



Yahweh, The Almighty God of Israel, Is With Us!

Where Biblical Truth  
Comes Alive!



# Human Suffering

“If there is a God in Heaven and if He is the ‘**Almighty**’ and has a ‘**compassionate heart,**’ then why doesn't He stop the suffering which is in the world today? Why doesn't He use His limitless power to put an end to the sorrow that fills the hearts of so many people? If the Almighty really does care for the human race, then why is He so strangely silent about mankind's cruel and crippling problems? **Why doesn't He do something about them?** And, above all else, why doesn't He answer **my** prayers?”

Questions such as these are often asked by people all over the world.

We are happy to report that there are answers to these questions, and they are found in the pages of the **Holy Bible**.

**A Voice In The Wilderness** considers it a great privilege to bring some of those answers to you in this lesson; answers which will assuredly stabilize your soul and comfort your heart, especially when you encounter the tempest of some personal tragedy.

Long, long ago when the Almighty created man and woman, He made them **free moral agents** and gave them that most basic of human rights - liberty. He allowed Adam and his wife Eve life's greatest liberty - the liberty to **choose the way they wanted to live**. Man was offered:

1. The liberty to live a life governed by simple **faith in divine leadership - Yahweh's leadership.**
2. Or of living a life governed by **the requirement to 'know,' to analyze, to test and to prove** to his own satisfaction what is good and what is evil.

The first way, the way of **faith** and **obedience**. was to lead to perfect peace, happiness, health, safety and life everlasting.

The second way, the way of **investigation, analysis** and **knowledge**, was alas, to end in death - “**dying thou shalt die**” the Eternal had warned. But man wasn't to know this fact right away. He could take the Eternal's word for it and accept it by faith, or find out for himself. Thus it was that **EL SHADDAI**, the Almighty God of Israel gave to mankind that amazing choice to eat of the **Tree of Life** by accepting His Word in simple faith, or to eat of the **Tree of Knowledge** and to learn the hard way - **by experience!** (Genesis 3)

All of us know that Adam chose the second way, the way of **trial and error**, the way of **personal experience**, the way of the **Knowledge of Good and Evil**. We are not condemning him for his decision, for given the same choice most human beings would have done exactly the same thing. Nevertheless the result of Adam's sin was catastrophic. **Indeed it was fatal;** for within a short period of time the whole earth was reeling under a burden of doubt, rebellion, violence, disease and death. It just didn't seem possible that so small a matter like ‘**mistrusting the Creator**’ could result in so much sorrow, suffering and death. Yet, strangely enough, that is what happened and all of us are still suffering because of Adam's

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fatal mistake.

Yahweh, we hasten to add, was by no means caught off-guard when man chose to doubt His word and go his own way. Scripture tells us that when sin (disobedience) entered the world, the Almighty promptly made known to Adam an emergency plan of how the **Seed of the Woman (The Messiah)** would one day come to earth to save mankind from that fatal decision to disobey the Creator. That plan is often referred to as the **Plan of Salvation**. The Plan of Salvation not only reveals the ultimate destiny of man, which is to be a joint-heir with the Saviour in the rulership of the mighty universe (see [Lesson 10](#)), but it also explains how the Most High is ever willing and able to **turn the saddest of situations to good effect, and to produce something of rare beauty and great worth from the most tragic of circumstances.**

It is in this connection that we shall now consider the seemingly inexplicable paradox of **'why'** a God of infinite love and power permits human suffering to continue; why He doesn't stop it immediately. What's more, we shall see that **suffering is a spiritual anvil upon which the Almighty is fashioning human character**; the anvil which man so ill-advisedly chose for himself. In other words, under **Yahweh's control** suffering is being turned to **'good effect'** and being used by Him to produce enormous spiritual benefits. With this little known fact in mind, let us now examine what the Bible has to say about human suffering - its cause, its purpose and its fast approaching end.

## 1. Personal Sin

**To begin with, suffering often comes to a soul as the direct result of personal sin**; for it is the inevitable harvest of transgression. People may ignore Yahweh's instructions, they may foolishly imagine that His commandments are obsolete and unworthy of attention; but God is not mocked. Whether in **rebellious defiance** or, as often happens, in **total ignorance**, the fact remains - disobedience (sin) always attracts punishment and results in suffering, sorrow or death. The Bible provides ample evidence of this unpalatable fact.

(Deuteronomy 28: 15-20, Leviticus 26: 14-20, Psalm 89: 30-33)

## 2. Parental Sin

**Secondly, suffering, in one form or another, is visited upon children unto the third and fourth generations for sins committed by their parents or grandparents.** Blessings, by way of comparison, fall upon children unto a **thousand generations**; so beware of judging the Most High on this point.

(Exodus 20: 5-6, Exodus 34 :6-7)

## 3. Communal or National Sin

**Thirdly we suffer on a communal basis.** Yahweh assesses mankind as **individuals**, as **families** and as **communities**. And He works to His own standards before He blesses or curses. Communal or national punishments come in the form of war, famine (brought on by freak weather) **disease epidemics** and **earthquakes**.

(Jeremiah 28: 7-9, 29: 18-19, 1 Chronicles 21: 12-14, Psalm 105: 16, Ezekiel 5: 12-17)

## 4. Hidden Reasons

Besides these three causes for human suffering, it often happens that people suffer for no apparent reason or fault of their own, their parents or their nation. In these cases there are **'hidden reasons'** operating behind the scenes; for suffering may be permitted by Yahweh for a **special purpose**. Here is a short list of some lesser known, **'special purposes'** for human suffering:

- a. **To glorify the Most High or to vindicate His Name before the entire heavenly host**, the sufferer bearing in his own body living testimony to the fact that Yahweh's Word is true and Satan's false. Read the book of **Job** where this fact is fully demonstrated. Satan claimed that Job served Yahweh purely for **personal gain** and not because he admired His way of life. Satan insisted that if Yahweh's blessings were removed the patriarch Job would soon give up his faith and obedience. Yahweh disagreed and gave Satan permission to test Job. Job stood the test, a test of **unspeakable suffering!** He proved that Yahweh's assessment of him was correct: that Job wasn't being bribed to be good, but was obedient because he loved his maker.  
Another example of how suffering was allowed for a special reason is found in the story of the man **born blind**. (John 9)  
The **Apostle Paul's** sufferings are also evidence of divine reasons operating behind the scenes.  
(2 Corinthians 12: 7-9, Acts 5: 41, Acts 9: 16, Matthew 24: 9. See point **6** for more details of this fact.)
- b. **To allow one the inestimable privilege of sharing in the sufferings of the Almighty**; the privilege, that is, of knowing and appreciating in a small way what the Creator is experiencing on a Himalayan scale. Bear in mind that the Most High shares the sufferings of the whole human race, just as a loving parent bears the accumulated suffering of his/her whole family.  
(Philippians 3: 10, Colossians 1: 24)
- c. **To kindle or even to rekindle faith**; and to guide a wanderer towards the Almighty.  
(Deuteronomy 4: 30-31)
- d. **To strengthen or test one's faith in Yahweh**.  
(1 Peter 1: 6-7, Psalm 66: 10, Zechariah 13: 9, Isaiah 48: 9-11, Malachi 3: 2-3)
- e. **To produce humility and to root out that monstrous sin - PRIDE**.  
(Deuteronomy 8: 2-3, 2 Chronicles 12: 6-7 & 12)
- f. **To produce, paradoxically enough, patience, endurance, courage and hope**.  
(Romans 5: 3-5, 1 Peter 2: 19-23, James 5: 10-11)
- g. **To perfect OBEDIENCE**, which, next to faith, is the highest form of Christian worship. Messiah suffered in this category.  
(Hebrews 5: 8-9, Hebrews 2: 10, 1 Peter 5: 10)
- h. **To qualify or enable a believer to help others**. This is done by allowing him/her to personally suffer, in order that he/she may in turn effectively

console or rescue others who often suffer without understanding and without hope.

(2 Corinthians 1: 3-5, Acts 14: 22, Philippians 1: 12-14)

5. As a positive, spiritual safeguard against bitterness, loss of faith, or even blasphemy - which is often expressed when the purpose of suffering is not understood - the student should seek to maintain a **CORRECT MENTAL ATTITUDE** towards suffering. On no account should unanswered prayer be taken to mean that Yahweh doesn't exist, or that He is uninterested in human suffering - because He is. The Almighty God of Israel is more concerned with the problem of suffering than the human mind will ever imagine. The truth is that **He often allows suffering to come our way for a SPECIAL PURPOSE; and though we may not always know what that purpose is, we may be sure that it exists. A correct mental attitude** towards suffering is, therefore, of vital importance; for without it, the human mind could rapidly descend into a state of self-pity, despondency and despair.  
(1 Peter 4: 12-19, Romans 8: 35-39, John 16: 33)
  
6. **Suffering, we are privileged to report, is scheduled to come to an end**, and that very shortly. It will have served the purpose, amongst others, of demonstrating to the inhabitants of the whole universe the true character of **good** and **evil**, of **Yahweh's way** and **Satan's way**. Suffering will one day become a thing of the past and will never again be experienced by anyone throughout time and space. This fact is guaranteed by God Himself. Make sure you remember the message of these vital verses.  
(**Revelation 21: 1-4**, Isaiah 35, Especially Verse 10, Zephaniah 3: 16-20)
  
7. When compared to the eternal bliss and glory believers are soon to experience, present suffering is really of small account. It is a passing phase, a tragic side-effect of mankind's decision to doubt Yahweh's Word and to learn by **trial and error**, to learn by **experience** rather than by **divine revelation**. Sufferers should, therefore, never allow their minds - no matter how much they are burdened with pain or sorrow - to forget the truth of these two magnificent verses:

Romans 8: 18: *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall berevealed in us."*

1 Corinthians 2: 9: *"... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."*

The Apostle Paul lived with these facts in mind. Knowledge of them enabled him to go through some of the most harrowing experiences known to mankind. Pause awhile and consider the long catalogue of his sufferings listed in 2 Corinthians 11: 23-33.

8. In view of this vital information, there is obviously a great deal a sufferer can do to alleviate his/her own sorrows, to rise above them and with Yahweh's assistance to **grow in the faith**. Here is a short check list of the positive steps sufferers should take in order to maintain **spiritual balance**, peace of mind, confidence and hope - **in the midst of suffering!**

A. To begin with the sufferer should repent of personal sin and by Yahweh's grace - **forsake the path of disobedience**. This is the very first step in the

process of reducing suffering. It must be taken (See Lessons 1, 2 and 3 about Sin, Repentance and Forgiveness)

- B. If serious physical or mental illness is involved, the sufferer should call for the **elders of the Church** and request **anointing** in the **Name of Yeshua the Messiah**. This divinely appointed course of action still produces the most amazing results.  
(James 5: 13-15)
- C. A balanced diet, regular physical exercise, sufficient sleep and fresh air etc. are also points to watch; for God will hardly heal a person who refuses to follow these fundamental principles of good health.
- D. The sufferer should also personally call upon Yahweh for help and **pray for divine guidance and strength**. These are bound to come. Indeed, nothing is more certain in this world of confusion and despair than the fact that the God of Israel is close at hand to help all those who put their trust in Him  
(2 Samuel 22: 4-7, Psalm 118: 5-6 & 14, Psalm 91: 9-16)

**STUDY, yes study the book of JOB and the PSALMS.** These prophetic passages tell of circumstances of absolute heartache and destitution. Notice how the Psalmist (a type of Christ) rises above his sufferings in Psalm after Psalm to a triumphant end.

- E. The sufferer should **HAVE FAITH IN THE MOST HIGH** and carefully cultivate that faith by **READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES DAILY**. This is beyond any doubt the best safeguard against a mental or spiritual breakdown, in which misunderstood suffering can so easily result. Yes, **HAVE FAITH IN YAHWEH!** He is deeply concerned about you. He loves you much more than you will ever realize. But He doesn't want Satan to say of you that you only obey the commandments for **material** gain; that you do not really admire Yahweh's lifestyle and character but are following Him for what you can get from Him. And so, as in Job's case, Yahweh allows many of His followers to suffer, in order to demonstrate their faith and love for Him.

**You may be certain that those who suffer for this reason will, like Job, receive far more than they have sacrificed. EL SHADDAI will most certainly recompense every soul who has suffered for His Name's sake and Satan will stop accusing Him of bribing the Church into obedience. Maintaining faith in Yahweh amidst suffering is probably the best way of demonstrating one's love for God.**

Are you willing to suffer for Christ's sake?

(Mark 11: 22, 2 Corinthians 5: 7, Habakkuk 3: 17-18)

- F. And finally, do not waste your energies and time **blaming yourself for your plight**. To be sure it may be your own fault. But then, as pointed out, it may not. It may be the fault of **your parents** - three or four generations back. Or it may even be the sins of the **society** in which you live. Alternatively it may be that you are being put through a test similar to **Job**, or **Paul** or even the **Saviour** himself. It matters not **WHY you are suffering**. Your main objective **in suffering** should be to **repent** of and forsake every sin which may be your particular problem. Then **trust** and **obey God**, resting in the knowledge that whatever happens thereafter is in His hands. And remember:

Romans 8: 28: *“All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.”*

We will end this lesson with that thought in mind and pronounce upon all true believers the prescribed blessing for the people of the Most High: this is our prayer for you in His Holy Name.

*“The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:  
The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:  
The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.  
And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”*  
(Numbers 6: 24-27)

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**In The Son's Name For The Father's Glory**

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