



THE STORY OF
Everything
LUKE 24:27

When Glenn Chambers was boarding the Avianca flight from Miami to Quito, Ecuador, his dream of becoming a missionary was about to be realized. During his layover in Miami, Glenn found a piece of scrap paper from a magazine which contained the single word “Why?” In a hurry and preoccupied, he scribbled a note to his mother around the word, put it in an envelope and mailed it to his mother.

That night, his flight crashed into a mountain in Colombia and everyone aboard the DC-4 was killed. Weeks later, when his letter arrived, his mother opened it with his note surrounding the one word that screamed at her: “Why?”

This question is the one that torments every sufferer. Why me? Why did this have to happen? And ultimately, people ask, “Why me God?” The question of “Why” haunts people so that they wonder if God is really for them. How can I believe that God loves me and cares about me when I suffer?

Of all the hard questions, “Why?” is the most difficult to wrestle with. Yet this is precisely what Job 19 is all about. Job honestly wrestles with God, with his beliefs, and with his friends. Yet in the wrestling, Job comes to a surprising insight.

Job, you see, was a rich man. He was born and lived around the time of Abraham. His friends seem to have had connections to Abraham and his family. They had come to support Job after he had lost almost everything – his children, his wealth, and his prestige. All that remained was his wife who told him to curse God and die and friends who sat with him for a week in silence before they began to try and ‘help’ Job.

The way his friends try to ‘help’ Job is that they begin to probe into his life. Job’s friends believe that the universe works a lot like a computer program – whatever you input will bring about the same kind of output. Garbage in, garbage out. Job’s friends see the universe operates on the principle of karma – you get what you deserve. Therefore, they conclude, Job must have some terrible, secret sin that he is hiding for him to be punished with such excruciatingly awful suffering.

But Job pleads his case. He can’t understand why God treats him like a sinner (vv. 1-12). If the suffering wasn’t bad enough, his friends are causing greater grief by telling him he is getting what he deserves. Their self-righteousness makes Job question if God is against him (vv. 1-6). He feels like he is being mugged and is crying out “Violence!” only to be met with silence (v. 7). And his experience is like a city that has been surrounded by an army that has cut off all supplies.

Further, Job doesn’t understand why he feels like God is cutting him off (vv. 13-20). Every relationship now brings him grief and leaves him alone. His brothers don’t want anything to do



THE STORY OF
Everything
LUKE 24:27

with him. His relatives and friends forget him. His servants find him disgusting. Even his wife finds him repulsive.

This is the experience of suffering. Feeling like God is against you. Feeling isolated and alone. Wondering if there is any hope in the world.

And yet, Job begins with a deep longing that becomes a confident hope. What gives Job hope in the face of unspeakable suffering?

1. Don't Doubt in the Dark what You've Learned in the Light (vv. 21-24)

When we are in the darkness of suffering, we cannot see clearly. We wonder why things are so terrible. We feel alone. Job felt this way. He felt alienated, cut off, as though no one understood him at all – not even God. For Job, he cries out for mercy because he feels like the hand of God has touched him.

But has his suffering come from the hand of God? We have a little window at the beginning of this book, and it is not the Lord whose hand has touched Job. In chapters 1&2, Satan, the adversary, has come to God to make accusation against Job: The only reason Job worships God is due to God's hand of protection. So Satan tells the Lord to stretch out his hand against Job. But the Lord does not stretch out his hand; twice he says that Job is in Satan's hand (1:11-12; 2:5-6). What Job cannot see, we can. We know it is not God who is against him.

Yet Job holds out hope that God is good. He holds on to the belief that he will be proven innocent of secret sin. And in the darkness of his friends accusing him, saying that he is getting what he deserves, Job cries out that he be defended. If he dies, his friends will malign his reputation, accusing him of suffering for secret sins. Their words break him to pieces (v. 2), but he wants his words to be recorded so that no one will forget (v. 23). He wants people to know that he didn't suffer because of sin. He wants his defense to be written down – etched on stone! He doesn't want his tombstone to say, "Here lies Job, wretched sinner who got what he deserved." Even his warning for judgment at the end of this chapter suggests that there is more going on than Job wanting his name to be defended. The character of God is at stake! How can God be so evil?

When we suffer, there is so much that comes against us. Friends may accuse. Satan will roar like a lion. Suffering will threaten everything we believe. The darkness will hide the light of God's face. Yet God is unchanging. Suffering is not the time to change what you think about who God is. Rather, what you have learned in the good moments of life is the truth that you need to hold on to when life is bleak.



THE STORY OF
Everything
LUKE 24:27

And for those of us who are enjoying the good moments of life, the time to know God is now. Today is the opportunity to know him, learn about his character, and depend upon him. The best time to plan for a disaster is not in the midst of it, but beforehand. When you prepare in the light, it will strengthen you when the dark days come.

2. Live by Faith to Enhance your Sight

But Job has more than a wish. While in v. 23 he was crying out with longing (“Oh that”), he now looks by faith to something more certain (“For I know”). There is a truth that Job holds on to in these dark days. There is something he sees in the future.

What does Job know and see? He knows and sees two things. First, he knows he has a Redeemer. A redeemer was someone, usually a relative, who would stand and defend you when you were wronged. If your property was threatened, they would protect it. If you had no children, you would be cared for and provided for in old age. If someone murdered you, he would ensure that your murderer received justice. In a few weeks we will see how the story of Ruth is about a Redeemer who cares for Ruth as a widow. The reason they would defend you is that they were bound to you by covenant.

What Job is confident in is that he has a Redeemer who lives – but there is something about this Redeemer that is better than words etched on stone. This Redeemer is more permanent than words on stone. How can that be?

This Redeemer lives...forever. And this Redeemer will stand on his grave, defending Job’s integrity and defending the truth that Job had a right relationship with God. And the only way Job can have this kind of defense forever is if that defender is God himself. And Job is trusting that God will defend him because he is bound to God and God to him by covenant. And the covenant-keeping God is more sure and solid and faithful than words etched in stone.

But the second thing Job knows and sees is that in the end he will see his Redeemer God with his own eyes. Three times in vv. 26-27 he says that he will see God. He has a right relationship with God, and he will see God. In spite of the accusations of his friends, Job looks and sees that God is not a moral monster who is out to destroy him. No, God will defend him. God is for him. Though everything doesn’t make sense, he will hold on to the truth of the light in the darkness of the night of his suffering and faith will see what his eyes cannot. He can trust God because God is his defense, and God is good.

How can we believe this? The reason we can trust that God is good in the face of hardships, trials, and disappointments is due to the reality that there was a man who suffered innocently. He did no wrong. Yet all of hell let loose on him, accusing him falsely, bringing about all of hell’s awful suffering so that he experienced a terrible death he did not deserve. But after three days,



THE STORY OF
Everything
LUKE 24:27

God defended him, raising him up from the dead, emptying the tomb and declaring, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him.” And his grave remains empty.

This is the hope of Easter. The sufferings of this life sting. The devils of this world threaten to undo us. But we will not fear, for God is our defense. When you trust in him, he will stand on your grave and say, “This is my son, whom I love.” He is our Redeemer. And in the face of the questions of life, especially the question, “Why am I suffering?” we have a Redeemer who lives.