



The Common Thread

*"The Complexities of
Justice and Suffering"*

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Job 1:2-3 ESV - "There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east."

Question #1: Is God Just?

Matthew 5:44-45 ESV - "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

Tim Keller: If you have a God who is big and powerful enough to be mad at for not stopping suffering, then you also have a God who is big and powerful enough to have good reasons for having not stopped it that you haven't thought of.

Question #2: Why Is There Suffering In the World?

Mystery is not just something God has created to confuse or frustrate us. This is about our nature vs. His.

The friends may have been trying to help Job, but they didn't—and they were wrong about their certainties about God. We shouldn't be so certain in the way we treat the suffering and blessing of the people in the world and near us.

Observations About God's Ways and Nature

1. God didn't send the suffering... the Accuser did. God did allow it, but He was also right about Job's ultimate end being for his good.
2. God did not give the Accuser the ultimate right to even inflict the suffering on man. Adam and Eve did. The possibility of suffering was allowed by us, though again, God did give us the right to choose. A state of suffering was not God's original and best intention for us—we have chosen it.
3. God made it clear that Job's suffering was not divine punishment for wrongs committed, so if we define justice only by our own arbitrary rubric of cause-effect for good-bad committed, we're not judging as God judges.
4. Though He corrected him, God honored Job's struggle, honesty, and prayer.
5. In the end, God not only restored, but also disproportionately blessed.