

# OUR SUFFERING & GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

## *The Story of Scripture, part 2*

*Job, ESV*

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### **JOB 1**

“There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, ‘It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.’ Thus Job did continually. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.’ And the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?’ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.’ And the Lord said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, and there came a messenger to Job and said, ‘The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.’ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, ‘The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.’ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, ‘The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.’ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, ‘Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you.’ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.’ In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.”

Suffering is often undeserved, often unexpected, often unimaginable, and always painful.

### **JOB 42:1 - 6**

“Then Job answered the Lord and said: ‘I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. “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. “Hear, and I will speak; I will question you, and you make it known to me.” I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

## **1 - GOD’S POWER IS GREAT.**

The sovereign power of God shows us that God is in control.  
The sovereign power of God reminds us that Satan is subordinate.  
The sovereign power of God assures us that suffering will conclude.

### **ROMANS 8:28**

“... in all things, God is working for the good of those who love Him and have been called according to His purpose.”

## **2 - GOD’S PURPOSE IS GUARANTEED.**

### **JOB 37:11 - 13**

“He loads the thick cloud with moisture; the clouds scatter his lightning. They turn around and around by his guidance, to accomplish all that he commands them on the face of the habitable world. Whether for correction or for his land or for love, he causes it to happen.”

### **JOB 37:23**

“The Almighty - we cannot find him; he is great in power; justice and abundant righteousness he will not violate.”

God uses suffering to refine our faith.

### **JOB 33:29 - 30**

“Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted with the light of life.”



### **JAMES 1:2 - 4**

“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.”

### **ROMANS 5:3 - 4**

“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.”

God uses suffering to reveal His glory.

### **JOB 33:19 - 26**

“Man is also rebuked with pain on his bed and with continual strife in his bones, so that his life loathes bread, and his appetite the choicest food. His flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out. His soul draws near the pit, and his life to those who bring death. If there be for him an angel, a mediator, one of the thousand, to declare to man what is right for him, and he is merciful to him, and says, ‘Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom; let his flesh become fresh with youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor’; then man prays to God, and he accepts him; he sees his face with a shout of joy, and he restores to man his righteousness.”

God uses suffering to teach us to rely on Him.

### **JOB 34:14- 15**

“If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.”

### **2 CORINTHIANS 12:7 - 9**

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

God uses suffering to repent of and renounce all sin in our lives.



### **JOB 36:21**

“Take care; do not turn to iniquity, for this you have chosen rather than affliction.”

God uses suffering to lead us to our reward in Him.

### **JOB 42:5 - 6**

“I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

## **3 - GOD'S KNOWLEDGE IS PERFECT.**

In the confusion of our circumstances, God is all-wise.

### **JOB 28:20 - 28**

“From where, then, does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the air. Abaddon and Death say, ‘We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.’ God understands the way to it, and he knows its place. For he looks to the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. When he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure, when he made a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder, then he saw it and declared it; he established it, and searched it out. And he said to man, ‘Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.’”

### **JOB 12:13**

“With God are wisdom and might; he has counsel and understanding.”

Pain on earth can only be ultimately understood from the perspective of heaven.

## **4 - GOD'S MERCY IS PERSONAL.**

What we want in our suffering: an explanation from God.

What we receive in our suffering: a revelation of God.

At every moment in our suffering, God is with us.

At every moment in our suffering, God is for us.



## **JOB 19:13 – 22**

“He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly estranged from me. My relatives have failed me, my close friends have forgotten me. The guests in my house and my maidservants count me as a stranger; I have become a foreigner in their eyes. I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer; I must plead with him with my mouth for mercy. My breath is strange to my wife, and I am a stench to the children of my own mother. Even young children despise me; when I rise they talk against me. All my intimate friends abhor me, and those whom I loved have turned against me. My bones stick to my skin and to my flesh, and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth. Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?”

## **JOB 19:23 – 27**

“Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! Oh that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!”

- Identify 1-3 ways these truths cause you to think, desire, and/or act differently this week.
- How do these truths lead you to PRAY (to praise God, to repent of sin, to ask God for certain requests, or to yield to God in your life)?
- Who can you discuss and/or share these truths with this week?

