

No Purpose of Yours Can Be Thwarted

Introduction

- ❑ The book of Job reveals both the divine & human perspectives of a godly person suffering severely.
- ❑ The book reveals God's sovereign rule over Satan and yet Satan's personal destructive role in much human suffering.
- ❑ The book reveals that God's wisdom is superior to human wisdom in suffering & God should be trusted (Pr. 3:5).
- ❑ God considers Job to be a righteous man with whom He is satisfied (1:8).

I. A Self-Centered Perspective In Suffering (ch. 1-31)

A. Loss & misery

Job went through a period of severe testing: loss of wealth, children, health, reputation, loyalty of wife & friends... The initial losses were devastating & happened in one day, yet Job handled it graciously (1:20-22). But the other losses & suffering took place over a longer period of time, leaving Job in misery & resulting in discouragement (7:3, 6). Job's health problems were intense & plagued him during this lengthy period of testing: skin ulcers or sore (2:7-8), decaying flesh with worms (7:5), sleeplessness & nightmares (7:4, 13-14), extreme weight loss (19:20) & fever (30:30).

B. No godly answers or reasons

Another aspect of Job's dilemma was that he desired godly answers & reasons for his suffering, but received none. His 3 friends falsely accused him of many sins as the cause of his suffering – hidden sins, injustice, rebellion, unrighteous acts. Job also received no answers from God as he vented his complaints to Him in prayer – he was frustrated, confused, discouraged & angry (10:1-2).

APPL: Job's words & actions toward people & God were a result of his unrelenting misery & pain without understanding.

ILL: Car trouble on 12/23 & severely cracked driveway on 12/24. Thousands of dollars in damage trying to save a few hundred... What about you; can you relate to Job????

II. A God-Centered Perspective In Suffering (ch. 42)

After months of suffering, God responds to Job w/questions & perspectives about His creation that were far beyond Job's ability to understand. In his suffering, Job had forgotten that God is in control of everything...

A. Understanding (v. 1-2)

Job now sees that God is in control of everything, including his suffering. He also sees that everything has a God-ordained purpose, including his suffering. Job now understands that God will complete the purpose for which he is suffering (Is. 46:9-10; Jas. 1:2-4). God's purpose was bigger than Job: involved Satan, Job's wife, 3 friends, neighbors, multitudes who would hear & read about his life (including you & me).

B. Humility (v. 3-6)

God never told Job why he was suffering. Job accepted the fact that God's purposes were far beyond his ability to understand. But he did have a personal meeting with God to hear from God which fully satisfied him (v. 5; 2Co. 12:9). So Job humbled himself, repented & confessed that he intruded into God's domain by demanding an answer to why he was suffering (v. 6).

ILL: After prayer & pleading with God about my car & driveway trouble & the thousands of dollars in damage, He gave peace to trust Him. I finally realized that His purposes were bigger than me: involved my father (who taught me auto repair), my wife (contacted towing Co.), Billy McCulley (advised me on auto repair), Ernest Whittier (advised me on driveway repair), home ins. Co., home builder & the towing company. I repaired the car, was reimbursed for towing & plans have been made to repair driveway. We discovered that there is a major erosion problem under the driveway... I think it is much too soon to say I fully understand God's purpose in my trial, but I can already see some benefit & I will trust Him through this trial whether I understand it or not!

CONCLUSION

So then my brothers & sisters the natural response to suffering initially is self-centered: seeking answers & reasons from God & trusted godly friends. We naturally want to know how long or how severe the suffering will be & what will be the outcome. While suffering, we (like Job) may get frustrated, confused, discouraged & even angry. But also like Job, we must remember that God always has a purpose for any suffering that a believer experiences and God may never reveal that purpose to us in this life. Therefore we must **humble ourselves, repent & confess** our error if we have been demanding an answer from God for our suffering & trials. This is a New Year (2012) filled with many opportunities & privileges, but we will also face many trials, troubles & suffering. Therefore let's keep each other encouraged this year as God works out His great purposes in our lives individually & collectively. Let's remind each other that God's purpose is bigger than us individually or even collectively. His purpose is not limited to our lifetime or even things that we can understand. But we know with our Brother Job that no purpose of God's can be thwarted; Rom. 8:28; Eccl. 3:1; Jas. 1:2;

If you are not a Christian, 2012 could be a wonderful year for you also. I bring you good news this year – Jesus has given His life to save you from the penalty of your sins. Will you trust Him today for salvation; will you believe...?

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[Prepared by Willie D. Woodmore](#)