

# What Happens When Suffering Takes You By Surprise?

Job 1:1-12

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The fear of suffering is prevalent in everyone's lives. While there is nothing wrong with being safe and avoiding suffering, we need to be prepared for it. We live in a broken world where pain and suffering are inevitable.

## 3 lessons from the suffering of Job:

### **1. Suffering is a surprise**

Job had a reputation for being blameless and upright. God referred to Job as His servant; there was none like him on the earth. Yet, this did not stop unexpected suffering to befall him. Job had lost all his wealth, his 10 children and even his health. Despite this, he ran to God instead of turning away from Him. What prepared Job to handle suffering so well was his faithful walk and reverent fear with and for God (v. 1). Job knew that he was not being punished for his sins. However, if we are suffering from the bitter fruits of our sins, we need to confess and repent from it!

Throughout Job's suffering, we see him worshipping and defending God, lamenting and crying out to God. In our suffering, we need to be like Job and turn to God. In the midst of suffering, we must know that God is for us and not against us. The way to prepare for future sufferings is to deepen our relationship with God. Don't waste seasons of calm in feeding the flesh. Instead, walk with God and grow in your relationship with Him and His people.

### **2. Suffering is a test**

The suffering Job faced was a test of his love for God. Satan accused Job of not truly loving God for who He is, but rather for what He can do for him (vv. 9-11; Job 2:5). Job's response to his suffering showed his true love for God. We will never know if God is enough until He is

all we have. The test of suffering will refine our love for God and help us discover the gift of unshakable faith which can only be received in the storms of life.

### **3. Suffering is in God's hands**

In suffering, the illusion of self-sovereignty bursts like a bubble. *"Hardship confronts us with our tendency to assume that we're in greater control than we really are, and because we think we are, we take way more credit for the good things in our lives than we should."* - Paul Tripp. While it seemed that Job's life was completely out of control, it was not so (v. 12). God had set a boundary for how much Satan could do to Job; He was in full control. As rebellious as Satan is, he is powerless against the sovereign God. Second guessing during suffering adds salt to your wounds. It is good news that everything is in the hands of God; He is the only one that is capable of holding all things together (Col. 1:17). Rejoice in the fact that our lives are in God's hand! In God's hand, evil is redeemed for good. Satan's plan to derail Job from worshipping God backfired spectacularly. Even after losing everything, Job's love for God was refined and he continued to worship God.

Job's suffering is a love story of him and God. This story points us to the love story of Jesus and us. While suffering came as a surprise to Job, Christ chose the way of suffering and death. While Job was tested, so was Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Christ went through all of that for us; to save us through His death on the cross. The act of tragic injustice to the Son of man was the means of salvation for mankind. Through the cross, we can be assured that our suffering is

not in vain. Let the agony from our suffering become worship unto God (Job 1:21)!