

**WHY DO THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER? (1)**  
**Psalm 73:1-14**

**Introduction:**

1. Believers wonder “Why do good people suffer so much while the wicked have it so easy?”
2. The Psalmist struggled with this question a thousand years before Christ.
3. Unbelievers regard the problem of suffering as the strongest argument against the existence of God.
  - a. If there is a God and He is good, why does He allow suffering?
  - b. If He has the power to prevent it and does not, then He is not good.
  - c. If He cannot prevent suffering, then He is not God.
4. Why is there so much suffering in the world?

**Discussion:**

- I. THERE ARE MANY REASONS ALL PEOPLE SUFFER.
  - A. We suffer because of our own sins (Gal. 6:7).
    1. The AIDs epidemic is spread mainly by illicit sex and drug use.
    2. In the US, more than 400,000 tobacco users die every year.
    3. Drinkers of alcohol suffer many related illnesses, cause many accidents, and account for 70 % of violent crimes.
  - B. We suffer because of the sins of others.
    1. 25,000 are killed or crippled annually by drunken drivers.
    2. Children often suffer because of their parents’ use of drugs.
  - C. We suffer because we make the wrong choices.
    1. God did not create robots, but gave us free will.
    2. Since Eden, Satan has tempted man to do wrong.
  - D. We suffer when we go contrary to natural law.
    1. God’s universe operates according to nature laws.
    2. If one jumps from a tall building, the result is inevitable.
    3. If one jumps into deep water and cannot swim, he will drown.
    4. Many illnesses come because we don’t follow rules of health.

- E. All are subject to suffering because we live in a world where sin, disease and death are common.**
  - 1. This is a consequence of Adam's sin in Eden (Gen. 3).**
  - 2. Life on earth is uncertain: "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7).**
  - 3. Death will come to every human being (Heb. 9:27).**
  
- F. There are additional reasons the righteous suffer.**
  - 1. Suffering is "soul-making."**
  - 2. Dealing with adversity builds strength and character (Heb. 5:8).**
  - 3. God chastens us as a loving Father (Heb. 12:5-12).**
  - 4. Christians suffer because they are different from the world (Jno. 15:20; Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 5:10-12).**

## **II. THE BOOK OF JOB DEALS WITH HUMAN SUFFERING.**

- A. Job does not deal with all human suffering.**
  - 1. Job was a test case to answer the question, "Will a man serve God even if there is no hope of material blessings?"**
  - 2. Job was a real person who once lived on the earth.**
    - a. He was a righteous man like Noah and Daniel (Ezek. 14:14, 20).**
    - b. James used Job as an example of endurance (Jas. 5:11).**
  
- B. Job was an outstanding man in every way.**
  - 1. He was righteous: "He was blameless and upright and one who feared God and shunned evil" (Job 1:1).**
  - 2. He respected God's original law of marriage (Job 2:9; Gen. 2:18-24; Matt. 19:3-9).**
  - 3. He was religious:**
    - a. He offered sacrifices for his family (Job 1:5).**
    - b. He feared God even when he had lost all (Job 2:10).**
    - c. Though he questioned God, he did not repudiate him.**
  
  - 4. He was rich: "He was the greatest of all the people of the East" (Job 1:3).**

## **III. WHY DID JOB SUFFER?**

- A. Satan said Job feared God because God blessed him (Job 1:8-12).**
- 1. God allowed Satan to test him, but not to afflict him personally.**
  - 2. Job was never aware he was a test case.**
  - 3. In one day, all Job's livestock were stolen or killed, his servants and children were also killed (Job 1:13-21).**
  - 4. Job said: "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job. 1:21).**
  - 5. "In all this, Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong" (Job 1:22).**
- B. Satan then suggested that Job was faithful because he had not been afflicted in his person (Job 2:1-9).**
- 1. Job was covered in boils and sat in the ash heap.**
  - 2. Job wife's admonished, "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9, 10).**
- C. Job's friends came to visit him (Job 2:11-13).**
- 1. They sat amazed before him for seven days.**
  - 2. They each made a series of speeches.**
  - 3. The substance of their argument was: sin causes suffering; the greater the sin, the greater the suffering.**
  - 4. They called on Job to repent; he maintained innocence.**
- D. At last the Lord spoke ( chapters 38-41).**
- 1. He did not specifically address Job's suffering nor tell him why he was suffering.**
  - 2. He showed Job His greatness, wisdom, and power in His creation.**
  - 3. "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him (Rom. 11:34,35; Isa. 40:13, 14).**
  - 4. God blessed Job greatly in the end.**

**Conclusion:**

- 1. Suffering may be self-inflicted by sinful living, but it is not necessarily a result of sin or punishment for it.**
- 2. We may never understand in this life why certain things happen to us.**
- 3. We should use suffering to increase our faith, hope and confidence in God.**
- 4. If we blame anyone, blame Satan for he is back of it all.**
- 5. Apart from what God has revealed we can never fathom His mind or will.**
- 6. No matter how great our suffering on earth, it will seem as nothing when we get to Heaven (Rom. 8:18).**

