



Biblical Understanding of Suffering (Part 2)
Sunday September 11, 2005

Overview:

Understanding God's Heart in the light of His original intent
Suffering – A Present Reality
Three realms in which we experience suffering
Different reasons for suffering
Suffering according to the will of God
Why does God allow me to suffer?
What should I do when I face suffering?
The Believers Mindset Towards Persecution
Enduring hardships

Review:

Understanding God's Heart in the light of His original intent
We must therefore understand the heart of God in the light of His original intent – that it is not God's desire for people to suffer! Hence we must be very careful not to accuse God for our pain and suffering!

Jeremiah 9:23,24

God executes everything in loving kindness, justice and righteousness on the earth.

Suffering – A Present Reality

Three realms in which we experience suffering

- Spiritual – intense satanic oppression
- Emotional
- Physical

Different reasons for suffering

1. Suffering due to the "bondage of corruption"
2. Suffering due to one's own actions
3. Suffering due to satanic oppression
4. Suffering due to other peoples actions including persecution
5. Suffering due to divine discipline and judgment
6. Suffering due to willing sacrifice

1. Suffering due to the "bondage of corruption"

Romans 8:17-23 2 Corinthians 4:16 – 2 Corinthians 5:5

- The Bible makes it clear that all of creation is in bondage/subject to corruption (Romans 8:21-23).
- Creation went into subjection to corruption at the time of Adam's Fall.
- Ever since that time, all of creation has been in a state of decline, deviating from the original state of perfection, tranquility, and order in which God created it.
- God did not allow this willingly but in hope or anticipation (Romans 8:20) that this will also be reversed. He knew the end result – that creation one day will be delivered from this bondage.
- Creation is yet to be delivered from its subjection to corruption and it will be in the future.



This explains:

- Why our bodies get old (2 Corinthians 4:16)
- Why there are tsunamis, earth quakes, hurricanes, etc.
- Why some babies are born deformed (some cases)

God by His power steps in and reverses in certain situations the effects of this bondage to corruption. We call this a miracle! This happens by the power of God's Spirit.

The good news is that there will come a time when creation will be delivered from its present bondage to corruption. There will be new heavens and a new earth. 2 Peter 3:5-14 Revelation 21:1-5

2. Suffering due to one's own actions

Sometimes the pain and suffering we go through is because of our own negligence, bad attitudes, improper conduct, distractions, overwork, dishonesty, laziness, negligence, ignorance, foolishness, etc.

- A student does not study as he should and fails in his exams, loses time, etc.
- A husband does not treat his wife well or vice versa – and the marriage breaks down
- An employee has a bad attitude in their work and they eventually lose their job
- A person drives rashly and gets into a bad accident
- A person makes unwise investments and has heavy financial losses
- A preacher does not treat people kindly and therefore fails in ministry

Galatians 6:7,8

Psalms 25:15

Our mistakes make put us in a corner or get us into a trap. However God is able to bring our feet out of the net.

Fleshly lusts trouble your soul – weaken you mind, will and emotions. 1 Peter 2:11

Distractions – wrong focus will result in wasted time and energy.

Examples in Scripture:

Abraham birthed Ishmael – a trouble-maker in his own house (Genesis 16:11,12)

David 2 Samuel 12

- We should not blame God for the suffering that results from our own wrong attitudes and actions.
- We must learn quickly from our mistakes. "Mistakes are like knives, they either cut us or serve us depending on whether you hold them by the blade or by the handle."
- God is greater than our mistakes. Therefore if we will repent, learn and change – God can intervene and take us on to success.

You are not responsible for the pain of those who have ignored your counsel.

3. Suffering due to satanic oppression

Job

Job chapters 1, 2



- It is very clear from the first two chapters of Job that it was satan who brought destruction and devastation to Job's family, property and even afflicted Job with boils.
- It was not God who was taking away, but satan (Job 1:21,22). However, Job did not have the spiritual understanding that we have available to us today because of the written Scriptures- and hence blamed God ignorantly.

Paul

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 2 Corinthians 11:22-33

- Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was not some sickness or disease that he suffered. Rather, as clearly stated in 2 Corinthians 12:7 it was a "messenger of satan" – a demonic spirit of group of spirit that repeatedly and continually hindered/opposed Paul in his ministry (2 Corinthians 12:10, 11:22-33).
- God permitted this thing to continue in spite of Paul's requests because this would serve in preventing Paul from being "exalted above measure", given the fact that Paul had received an "abundance of revelations" (2 Corinthians 12:7). It was in the light of this fact that God told Paul to depend on His grace (2 Corinthians 12:9) rather than having the "messenger of satan" depart.
- None of us qualify for such a "thorn in the flesh" since we have not received the same "abundance of revelations" as Paul did!
- The general instruction of Scripture to ALL BELIEVERS is to resist the devil and the promise is that he will flee from us (James 4:7). So as believers we do not have to worry about having a messenger of satan continually buffet us (ie. Paul's thorn) without being able to resist it and having it depart/flee from us.
- The lesson however, is that satan does come against us and attempts to hinder us from progressing in God's plan and purpose.

Acts 10:38 Luke 13:10-13

Summary:

- God has permitted satan to work against us in this present world. If you allow things that were designed to harm you become the very things that perfect you into the image of Jesus, satan will remain defeated before you!
- Satan oppresses people by causing circumstances and situations that are intended to cause hardship, hindrances, delays, suffering
- Delays are not always from God (Daniel 10:2-14). Satan attempts to delay your miracle and thus weaken your desire to keep reaching out for God's highest and best.
- A number of sicknesses and bodily ailments are caused directly due to demonic oppression (different from a physical condition that is purely "biological" in nature)
- A number of things we face in life: failure, breakdown in marriage relationships, lack of progress, sicknesses, emotional torments, could be demonic in origin.

Our Response:

- Discern by the Spirit of God what the enemy is attempting to do against you (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- Learn to exercise your God given authority to resist and overcome satan's workings (James 4:7)
- Stand and don't quit (Ephesians 6:13,14).Your endurance is demoralizing to satan.
- Too often, believers suffer at the hands of the enemy and then turn around and blame the devil or others for it.
- Sometimes we are expecting God to stop the devil for us – when God has clearly instructed us to resist the enemy being steadfast in the faith (1 Peter 5:8,9). Nothing happens when we keep waiting for God to do what He has instructed us to do.

Will be continued next week.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

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CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

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