

Spiritual Growth Questions for September 5, 2021

Opener: What has God been teaching you this week?

- **Read Job 4-5 on your own.** What is the advice that Eliphaz gives to Job? What does the Lord say about Job in 1:1-3, 1:8 and 2:3? Is Eliphaz's advice helpful? Has he correctly diagnosed Job's problem?
- **Read Job 4:12-21.** Although dreams are one valid means of revelation in the OT, does Eliphaz's experience in verses 12-16 conform to revelatory dreams in Scripture? Is what he saying true in 4:17-18? How does this help us evaluate the rest of his speech?
- **Read Job 6:14-23.** In these verses, Job transitions from lament to directly addressing his friends. In comparing them to an intermittent stream or river in verses 15-20, what is he saying about them? Have you ever gone through something where you feel your friends are just not there for you?
- **Read Job 7:6-10.** This passage is a transition into prayer, where Job anticipates dying before his problems are resolved. Have you ever been in a situation that seemed hopeless? What or who helped you get through it?
- **Read Psalm 130:3, I Timothy 1:15-16, James 5:11.** Why is it so important to consider the mercy of God in situations like Job's?

Read the following scripture: Ephesians 2:1-8. Apply the S.O.A.P. study method.

Scripture: Read the passage three times with an open heart and ask the Lord Jesus to speak to you.

Observation: Write down what you see in this passage. Make as many observations as you can.

Application: Write down how you will be different because of what you have just read. Look for lessons to be learned, examples to be followed and promises to be enjoyed. How is Jesus revealed?

Prayer: Write out a short prayer.

Psalm 130:3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

James 5:11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Why? Answering Life's Toughest Questions:

A study of the book of Job What is the cause of suffering? September 5, 2021 Pastor John Lloyd

Why? It's a question that is at the heart of every person who undergoes serious trials. Why suffering? Why evil? Why pain? Why injustice? Why false accusations? Why? What is God's purpose? I know I have asked these questions throughout my life. I am sure that you have as well. Today, we will continue our study of the book of Job. Job is part of the wisdom books of the Bible. It is my prayer that each of us could gain both wisdom and gain eternal perspective to help us with our lives and trials that we face. Today, we will encounter Job after he has lost everything. His friend Eliphaz is attempting to comfort him. The root question that Job and his friends are trying to answer is why is Job suffering? What is the cause? I am sure you have asked that questions as well. Today, we will look to the Lord for help.

Job 4:1 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said: 2 "If one ventures a word with you, will you be impatient? Yet who can keep from speaking? 3 Behold, you have instructed many, and you have strengthened the weak hands. 4 Your words have upheld him who was stumbling, and you have made firm the feeble knees. 5 But now it has come to you, and you are impatient; it touches you, and you are dismayed. 6 Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope? 7 "Remember: who that was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off? 8 As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same. 9 By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his anger they are consumed. 10 The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion, the teeth of the young lions are broken. 11 The strong lion perishes for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness are scattered.

Job 4:17 'Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? 18 Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error; 19 how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth. 20 Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces; they perish forever without anyone regarding it. 21 Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them, do they not die, and that without wisdom?'

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Retribution theology is based on the idea that sin leads to suffering and thus that suffering is a sign of sin.

Why is Job suffering? Why do we suffer?

In short, the problem of tragedy, suffering and injustice is a problem for everyone. It is at least as big a problem for unbelief in God as for belief. It is therefore a mistake, though an understandable one, to think that if you abandon belief in God it somehow makes the problem of evil easier to handle. Timothy Keller

Commonly held wrong view of suffering:

- All suffering comes from our _____

Job 4:6-11- Only sinners suffer.

Job 4:7 "Remember: who that was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off? Job 2:5-7 Job is so sick that he is nearly dead.

Our worst mistakes are occasioned by drawing wrong views of undeniable truths. Matthew Henry
Whenever we think that God is being unfair, or that we would never do some of the things that God does, we make ourselves more righteous than God. Layton Talbert

Job 4:17 'Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? Job 5:1-4, Eliphaz is hinting that Job's children died because of his sin. Job 5:7 sparks fly upward.

Eliphaz is basically saying, "Job is suffering because God is punishing him for being a worthless sinner." Eliphaz sees God as only a God of justice. Ray Stedman

Job 5:4a His Children are far from safety: they are crushed in the gate, Job 5:17 "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves; therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty. Galatians 6:7

Job 5:26 You shall come to your grave in ripe old age, like a sheaf gathered up in its season. 27 Behold, this we have searched out; it is true. Hear, and know it for your good."

What is true generally may not always be true to a specific situation.
The problem with arguing from observation is that our observations are severely limited. **The righteous will prosper and the wicked will suffer.**

Remember: Job 1:8 and 2:3, 2 Tim. 3:12 All who are godly will suffer.

- Job's plea to his friends: _____and _____

Job 6:2 "Oh that my vexation were weighed, and all my calamity laid in the balances! 3 For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words have been rash. 4 For the arrows of the Almighty are in me;

Mental pain is less dramatic than physical pain, but it is more common and harder to bear. The frequent attempt to conceal mental pain increases the burden: it is easier to say, 'My tooth is aching' than to say 'My heart is broken.'" – C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain. (Job 6:12-15)

Hopelessness can lead to a feeling of *uselessness*; and when you feel useless, you don't want to live. Job didn't attempt this himself, for he knew that suicide was wrong; but he prayed that God might take him out of his misery. Wiersbe

Job 6:24 **Teach me**, and I will be silent; make me understand how I have gone astray. 25 How forceful are upright words! But what does reproof from you reprove? 28 "But now, be pleased to **look at me**, for I will not lie to your face. Few things are harder to bear than meaningless suffering. If we could see some reason for what we have to go through, we could more easily endure it. But pointless trouble is corrosive to our souls. Ray Stedman

We live in clay bodies... they are not permanent. Job 4:18.
God cares for us and knows the hairs on our head. Luke 12:7

- Job's plea to God: _____?

Job 7:1 "Has not man a hard service on earth, and are not his days like the days of a hired hand? Job 7:6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle and come to their end without hope. 7 "Remember that my life is a breath; my eye will never again

Job 7:13 When I say, 'My bed will comfort me, my couch will ease my complaint,' 14 then you scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions,

Suffering, in fact, is sometimes the result of righteousness and of God's eternal plan for our lives. Satan has his reasons for wanting us to suffer, but God has His reasons for allowing us to suffer, and His reasons will ultimately bring perfection out of our pain. Ray Stedman

Psalm 130:3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,
Romans 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
34 "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"
Wherever the Lord removes the guilt of sin, he breaks the power of sin. Mt. Henry
Praise the Lord, His mercy is more. Stronger than darkness, new every morn. Our sins they are many, His mercy is more!