

GREATEST COMBACKS
PART 6: JOB, COMING BACK FROM SUFFERING (3 OF 3 WEEKENDS)
Book of Job
Pastor Daniel Hahn
October 27/28, 2018

MESSAGE NOTES

What suffering can do:

1. Suffering can set us up for an encounter with God.

This is the terrain where God doesn't always make sense of our sad or bland lives, our calamities and banalities, but who keeps meeting us in the thick and thin of those lives. — Mark Buchanan, *The Holy Wild*

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

— Isaiah 55:8 – 9

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor?

— Romans 11:33 – 34

2. Suffering can humble us to the point of abandoned trust in the face of unanswered questions.

Therefore I will not weary myself with seeking beyond what God wants me to know. Instead I will abide in peace with the understanding God has given me, and I will let this occupy my mind. If we are to see properly, we must pluck out of our eyes our own presumption. If we gaze too long at the sun, we go blind; in this manner, I think, does pride blind many of us who want to know too much. — Catherine of Genoa

3. Suffering can actually strengthen our faith, our character, and our hope.

... we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. — Romans 5:3 – 4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. — James 1:2 – 4

According to Scripture God is altogether good and is always out for our good, even when we don't understand it. We never know why anything happens to us. All these things are beyond our grasp. But one day we will understand. All the judgments of God will be clearly fair. Jesus experienced suffering. He understands. God's goodness isn't determined by my judgment. My disappointments with God tell about me, not Him.

— James Bryan Smith, *The Good and Beautiful God*

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the skies. Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, Your justice like the great deep. You, Lord, preserve both people and animals. How priceless is Your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. They feast on the abundance of Your house; You give them drink from Your river of delights. For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.

— Psalm 36:5 – 9

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Take some time to review Job's story as covered in our past few weekends at ENCOUNTER.
- Was there something in particular that impacted you from this last weekend?
- Does God ever rebuke Job for pouring out his heart and his emotions in the midst of his suffering? What does this tell us about God's relationship with us?
- Can you share about a time when you felt angry with God for something? What was the bottom line of those feelings, for instance, maybe you felt that God was unjust or uncaring?
- What was the main error in Job's thinking, according to God? How have you seen that same error expressed by people today?
- In chapter 38, God asks Job a series of questions that highlight God's attentive care in creating and maintaining the universe. How does Psalm 8 relate to Job 38?
- How do you personally see God's divine power displayed in creation?
- Compare Job 38:41 to the words of Jesus in Luke 12:24. How do the words of Jesus compare to God's response in Job 38? Are there particular ways in which it has been hard for you to hold on to the reality of God's love and care for you or others?
- God seems to turn our thoughts to a much wider perspective in the midst of our suffering. How might that be helpful?
- In light of our study, how might you respond to someone who says, "I can't believe in or love a God who would allow people to suffer."
- What good can come of suffering? How does 1 Peter 1:6-7 weigh in on that?
- This week, take some time to reflect on what good may have come from some of your own suffering.