



John's Schedule

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## Seeing God Through Pain



Part 2 (950730PM)

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Somewhere out in our world someone just gave up the fight for food. They starved to death, just like 17 million do each year, that is almost 60 thousand a day, or 2,500 each hour, or 41 each minute - its almost one a second. And that is suffering. And God knows everyone of them, and He has an answer for all who wonder why. The answer is not why but what. Not why does He let it continue but what is my response to be!

Refer to Acts 16. Remember those events God used, that led to the founding of the church that received Paul's letter to the Philippians. Again, it is centered around a jail...

### ❖ POINT ONE: THE INDEFLECTABLE LOYALTY OF PAUL

**Acts 20:24** "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." (NKJV)

### ❖ POINT TWO: THE INVALUABLE LESSONS OF PAIN

**Philippians 4:11-13** "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (NKJV)

**The Lord's purpose for pain is that suffering for God enables us to experience:**

1. *The Song Giving Power of God Acts 16*

Philippian Jail [Psalm 142]

2. *The Sight giving Power of God*

- Cover Job 1-2
- **Job 42:5-6** "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes." (NKJV)

### THE PAIN

**Acts 16:12-40** = Paul got squished, he is suffering. Have you ever been in a car accident? Think of a sustained beating with sticks by a skilled executioner and beater [deep cuts, infection, fever, cramps, sore back, joints, stiffness, lack of sleep].

Reflections on Personal Pain:

- Pain should not stop us, only reorient our hearts with Heaven our eternal home.
- Hatred should not paralyze us, but refocus us on God the source of true love.
- Adversity shouldn't surprise us, but remind us of who we are following, Jesus the man of sorrows.

### THE PLAN

**Acts 17:1; 1 Thess. 3:4**; accept suffering from God. Paul walks 97 miles [Philippi to Amphipolis is 30 miles, to Apollonia is 30 miles, and to Thessalonica is 37 miles] in a weakened state from pain, blood loss and stiffness. He has welts, ugly purple scars

and the memories of that mob filled with rage coming on him in a fury. He goes to Thessalonica hot and dusty. It took three to four days at 3 mph to get there. Now, in the city he goes to the public baths, disrobes and the rumors start. Who but a dangerous criminal or runaway slave would have had such a severe beating?

Reflections on God's Plan:

- God has a **PURPOSE**, He never moves without purpose or plan.
- God has the **PERSPECTIVE**, He sees things from the perspective of eternity.
- God has a **PROGRAM**, says suffering is part of the plan and not to be avoided.

## THE PURPOSE

God takes Job on a divinely guided tour of pain. Along the way He teaches him and at the end He never blames Satan, apologizes to Job for all the pain he had to endure, nor praises his friends for their counsel. Job 1-2, 42

First, the Lord wanted Job to see the Big Picture Job 1-2

- 1) Satan has power over [nations 1:13-17](#)
- 2) Satan has power over [nature 1:16-19](#)
- 3) Satan has power over natural [man 2:7](#)

Next the Lord wanted Job to be able to see HIM as the All Sufficient God who is enough clearly Job 42.

Job learned some powerful truths in affliction:

- WE ARE IN A WAR! He became more aware of the cosmological battle all around him.
- WE ARE INFECTED WITH SIN! He became more aware of his own sin within him. [4:7-9]
- WE ARE NOT HERE LONG! He became aware of the brevity of life. [7:1, 6-9]
- WE MUST BE REFINED! He became aware of the refining hand of God in trials. [23:10]
- WE MUST DEPEND ON GOD! Job was introduced to God as El Shaddai [31 of 48 times in OT is here], literally "The God who is enough." [22:26]
- WE MUST TRUST GOD AT THE CONTROLS! God is bigger than we can comprehend, all the Universe reflects His handiwork. Note Job 38-39:
- Geology [Job 38:4-6](#)
- Rotation [Job 38:14](#)
- Oceanography [Job 38:16](#) [toxic hot springs at volcanic vents, two miles down in the dark ocean depths]
- Astrophysics [Job 38:19](#) [99% of the mass of the Universe is dark matter we don't even know what it is]
- Meteorology [Job 38:22, 25](#)
- Astronomy [Job 38:31](#) gravity
- Hydrology [Job 38:34](#)
- Zoology [Job 38:39](#)
- Ornithology [Job 39:26-30](#) migratory navigation not even closely imitated until satellite navigation, yet God built it into fish, birds and even insects!

Remember the lessons of Psalm 119. This longest chapter in God's Word says God uses Affliction purposefully.

## HOW DOES GOD USE AFFLICTION IN OUR LIVES?

- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S WORD MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:50](#) This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life. (NKJV)
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S PATH MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:67](#) Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word. (NKJV)
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S PLAN MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:71](#) It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes. (NKJV)
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:75](#) I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are right, And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. (NKJV)
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S SOURCE OF HOPE MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:92](#) Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. (NKJV) **Note, just because the technology exists** [as in Prozac, psycho-therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.] doesn't mean it is right! What did David, and the holy prophets of old do in times of deepest depression? Prior to medication and thera-pists there was the God who said:
  - I will bring you back with my Word [Psalm 119:25-32](#),
  - I will restore your soul [Psalm 23:3](#),
  - I will make you whole [Psalm 19:7-14](#).
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S OFFER OF REVIVAL MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:107](#) I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your word. (NKJV)
- AFFLICTION MAKES US SEE GOD'S ABILITY TO RESCUE US MORE CLEARLY [Psalm 119:153](#) Consider my affliction and deliver me, For I do not forget Your law. (NKJV)

Finally, in the late Autumn of life sits the Apostle who dominates the early years of the church. Here awaiting execution in this most undesirable spot, is Saint Paul. Look at his last words from this very spot... [II Timothy 4:6-8](#) For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (KJV)

How did he make through so many terrible situations? He had learned those six secrets we would do well to hear and learn:

- *His Contentment was from God* For I am now ready to be offered
- *His Confidence was in God* and the time of my departure is at hand
- *His Courage was for God* I have fought a good fight
- *His Faithfulness was to God* I have finished my course

- *His Fidelity was of God* I have kept the faith
- *His Focus was on God* Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing

Dr. Paul Brand spent 70 years of life living around pain and suffering wrote a magnificent book we all would do well to read, *Pain the Gift* no one wants. His theme is we try to get rid of pain when in reality it is a blessing from God.

## ARE YOU SEEING THE LORD'S PURPOSE FOR PAIN?

### 1. The Song Giving Power of God Acts 16

### 2. The Sight giving Power of God

### 3. The Purifying Power of God

### 4. The Self-sacrificing Power of God [love]

- [Luke 14:26](#) "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. (NKJV)
- [Revelation 2:4](#) "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. (NKJV)

### 5. The Faith Building Power of God [faith] Gen 22

[Romans 4:13-25](#) For the promise that he would be the heir of the world [was] not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if those who are of the law [are] heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law [there is] no transgression. 16 Therefore [it is] of faith that [it might be] according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed -- God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. (NKJV)

### 6. The Hoping Power of God

- [Romans 8:18-24](#) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected [it] in hope: 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only [that,] but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? (NKJV)
- [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#) Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward [man] is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen [are] temporary, but the things which are not seen [are] eternal. (NKJV)
- [2 Corinthians 5:1-5](#) For we know that if our earthly house, [this] tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in [this] tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing [is] God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (NKJV)

### 7. The Comforting Power of God

- [2 Corinthians 1:4](#) who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (NKJV)
- [Hebrews 2:18](#) For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. (NKJV)
- [Hebrews 4:14-16](#) Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (NKJV)

### 8. The Humbling Power of God

[2 Corinthians 12:9-10](#) And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore

I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (NKJV)

### 9. The Resisting Power of God

[Hebrews 11:24-26](#) By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup> choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup> esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. (NKJV)

### 10. The Enduring Power of God [patience]

[James 1:2-4](#) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (NKJV)

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