

Hebrews 2.10

Perfected By Suffering

One of the most pressing questions of this life is “Why does this suffering occur?” Why does my loved one have cancer? Why a pandemic? Why did this one die? Why has this trial come upon me?... the list could go on and on. But hidden here in Hebrews 2 is a gem of such wondrous beauty and power, a key perspective that God gives us to aid with this understanding. I do not say that I can answer the specific questions of why this exact thing, but I will say that if we can gain some insight into suffering in general, we might learn to trust God more when the specific questions of our own sufferings press us close.

This is because our sufferings are but small mirrors of insight into the sufferings of Jesus on our behalf. He has born all things and endured all things so it is fitting that we pause to consider that the writer of Hebrews tells us that the sufferings of Christ actually *perfected Him*! There is so much there that we can never fully understand, but there is also much here that we MUST

understand. And it begins with a question about something that we might not think is connected. But I think it shows us the way to actually put it into a right perspective. So first, a small non-sequitur that is actually a fundamental concept... our relationship to authority.

I. OBEDIENCE AND AUTHORITY

- a. We are made to exercise dominion
 - i. Not total, but under God. We are all, always under authority. This understanding on the part of the Roman Centurion amazed Jesus –

Matthew 8.9

- ii. Knowing that your own authority has a source greater than yourself empowers it.

John 12.49-50

iii. This truth marked Jesus's whole ministry

Matthew 7.9

b. The lack of proper perspective on this fact is part of the consequence of the fall

2 Peter 2.9-11

c. It was a key element OF the fall - the serpent questioned and brought Eve to question the truth AND the authority of God. –

i. Has God Said?

ii. You will become like Him

iii. In short - the fall was an attempt to leave our place under the authority of God

d. This struggle defines our lives

Joseph Ton - "I would describe the human condition upon the earth as a delicate balance between being in possession of authority and being in submission to authority. On the one

hand, man was created with capacity to rule and to exercise authority. On the other hand, man was intended to live under the authority of God, to submit to Him, and to obey Him. In other words, man has to exercise his authority under the authority of God. In the end, the test of his capacity to rule is his capacity to obey. However, it is difficult to feel empowered with authority and still gladly submit to the authority of another. Man's temptation is to exercise his authority independently, without recognizing God's absolute authority.

When Christ entered the human condition, He came face to face with this human difficulty of keeping the balance between having authority and still being totally dependent upon the Father and totally obedient to the Father."

e. Jesus was Perfected by the suffering he endured as He won this struggle.

f. This learning, at least in part, is how He was able to save us.

Isaiah 53.11

By His knowledge He justifies the many

II. JESUS GREW

- a. He grew in all things, this is also to be applied in the area of His suffering.

Luke 2.52

- b. He acquired knowledge that could be obtained in no other way
 - i. Learned Obedience

Hebrews 5.8

He was still growing. Just as we are. Life is growth. You are either growing or dying. The process of Jesus growing did not stop with His physical maturity. He continued to learn the will of God and to walk in it -

ii. Follows the Father

John 5.19

does whatever He sees the Father doing

iii. He did everything He did UNDER God's authority

1. He Spoke under authority –

John 14.10

2. The works were done by God's authority

3. The Spirit speaks under authority

John 16.13

4. Jesus Has been given authority to judge the earth –

John 5.25-26

iv. He was made like us

1. Second Adam
2. High Priest - intermediary between man and God
3. The great Example, Pathfinder, Way-maker, Pioneer...
 - a. Showed us how to come to God
 - b. Taught us how to endure our sufferings

v. This made Him Sympathetic to us in all our sufferings –

Hebrews 4.15

c. This allows Him to give us aid in whatever we are facing –

Hebrews 2.18

d. Fix your eyes upon Him –

i. He Endured hostility from Sinners

Hebrew 12.1-3

e. God trains all his children in the same manner

Hebrews 12.5

i. All legitimate children suffer

Hebrews 12.8

ii. This shapes and trains us to share in His holiness –

Hebrews 12.10

Remember that here in our main verse of Hebrews 2.10, it was deemed to be appropriate, fitting that this method made Christ our complete head...

Again, Joseph Ton ~

"the Father considered suffering to be the appropriate method by which He would perfect first His Only Begotten Son and then all of the others for whom His Son would become the Example! For this reason suffering, persecution and martyrdom are the fated tragedies of a miserable earthly existence; they are clear indications that one is in God's "gymnasium" (12.10 - trained as in a gymnasium) in the place where God is forming His child into His own image of holiness and righteousness." –

- f. He aids us by His perfect knowledge and conquest of suffering to endure our own...
 - i. He endured for the "Joy Set Before Him"
 1. Hope
 2. Promise
 3. The presence of God awaits
 4. We will be made fit for that presence once we too are perfected.

ii. Sends angels to help

Hebrews 1.14

iii. He is able to sympathize

Hebrews 4.15 – 16

g. Therefore, approach the throne with confidence
(4.16)