

# Why does God allow us to suffer?

Super Saturday Jesus Rally  
October 25, 2014

## Agenda

1. Record the call
2. Introductions
3. Songs -
  - a. Good to me
  - b. The Solid Rock
  - c. What a Friend We Have in Jesus
4. Prayer
5. Welcome
  - a. Who I am and what is the Bible Team (see previous call)
6. Study
  - a. Overview - my suffering house/marriage
  - b. 2 ways of suffering
  - c. Examples of suffering
    - i. OT
      1. Joseph
      2. Naomi (Ruth)
      3. Hannah (1 Samuel 1, 2)
      4. David
      5. Job
    - ii. NT
      1. Woman with bleeding issue (Mark 5)
      2. Three men on the cross
      3. Paul
  - d. Purposes of suffering
  - e. Keys to enduring suffering
    - i. Verses to meditate on

## **2 ways of looking at suffering:**

### **World's way (without Christ)**

World's way leads to bitterness, resentment, no peace, no purpose and no hope

### **God's way (with Christ)**

Purpose and peace through suffering, refines and sweetens us

## **Any suffering we do, we do for Christ**

# Examples of suffering

## Old Testament

### Joseph

**Genesis 45:** <sup>5</sup> But don't be upset, and don't be angry with yourselves for selling me to this place. It was God who sent me here ahead of you to preserve your lives. <sup>6</sup> This famine that has ravaged the land for two years will last five more years, and there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. <sup>7</sup> God has sent me ahead of you to keep you and your families alive and to preserve many survivors. <sup>8</sup> So it was God who sent me here, not you! And he is the one who made me an adviser to Pharaoh—the manager of his entire palace and the governor of all Egypt.

**Genesis 50:** <sup>19</sup> But Joseph replied, "Don't be afraid of me. Am I God, that I can punish you? <sup>20</sup> You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. <sup>21</sup> No, don't be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children." So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

### Naomi

#### Ruth 1

**1** In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. **2** The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there.

**3** Then Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. **4** The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, **5** both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her two sons or her husband. ...

**19** So the two of them continued on their journey. When they came to Bethlehem, the entire town was excited by their arrival. "Is it really Naomi?" the women asked.

**20** "Don't call me Naomi," she responded. "Instead, call me Mara, for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. **21** I went away full, but the LORD has brought me

home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?"

**Ruth 4:** <sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife. When he slept with her, the LORD enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. <sup>14</sup> Then the women of the town said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. <sup>15</sup> May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!"

<sup>16</sup> Naomi took the baby and cuddled him to her breast. And she cared for him as if he were her own. <sup>17</sup> The neighbor women said, "Now at last Naomi has a son again!" And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

## Hannah

**1 Samuel 1** <sup>1</sup> There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah in the region of Zuph in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, of Ephraim. <sup>2</sup> Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.

<sup>3</sup> Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of Heaven's Armies at the Tabernacle. The priests of the LORD at that time were the two sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas. <sup>4</sup> On the days Elkanah presented his sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to Peninnah and each of her children. <sup>5</sup> And though he loved Hannah, he would give her only one choice portion because the LORD had given her no children. <sup>6</sup> So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the LORD had kept her from having children. <sup>7</sup> Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat.

<sup>8</sup> "Why are you crying, Hannah?" Elkanah would ask. "Why aren't you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me—isn't that better than having ten sons?"

9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. 10 Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD. 11 And she made this vow: "O LORD of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the LORD, his hair will never be cut."

12 As she was praying to the LORD, Eli watched her. 13 Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. 14 "Must you come here drunk?" he demanded. "Throw away your wine!"

15 "Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the LORD. 16 Don't think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow."

17 "In that case," Eli said, "go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him."

18 "Oh, thank you, sir!" she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.

19 The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the LORD once more. Then they returned home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the LORD remembered her plea, 20 and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I asked the LORD for him."

## **David**

**1 Samuel 30** Three days later, when David and his men arrived home at their town of Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had made a raid into the Negev and Ziklag; they had crushed Ziklag and burned it to the ground. 2 They had carried off the women and children and everyone else but without killing anyone.

3 When David and his men saw the ruins and realized what had happened to their families, 4 they wept until they could weep no more. 5 David's two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel, were among those captured. 6 David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him. But David found strength in the LORD his God.

## Job

**Read Job 1 & 2**

**Read Job 42**

## New Testament

**Mark 5: 25** A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding. **26** She had suffered a great deal from many doctors, and over the years she had spent everything she had to pay them, but she had gotten no better. In fact, she had gotten worse. **27** She had heard about Jesus, so she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his robe. **28** For she thought to herself, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed." **29** Immediately the bleeding stopped, and she could feel in her body that she had been healed of her terrible condition.

**30** Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my robe?"

**31** His disciples said to him, "Look at this crowd pressing around you. How can you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

**32** But he kept on looking around to see who had done it. **33** Then the frightened woman, trembling at the realization of what had happened to her, came and fell to her knees in front of him and told him what she had done. **34** And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace. Your suffering is over."

## Jesus

### Read Isaiah 52: 13 - Isaiah 53

#### Matthew 26:39

**36** Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." **37** He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he became anguished and distressed. **38** He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

**39** He went on a little farther and bowed with his face to the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine."

**40** Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? **41** Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!"

**42** Then Jesus left them a second time and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away unless I drink it, your will be done." **43** When he returned to them again, he found them sleeping, for they couldn't keep their eyes open.

**44** So he went to pray a third time, saying the same things again. **45** Then he came to the disciples and said, "Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But look—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. **46** Up, let's be going. Look, my betrayer is here!"

**Luke 22:** **41** He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, **42** "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." **43** Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. **44** He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood.

**Luke 23:** **39** One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, "So you're the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you're at it!"

**40** But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? **41** We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done

anything wrong.” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.”

43 And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

**Hebrews 4:** 14 So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. 15 This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. 16 So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

## **Paul**

**Acts 9:** 15 But the Lord said, “Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. 16 And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’s sake.”

**Romans 8:** 15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” 16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. **But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.**

18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. 19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. 22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

**Philippians 1:** <sup>28</sup> Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. <sup>29</sup> **For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.** <sup>30</sup> We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of it.

**2 Timothy 2:** <sup>2</sup> You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

<sup>3</sup> Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup> Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them.

## **Purposes of suffering**

- 1. Gets our attention**
- 2. Disciplines us**
- 3. Refines us, like a fine wine**
- 4. Shapes/defines us**
- 5. Brings us closer to God**
- 6. Brings glory to God**

### **Psalm 119:**

<sup>71</sup> My suffering was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to your decrees.

**Hebrews 5:** <sup>7</sup> While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God. <sup>8</sup> **Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.** <sup>9</sup> In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. <sup>10</sup> And God designated him to be a High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.



**2 Corinthians:** <sup>3</sup>All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. <sup>4</sup>He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. <sup>5</sup>**For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ.** <sup>6</sup>Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. <sup>7</sup>**We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.**

<sup>8</sup>We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. <sup>9</sup>In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup>And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. <sup>11</sup>And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety.

## **Keys to enduring suffering:**

- ❖ Seek Jesus and His presence daily
  - Learn to rest in Him
  - Cry out to Him
    - Whatever pain, feelings, emotions, frustrations, give them all to Him. Tell Him verbally
  - Journal
    - Write what's on your heart, write your prayers to God.
  - Read your Bible daily
  - Seek a friend and spend time with them regularly
    - Someone who loves Jesus and has time for you

## Scriptures to meditate on:

**John 14:** <sup>27</sup> "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.

**Philippians 4:** <sup>6</sup> Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

**1 Thessalonians 5:** <sup>16</sup> Always be joyful. <sup>17</sup> Never stop praying. <sup>18</sup> Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

### Financial worry

**Matthew 6:** <sup>31</sup> "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' <sup>32</sup> These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. <sup>33</sup> Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

<sup>34</sup> "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

**Romans 5:** <sup>3</sup> We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. <sup>4</sup> And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. <sup>5</sup> And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

**James 1:** <sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. <sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.