

# Why Does God Allow Suffering?

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 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.” (Rom. 5:1-5)

When we see or experience suffering, what are some basic foundational principles in the Bible that will help me in my response?

## **1. Suffering is universal.**

- All nations!
- All Ages!
- All economic situations!
- All personalities!
- All education levels!

“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth, until now.” (Rom. 8:22)

To “groan” - desperate cry for deliverance.

Present tense - to groan and keep groaning.

Pains of childbirth - what we are going through is not permanent.

- The pain is increasing in intensity.

- A good outcome is longed for.

## **2. My understanding will always be limited or unclear.**

Do We Worship Clarity?

- I want to know to my satisfaction.
- I deserve to know.
- You can't stop me from knowing.
- Search for answers.
- Must make "sense" to me.

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord." (Isa. 55:8)

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. 55:8)

Story of rain and snow - "comes down from heaven...waters the earth making it bring forth and sprout." (10)

"oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Rom. 11:33)

How unsearchable are His judgments

and how inscrutable His ways.

## **3. God's understanding is unlimited.**

- **The wisdom and knowledge of God is infinite.**

"a man of sorrows"

- Deep distress.
- Overwhelming sadness.
- Sense of loss.

"acquainted with grief"

- Personal familiarity.

Part of our sorrows - to be misunderstood by people.

- To be judged by others.

- To have our pain dismissed.

“...for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.” (Ps. 6:8)

“You have kept count of my tossing, put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book?” (Ps. 56:9)

“Christ - in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col. 2:3)

- Not just Wikipedia, Jeopardy knowledge, “Google it” facts.

- But an intimate insight into every life, every heart, every family.

- The compassion of God never ceases.

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end.” (Lam. 3:22)

“For I the Lord do not change, therefore you, o children of Jacob, are not consumed.” (Mal. 3:6)

“But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.” (Ps. 103:17)

His Eye is on the Sparrow

“Why should I feel discouraged?

Why should the shadows come?

Why should my heart feel lonely?

And long for heaven and home?

When Jesus is my portion, a constant friend is He!

His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me!”

- **The goodness of God always has the last word.**

“More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,”

(Rom. 5:3)

“endurance produces character, character produces hope,” (Rom. 5:3)

“and hope does not put us to shame.” (Rom. 5:3)

“When you have hope – you have confidence!

When you have hope from God – you have a confidence that will last forever!

“And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose.” (Rom. 8:28)

“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” (2 Cor. 4:17)

- The big picture; the ultimate plan; the finished product = Good!

“as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (18)

- Visible, external – not always good!

- Invisible, eternal – always very good!

- The power of God is sufficient every time.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. 12:9)

“...for when I am weak then I am strong.” (10b)

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” (2 Cor. 4:7)