

JESUS: OUR FELLOW SUFFERER

1. Suffering - The Human Lot

A. Everyone has a story to tell about their suffering:

1. From nature: illness, injury, pain, death.
2. From others: unkindness, abuse, injustice.
3. From own actions: mistakes, sin.

B. Why does suffering exist?

1. It is directly or indirectly related to sin and its consequences.
2. In creation, God repeatedly “saw that it was good.”
3. It is the entrance of sin into the world **by man** that brings death and ruin. It is misused free will which leads to much of the suffering that exists.

C. Unanswerable “whys” that tend to reflect upon God:

1. Why were unalterable changes made in the world because of sin?
2. Why does Satan exist? Why did God let him into the garden to tempt Eve?
3. People end up blaming God for **allowing** (if not causing) suffering to exist. “A good God wouldn’t let people suffer.”

2. God And Suffering

A. There is a point at which “why” becomes a moot issue. What is important is what **is** and how we deal with it.

B. God has done much to **prevent, alleviate** suffering.

1. Given laws which, if followed, would solve most problems.
2. Established civil government which, if it fulfills its mission, would deal with law-breakers.
3. Given intelligence, freedom to man to manipulate his environment so that suffering is lessened: medical technology, agricultural advancements, etc.

4. Provided family structure to lend support, comfort, education, etc.
 5. Spiritual blessings in Christ which allow us to put suffering in proper context and mature spiritually by enduring trials and tribulations.
- C. God is grieved by the suffering that exists upon the earth. It is not true to say that God doesn't exist or doesn't care about man because suffering exists. **But all of this is not enough; God had to do something more in order to gain our trust.**

3. God's Participation In Our Suffering - Heb 2:10-18

- A. Jesus - Made perfect through suffering - 2:10-13.
1. Author (NKJ; NAS) - Pioneer, trail-blazer, a military leader who forges ahead and makes a way for the troops to follow.
 2. Jesus was willing not only to condescend to our level of existence but participated in our suffering to the fullest degree. He suffers with us as brethren.
- B. Jesus - Nullified Satan's power over death through death - 2:14-6.
1. Jesus did not remove physical death, but He alleviated that which makes death so fearful - sin.
 2. Death is one of those unalterable facts of human existence; it will not change.
 3. But it is not an experience with which God is personally unfamiliar. Jesus **died**.
- C. Jesus - Our merciful and faithful high priest - 2:17-18.
1. We have confidence that Jesus understands our pain, grief, frustration, etc.
 2. This bridges the gulf between earthly life and heavenly existence.
 3. Our confidence is firmly rooted in Christ:
 - a. "I will put my trust in Him" - Heb 2:13.
 - b. "Come boldly to the throne of grace" - Heb 4:14-16.
 - c. "Run with endurance, looking to Jesus" - Heb 12:1-2.