

The Problem with Pain

A Brief Look at Job: Section 3

Introduction

In Psalm 47, the psalmist writes: “Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. For the LORD Most High is awesome.”

- In what ways has God shown Himself to be awesome? Examples can come from the Bible, your own life, or anything else. After you have thought about that for a few minutes, consider this question:
- Would this be a good exercise to do when we are suffering? Why or why not?

Read Job 32:1-22

1. Elihu, a character we know very little about, enters the conversation between Job, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. What are some things you like about his opening words? Is there anything you don't like?

Read Job 33-37

2. In these chapters, Elihu, who is younger than all of Job's other friends, speaks to Job in four discourses, or speeches. Each speech can be summarized in these bullet points:

- God is good, also when He send afflictions upon His God-fearing people
- God is just, because He is the almighty Creator and Lord of all things
- God does not administer justice in accordance with our thinking
- In afflicting the God-fearing, God only has good in mind

So, the advice of Job's three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, was mostly law-oriented: “Job, you're suffering because you have sinned!” The advice of young Elihu, although not perfect, is largely Gospel-oriented: “Job, God is gracious and has a good purpose in mind for this suffering!”

- a. When would a suffering Christian ever need to hear the Law?
- b. When would a suffering Christian ever need to hear the Gospel?

3. In 34:21, Elihu says of the Lord: "His eyes are on the ways of mortals, he sees their every step." How is that both a warning and a comfort to the Christian?

Read Job 37:1-24

4. In his statements in 37:1-13, how does Elihu's explanation of thunder, lightning and rain differ from that of most meteorologists today? What can we learn from Elihu in that matter?

Apply

5. Saint Paul wrote, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28). What "good" might God have in mind when he allows trouble or danger to enter our lives? What will God ultimately use trouble or danger to accomplish?
6. In times of trouble or danger, why is it so important to focus on the promises of God rather than on our own feelings?