men from the east, had been searching for Jesus so they could present Him with gifts and worship Him. They saw and followed his star.
- b. They called him the “king of the Jews” – a title already given to Herod who was ruling over Judea at that time on behalf of Rome.
 - i. This of course did not sit well with Herod, and so he ordered the wise men to let him know once they found the child.
 - ii. So, after they had found Jesus in Bethlehem and presented him with their gifts, they were warned by God in a dream to return back home instead of going back to Jerusalem to reveal to Herod Jesus’ location.
- c. [6] Matthew 2:13-18 (ESV) – 13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” Then Herod, [7] when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”
- d. From the very beginning, Jesus was at the top of “Israel’s Most Wanted” list.
 - i. Herod is feeling so threatened by Jesus, who apparently others are already beginning to believe in as the Messiah, that he is prepared and ready to stop this

before it has the chance to grow, no matter the cost.

ii. Imagine the scene:

1. It's the middle of the night. This young family is sound asleep, and suddenly Joseph wakes up from this dream.
2. He immediately stirs Mary to wake her up, and he has to explain to her that Herod's soldiers are on their way to murder their son.
3. Now, at this point, I don't know if Joseph ducked or what, but here is a young mom who has spent most of her waking hours caring for and feeding her son.
4. She's exhausted, and now we have to leave?
 - a. "Yes, Mary, we have to leave now!"
5. So, in the dark, they frantically start to pack the little belongings they owned. They don't have the privilege of taking their time.
6. This is not a vacation they're getting ready for. And who knows if Jesus has woken up by this point and starts crying to make things just a little more stressful.
7. But within moments, the three of them begin a 75–100-mile journey to Egypt.

e. Overnight, a royal family becomes an immigrant family.

- i. And in the background, are the screams of other mothers who have had their baby boys ripped from their arms and slaughtered, possibly right in front of them.
- ii. In that day, the estimated population of Bethlehem was less than 1,000 people.
- iii. So, there's possibly 10-20 families whose sons had just been murdered.¹
 1. ¹ Platt, D. (2013). *Christ-centered exposition commentary: Exalting Jesus in Matthew*. Nashville, TN: B&H Pub, pg.43.

f. We can imagine the heaviness that Mary must have felt upon hearing this news.

- i. We can imagine how tightly she would have held on to Jesus on their trip to Egypt.
- ii. The thought of something happening to Him stirred emotions too deep for words.
 1. What does all of this mean?
 2. And why Egypt?
 3. What about the news she heard from the angel and from Simeon, about who this child was to be?
 4. And the wise men's visit – was all of this a waste now that they are fleeing the country and living as exiles?
 5. Is God going to sort all of this out?
 6. How can this be His plan?
 7. And why weren't those other families warned in a dream?
 - a. Why were we allowed to escape?

- 8. We can imagine the questions, the doubts, the inconveniences, the fear and trepidation, the anxiety we all would be going through facing all of this uncertainty and sorrow. This is Mary's reality.

iii. Suffering, because she chose to say YES to God

6. Fast-forward another 30 or so years. Near the end of Jesus' life, where...

7. [8] Mary helplessly witnessed her son's humiliation, rejection, and execution.

- a. Now as an adult, Jesus is being hunted again by the authorities.
- b. But there was no escape this time.
- c. This time, he has been taken into custody, humiliated, mocked, discriminated against, falsely condemned, and tortured. He is now standing before Pilate and a court that wants Him dead.
- d. The life of her son hangs in the balance. And she's got a bad feeling about this one.
- e. **[9] Luke 23:18-27(ESV) – 18 But they all cried out together, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas"— 19 a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. 20 Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, 21 but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" 22 A third time he said to them, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him." 23 But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices [10] prevailed. 24 So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. 25 He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will. 26 And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. 27 And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him.**
 - f. We don't know if Mary is a part of this group or not, but she can't be far, as she will soon be standing at the foot of the cross on which he'll be nailed, looking up at her son, with zero doubt that she would be one of the loudest ones to mourn and lament for Him.
 - g. The injustice and cries for crucifixion are unfathomable in this scene.
 - i. There is no dream this time that is given to warn her, other than what Jesus Himself had already said would happen.
 - ii. There is no fleeing to Egypt this time, no hidden door that will rush Jesus out of this situation.
 - iii. Mary is helpless to rescue Him because there is no escaping what's about to happen. Jesus is staying and going through with this.
 - h. From what Mary perceives, He is being forced to stay. But from Jesus' perspective, He is volunteering to stay in this suffering and taking the place of a condemned murderer.
 - i. Why?
 - j. Because He is surrendered to the Father's will. Just like his mom.
 - i. No one takes His life from Him.
 - ii. He has authority to lay it down of his own accord, and authority to take it up

again (John 10:18).

- k. There is nothing left for Mary to do but continue herself to surrender and lament what's about to take place.
- l. What would it do to the heart of a mother to watch her son go through what Jesus went through?
 - i. Her soul was pierced all the way through, down to the very deepest part of her.
 - 1. Can you relate to that feeling?
- m. In this moment, nothing makes sense. Not much has made sense throughout her life. But even so...

8. [11] Mary's suffering is part of a much bigger story God is writing.

- a. What was the purpose of them being uprooted from their homeland and having to flee to Egypt?
- b. Understand that what's happening in that tragic story of the slaughter of innocents, are echoes of another ruthless leader long ago, King Pharaoh, who cast every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River.
 - i. But by God's sovereign hand, something else was happening.
 - ii. A soon-to-be deliverer named Moses was spared, who would lead God's people out of Egypt.
- c. Jesus, in this story, will be a better Moses and will deliver His people in a new kind of Exodus, from a deeper form of slavery - to satan, sin, and even death.
- d. How?
- e. By being their Passover Lamb, and whose blood would satisfy the just wrath of God so that the sins of the world could be forgiven and cleansed.
 - i. In addition, right after every boy aged two and under are killed in Bethlehem those 30 years before, Matthew quotes the prophet Jeremiah. Let's look at this again in

1. [12] Matthew 2:17-18 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

- ii. When the Babylonians came and attacked Jerusalem in 586 BC, they destroyed the entire city, and before hauling them off to exile, they took those remaining to a place just north of Jerusalem called Ramah.
- iii. There in Ramah, was a scene much like what happened during the Holocaust as Jews were about to be shipped off to concentration camps.
 - 1. What the Nazis did, was they began to split up families by gender.
 - 2. For most, it was the last time mothers and fathers would see their sons and daughters.
 - 3. There in Ramah, same thing.
 - a. Families were torn apart, and the torment and wailing that could be heard, was heard again in Bethlehem that night.
- f. What's important to understand, is the next two verses in Jeremiah 31, that say this...

- i. **[13] Jeremiah 31:16-17 (ESV) – 16 “Thus says the Lord: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; 17 there is hope for your future, says the Lord: your children shall come back to their own country.”**
- g. By quoting Jeremiah, Matthew is saying that in the middle of this horrific tragedy, Jesus is the faithful Israelite son who will come out of exile and put an end to their weeping. There is hope and there is life that is coming through Him!²
 - i. ² *Ibid.*, pgs. 44-45.
- h. Jeremiah is telling the people that the Lord will remember them, and He will offer them a new kind of relationship based on a new covenant
 - i. **[14] Jer 31:31-34: 31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I**
[15] will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
- i. This is why Jesus tells his disciples He must go to Jerusalem, where He will be rejected, falsely condemned, beaten, flogged, and killed – but on the third day He will rise again!
 - i. This is why Jesus stays on trial and stays on the cross, rather than escapes. This is how the Passover Lamb will be sacrificed.
 - ii. THIS IS THE REASON. THE WHY to the suffering.
- j. But again, as Mary is experiencing this, God isn’t telling her every step of the way, “Here’s why, Mary.”
 - i. WHY GOD is one of the most natural and common questions we ask (scream) at God in the midst of our suffering
 - ii. Yet it’s the question God most rarely answers.
 - 1. Maybe you can resonate with that this morning
 - 2. With Mary as she suffers and asks God WHY
 - a. And no answers come.
 - b. And she stands there as her dear boy, now a young man, dies on a Roman torture device like a criminal.
 - iii. God didn’t quickly tell her why, especially at that time
 - iv. And yet, even in that, at every turn, she remains surrendered to God and chooses to walk by faith.

1. Even when her heart was pierced and breaking
2. She chooses not to lean on her own understanding, but in all of her ways, to acknowledge Him, and He directs her paths (Proverbs 3:5-6).

9. **[16] Reflection Question: In the moments and seasons of your own suffering (sometimes mild annoyances... other times unspeakably devastating), are you choosing to trust God for His greater purposes? – Even if you don't know yet what they are?**

- a. Suffering begs for us to blame somebody or something, and God Himself is typically the easiest target because He actually has the power to prevent it from happening.
 - i. Sometimes from our limited perspective, it's HIS FAULT for not stopping our pain, not preventing the suffering and evil we walk through.
 - ii. And we rage at God. And turn a cold shoulder to him as we weep.
- b. However, what we often don't realize is how much suffering He has already prevented and how often He has already intervened in our lives.
 - i. There is so much that we don't give Him credit for.
 - ii. Because we don't see. Don't know his min, his perspective.
- c. But when He doesn't prevent it, or when He doesn't intervene, and sin and evil is allowed to do what it does, the suffering that results does not limit God's ability or paralyze Him from accomplishing an even greater purpose.
 - i. In some mysterious way, He is able to use suffering in ways that result in a level of goodness and redemption we don't naturally think is possible or even comprehensible.
 - ii. It's God's super power – not to speak the universe into being, or to hold galaxies together through the power of supermassive black holes....
 1. But to take what is broken and lost and dead and hopeless, and bring it back to life.
 2. To use it for great good that (as CS Lewis says) makes pain and death work backwards.

10. Now, I fully recognize that there are types of suffering, that on this side of heaven, we will never know the purpose or reason for why God allows it or how He will use it. There are certain losses that maybe you have experienced, that to be honest, no amount of explaining would satisfy you.

- a. **[17] In his book *If God is Good*, Randy Alcorn writes, "When a child falls off a bike, she doesn't need her father to say, 'Sweetheart, here's why it happened – given your speed and the weight of this bike, it couldn't tolerate that sharp turn and...' No. The child simply wants comfort. We don't need explanations; we need 'God, who comforts the downcast' (2 Cor 7:6).³"**

- i. ³ Alcorn, R. (2014). *If God is good: Faith in the midst of suffering and evil*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, pg. 348.

- b. And often, there is nothing more comforting than to know that God Himself in Christ has suffered too.
 - i. He KNOWS what it's like. Even more than we can imagine.

- ii. He could have stayed aloof from all the sin and death we brought upon ourselves
- iii. But chose to step into our suffering. Chose to come near. To become LIKE US
 - 1. Even in our suffering.
- c. There are other kinds of suffering, where God's purposes *do* come into focus. But again, it's typically not while it's happening, but years later. For Mary, there were cosmic purposes for her suffering, but real comfort and clarity would not come until her Son would rise again.
- d. Whatever pain you may be going through in this season, there is purpose in the midst of your pain. Not that God causes evil, indeed he does not! But that he can be trusted to USE IT for good that far eclipses the pain.
 - i. And until God chooses to reveal what that is, I want you to know that He can still be trusted, He can still be surrendered to, he can still be served, He is still worth following, because He still is good.
- e. What you choose to do with your suffering matters most. What do we see Mary doing?

11.[18] Mary's suffering draws her near to the Suffering Servant

- a. She chooses to lean in closer to Him with her heartache.
- b. Mary doesn't blame God for the suffering she's experiencing.
- c. Instead, she draws near her Son in it.
- d. To be the mother of the suffering Servant means to suffer with Him. Unlike Jesus' disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mary doesn't abandon the Lord during His greatest time of need.
 - i. As Jesus cries out from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" feeling abandoned by the Father, His mother is right there, suffering with him, as He suffers for her and the whole world.
- e. Suffering with Jesus is not just for Mary, it is an essential part of being His disciple.
 - i. [19] Jesus said in John 15:20, **"Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."**
 - ii. [20] Paul in Philippians 3:10-11, **"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead."**
 - 1. "Suffering for Christ provides greater intimacy with Christ."⁴ In many ways, that cannot be had apart from it.
 - a. ⁴ <https://preachingtruth.org/sharing-in-christs-sufferings/>
 - iii. [21] Paul again says in Romans 5:3-5 ³ **Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.**
- f. When Jesus says in Matthew 16 tells his followers to "take up your cross and follow me," that means we must surrender and yield to Christ as He's suffering on the cross,

rather than abandoning or forsaking Him.

- i. We must abide in Christ as He abides in the cross.
 - ii. Rather than calling for angels to rescue Him or exercising His power, He yields and surrenders to the Father's will to crush Him. Obedience and surrender at the cost of His life.
 - iii. That is how we abide with Jesus as we suffer, obeying and surrendering to Him.
- g. When Mary surrendered to God's plan, saying, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your word," she's still praying it at the foot of the cross.
- i. Devastated and heartbroken? Yes.
 - ii. Unspeakable pain? Yes.
 - iii. Understand how God's going to make it ok? NO
 - iv. Distant and cold? No.
 - v. Her affections are deep for her son and her Savior.
 - vi. She remains surrendered and committed, even as she feels left in the dark.
- h. Clarity will soon come, in just three more days.
- i. The Resurrection of Jesus changed... everything!
- i. Sorrow and pain, and death itself, begin to work backward
- j. Just like Paul, and Mary, we can choose to trust God in the midst of our suffering as we follow Christ.
- i. And even experience intimacy and solidarity with Jesus Himself as we suffer for following his way.

12. My story of suffering for Christ:

- a. Going into ministry, my aunt's comment
- b. It's been true, some of the most significant pains and sorrows, times of suffering have come on this journey of ministry
 - i. Pains I wouldn't have had had I not been following Jesus and his way for me.
 - ii. Some of these have rent my very heart.
 - iii. At times I've been unable to see a way out, or how God could do anything good through it all
 - iv. The burden of care and anxiety for people who are hurting and broken.
 - 1. The pain of broken relationships, broken people, hurt people hurt people.
 - a. Even in the church!
 - 2. But also the sorrow and sharp pain of rejection as people I've poured into walk away from me and from Christ as if nothing had happened.
 - v. Before I came to Tru I went through a particular season of suffering and sorrow, and uncertainty.
 - 1. And I had to choose again if I was going to trust God with it all, when I didn't understand. When I didn't know how it was all going to work out.
 - vi. But in that time, when all else fell away, there was nothing left to do but continue trusting God.

1. Continuing to say YES LORD, Here I am, still your servant. Let it be done unto me.
2. Again, today, and tomorrow.
- c. Even through great sorrow and suffering, he's continued to hold me. And I trust him.

13.[22] Reflection Question: What pain and suffering do you need to draw near to Jesus with?

- a. He has already entered our suffering.
- b. You can now share yours with Him.
- c. We have the promise, that
 - i. [23] As is said in James 4:8 – when you “draw near to God, He will draw near to you”.
- d. You have the opportunity and invitation today, to close any gaps between you and the Lord and draw closer to Him through the pain and suffering you're going through.
- e. If you're feeling distant from the Lord and feel like He's forgotten you or you're not sure where to start, you can always find Him at the cross.
- f. This is an opportunity for you, like Mary, to practice surrender and exercise faith, even in a season that doesn't make sense and feels hard.

14.[24] Bottom Line: Mary's response to suffering encourages us to follow Jesus at all costs.

- a. Let's stand and pray that prayer again that Mary prayed...
 - i. [25] “Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”

15. Reflections & Applications

- a. [26] In the moments and seasons of suffering, are you trusting God for His greater purposes? -- even when you don't understanding what he's up to.
 - i. If so, what does that look like?
 - ii. If not, what might it look like to begin trusting God in the midst of suffering.
- b. Mary drew near to Jesus in the middle of her suffering.
 - i. [27] Is there any pain or suffering that you need to draw near to Jesus with today?

1. If so, take a few minutes to pray and tell Jesus about your pain and tell him you're still choosing to trust him in it.

16.[28] Pray to end



MARY

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD



MARY'S

S U F F E R I N G

Luke 2:34-35

“This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and **a sword will pierce your own soul too.**”





MARY'S

S U F F E R I N G



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S U F F E R I N G

as she and her family lived as refugees

Matthew 2:13-18

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and **flee to Egypt**, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” Then Herod,



Matthew 2:13-18

when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and **killed all the male children in Bethlehem** and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”





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S U F F E R I N G

as she witnessed her son's humiliation

Luke 23:18-27

But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas” — a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, “**Crucify, crucify him!**” A third time he said to them, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.” But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices



Luke 23:18-27

prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will. And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of **women who were mourning** and lamenting for him.





MARY'S

S U F F E R I N G

is part of a bigger story God is writing

Matthew 2:17-18

Then was fulfilled what was **spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:**

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
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Jeremiah 31:16-17

“Thus says the Lord: Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for there is a reward for your work, says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy; there is hope for your future, says the Lord: **your children shall come back** to their own country.”



Jeremiah 31:31-34

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I



Jeremiah 31:31-34

will **write it on their hearts**. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."



Reflection Question

In the moments and seasons of your own suffering, are you choosing to trust God for His greater purposes?



Randy Alcorn, *If God is Good*

“When a child falls off a bike, she doesn’t need her father to say, ‘Sweetheart, here’s why it happened – given your speed and the weight of this bike, it couldn’t tolerate that sharp turn and...’ No. The child simply wants comfort. We don’t need explanations; we need ‘God, who comforts the downcast’ (2 Corinthians 7:6).”





MARY'S

S U F F E R I N G

draws her near to the Suffering Servant

John 15:20

“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘**A servant is not greater than his master.**’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.”



Philippians 3:10-11

“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the **sharing of his sufferings** by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”



Romans 5:3-5

Not only that, but **we rejoice in our sufferings**, knowing that **suffering produces endurance**, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.



Reflection Question

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James 4:8

"Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you."





MARY'S

R E S P O N S E T O
S U F F E R I N G

encourages us to follow Jesus at all costs.



“Here I am,
the servant of the Lord;
let it be with me
according to your word.”

MARY'S

R E S P O N S E T O
S U F F E R I N G

encourages us to follow Jesus at all costs.

Reflections & Applications

1. In the moments and seasons of suffering, are you trusting God for His greater purposes?
 - *If so, what does that look like?*
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2. Is there any pain or suffering that you need to draw near to Jesus with today?
 - *If so, take a few minutes to pray. Tell Jesus about your pain and tell him you're still choosing to trust him in it.*





MARY

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD