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Sorting Out My Suffering

Text: Job 6:1-7:21

Someone asked C.S. Lewis, "Why do the righteous suffer?" "Why not?" he replied.

"They're the only ones who can take it."

After each of Job's friends speaks, Job will respond. Eliphaz has spoken in chapters 4 and 5. Job responds in chapters 6 and 7.

Listen to Job as he processes, out loud, what is his epic battle.

Vs. 4- I feel like I've been shot! (7:20;16:12-13)

Comment [1]:

v. 11- I feel hopeless. In fact, hoping takes so much strength.

Comment [2]:

v. 14-30- I have been deceived. Job is in despair(6:26) and his friends have dried up on him like a riverbed dries up in scorching

Comment [3]:

heat (6:15-17). Job is disappointed in his friends(12:1-3; 13:1-10).

Comment [4]:

7:1-10- I have resigned myself. Cf. 3,5,7

Comment [5]:

and hear the alternating rhythm of resignation and despair. The book of James says that life is a vapor- here one moment and gone the next(James 4:13-16). The life we have is the life God has for us.

Comment [6]:

Presumption has no place in us. When you have ten children and a thriving agricultural

enterprise, its easy to think certain items are your right.

For most of chapter 7, Job speaks to God about the futility of life. It's reminiscent of the book of Ecclesiastes.

Job continues to vent. The section beginning in 16A is so raw!

Two questions from the psalter:

1. What is man? (v. 17/Psalm 8:4)
2. How long?(v. 19/ Psalm 13:1-2)

He says to God, "By the time You come to see about me, I'll be dead!!"(21b)

This passage has some speed bumps in it. For instance, in chapter 1, God affirms Job's righteousness (1:1,8). In 6:29, Job himself reaffirms his faith. However, in 7:20-21, the possibility of his transgression having brought this suffering on, is raised. If, indeed, Job is guilty of some infraction, should he not be forgiven?(21a; 13:23) Hidden in this passage by implication and inference, is the subject of deserved suffering. Shouldn't a moral life guarantee some freedom from trials? Doesn't

righteousness entitle me to a pass from some of life's stuff? Even if we haven't said it aloud, don't we think this way?

For Job there is no pass, no "get out of suffering free" card. There is not one for you or me either.

We accept what our sovereign God allows.

Comment [7]:

To use a card-playing analogy, this is the hand that has been dealt to me. To use an equestrian analogy, this is the horse I've

been given to ride. To borrow language from the military, this is my tour of duty. How could God do this to me? I'm a nice person. I tithe. I attend worship. I'm ethical. I'm moral. I'm faithful. I'm a hard worker. Yet, there is a bullseye on my back, painted there by The Eternal(7:20).

### **Illus.**

Charles Haddon Spurgeon wrote:

*There is no attribute more comforting to His children than that of God's sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe trials, they believe that sovereignty has ordained their afflictions, that sovereignty*

*overrules them, and that sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children ought to more earnestly contend to than the doctrine of their Master over all creation--the Kingship of God over all the works of His own hands--the Throne of God and His right to sit upon that throne...for it is God upon the Throne whom we trust.*

I want to put a song in Job's mouth:

I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord, until I die  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord  
I will trust in the Lord, until I die

Amen