

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Unclassified Topics

Human Suffering

Reading:
Revelation Chapter 21

1. Introduction

Suffering comes to the human race in a variety of forms. Physical sickness and pain, mental pressure, rejection, loneliness, war, famine, disease, persecution, natural disasters, poverty etc. No nation or class of people is exempt. Black and white, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, all suffer even though their problems vary. Why is this? Why hasn't man, with his sophisticated knowledge and skill, been able to eradicate suffering? And what is God doing to help? Does the Almighty understand what the human race is going through? Will suffering ever end? And when it is all over will we be able to look back and say: **'suffering did have its benefits and God was just and right to allow it?'** Let us briefly examine this important subject of human suffering.

2. Causes of Suffering

Suffering has many causes. People suffer:

For the sins of their ancestors

Exodus 20: 5: *"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: **for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;**"*

For their own sins

Deuteronomy 28: 15: *"But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*
16: *Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.*
17: *Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store.*
18: *Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*
19: *Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.*
20: *The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest*

thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.”

Psalms 89: 30: *“If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;”*

For Doing Right

2 Timothy 3: 12: *“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”*

3. Suffering Comes To Everyone

No one is exempt from suffering.

All the prophets, all the apostles, indeed all the church suffers in one form or another. Even the Messiah suffered terribly.

The Sufferings of Jesus Christ

Mark 8: 31: *“And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”*

The Saviour was called - **a Man of Sorrows!**

The Sufferings of Paul

Acts 9: 16: *“For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.”* (Paul)

All Believers

Philippians 1: 29: *“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;”*

1 Peter 5: 10: *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”*

4. Suffering has many Benefits

Suffering has many benefits. I list a few:

To Learn Obedience

Hebrews 5: 8: *“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ”*

To Learn Spiritual Lessons

Deuteronomy 8: 2: *“And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*

3: And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

Romans 5: 3: **“And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;**
4: **And patience, experience; and experience, hope:**
5: **And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”**

To Glorify God

John 9: 1: **“And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.**
2: **And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?**
3: **Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”**

To Share / Complete Yahweh's Suffering

Philippians 3: 10: **“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”**
Colossians 1: 24: **“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:”**

To Enable One to Understand/Help Others

2 Corinthians 1: 3: **“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;**
4: **Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**
5: **For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.**
6: **And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.”**

5. Right Attitudes in Suffering

How one reacts to suffering is extremely important. Do not waste time or effort trying to establish who - **if anyone** - is to blame. The real cause of human suffering is usually very difficult to establish. Concentrate on maintaining the **correct attitude** amidst suffering. And above all, **do not abandon your faith in God if your suffering appears to be endless.** If anything, suffering should draw the true believer closer to Yahweh. Is He not suffering inexpressible sorrow at this very moment as He views mankind's myriad miseries?

Bear Suffering Patiently

1 Peter 2: 19: **“For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.**
20: **For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.”**

Get Suffering into Perspective

Philippians 3:
8: **“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,**
9: **And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is**

*through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:
10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and **the fellowship of his sufferings**, being made conformable unto his death;”*

Commit your Soul to the One Who Created You

1 Peter 4: 19: *“Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”*

Study Psalm 69

All sufferers should read the Psalms. There you will find numerous examples of how to react to suffering. One's reaction to suffering is important. Do not grow bitter as many do and blame others or even God for not caring.

6. The Patriarch Job

Few men have suffered as much as Job did. He was a righteous man and served the Most High faithfully. Even God said that Job was perfect in all his ways.

Job 1: 8: *“And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, **a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?**”*

The book of Job goes on to tell of how Job lost **everything**: the love of his wife, the lives of his ten children, all his possessions, his health and the respect of his community. Job's friends even thought that he was suffering because deep within his soul he must be a very wicked man. They were 100% wrong. Job was suffering, unbeknown even to himself, to prove to the universe that he wasn't serving Yahweh for material gain; but because he loved God. Satan had accused the Almighty of favouring Job; by trying to gain the patriarch's worship by bribing him with cattle, goods and material wealth. Of course Satan was totally wrong: but the naïve heavenly host of angels didn't know that. So God allowed Job to suffer the loss of virtually everything - including his health to prove that His servant's faithfulness was genuine and unselfish. And what was Job's reaction to his terrible suffering? He said this of the Almighty:

Job 13: 15: *“**Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.**”*

7. The End of Suffering

Suffering will come to an end one day; and that day is near. We are told in numerous Bible passages that suffering of every kind is scheduled to end. Yes, believe it or not, the day is coming when there will be no more suffering, sickness, pain, sorrow and death.

Revelation 21: 1: *“**And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.***

*2: **And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.***

*3: **And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.***

*4: **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.***

*5: **And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.**”*

8. Rewards

Yahweh will compensate His children a million-fold for all the suffering they have born for His Name's sake. The rewards the saints will receive is beyond imagination! Consider these all-encompassing promises when you are despondent. And remember that they are soon to come true.

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

1 Corinthians 2: 9: ***“But as it is written, 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.”***

Memorize these two verses. They will carry you through times of seemingly unbearable suffering. Millions of believers in past ages have born suffering with great fortitude. Do as they have done and hold fast to your faith: because suffering will end - and that very soon. Yahweh's Word assures us of these facts.

AMEN!

In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.

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