

WHY DO PEOPLE SUFFER?

TALK TOGETHER

SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED TODAY. SOMETHING AWFUL, HORRIBLE AND SAD TOOK PLACE ON OUR PLANET, AND MANY PEOPLE WERE HURT. ON DAYS LIKE TODAY, IT'S EASY TO WONDER, "IF GOD IS GOOD, WHY DID HE LET SOMETHING REALLY BAD HAPPEN?"

Right now, you likely feel lots of different feelings. You may feel a sadness deeper and wider than the largest ocean. Or maybe you feel anger that threatens to spurt out of you like lava from a mighty volcano. Perhaps you feel fear, like a shadow about to be swallowed by a setting sun. It's even possible you feel all of these feelings, and more. What are you feeling right now?

(Take a moment for your child to share their feelings with you.)

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, people have lived in a world where sin affects everything. Sin separates us from God. Sin changes the way we think, the words we speak and even the things we do. Because of sin, we see anger, hurt, sadness and evil around us. Sin causes broken relationships, sickness, suffering and even death.

God does not cause sin. He created a perfect world where sin did not exist. But He also gave humans free will. He wanted us to choose to love Him and follow Him. Sadly, Adam and Eve choose to sin, and all of humanity has dealt with the consequences since that day.

While we know suffering exists on Earth because of sin, sometimes we don't know why good people get hurt. The Bible tells us about a very good man who suffered greatly and didn't know why.



TALK TOGETHER

A long time ago, in a land called Uz, there lived a man named Job. He loved God and served Him. But one day, multiple tragedies turned Job's life upside down. That day his animals and servants died, a massive windstorm killed his children and his money was gone. After that, Job became very sick with painful sores. Job suffered greatly, and Job grieved.

Grieving is not wrong; it's a way we can express the pain we feel inside. Sometimes that looks like crying. Other times it looks like quietly holding your mom or dad's hand. It may even look like writing a poem or prayer to God about the hurt you are experiencing. **(Ask your child how they would like to grieve for the people who were hurt today.)**

Despite everything that happened to him, Job did not say bad things about God or turn away from Him. He didn't understand why God would allow these terrible things to happen, **but Job knew God was still God.** Job was not perfect. He made mistakes. **But during his suffering, Job did not stop believing God was in control.**

Throughout Job's journey of suffering, he looked for comfort during his trials. He tried to find comfort from his friends and even from his bed. But none of those things truly comforted his heart during his suffering. Finally, Job realized God was the only One who could understand his pain and comfort his heart. **Let's read Job 42:1-6 together.**

THEN JOB ANSWERED THE LORD AND SAID: 'I KNOW THAT YOU CAN DO ALL THINGS, AND THAT NO PURPOSE OF YOURS CAN BE THWARTED. 'WHO IS THIS THAT HIDES COUNSEL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE?' THEREFORE I HAVE UTTERED WHAT I DID NOT UNDERSTAND, THINGS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME, WHICH I DID NOT KNOW. 'HEAR, AND I WILL SPEAK; I WILL QUESTION YOU, AND YOU MAKE IT KNOWN TO ME.' I HAD HEARD OF YOU BY THE HEARING OF THE EAR, BUT NOW MY EYE SEES YOU; THEREFORE I DESPISE MYSELF, AND REPENT IN DUST AND ASHES.'

JOB 42:1-6



TALK TOGETHER

In verse 6, when Job says he repents, that word has a deeper meaning in Hebrew. It also means comfort. Job found true comfort in the arms of God. We can find comfort from God too. **(Take a moment to ask God to comfort your hurting hearts.)**

One day followers of Jesus will live in a perfect world without sin and death — where God lives with us and all things are new. But what do we do until then?

We can weep with those who are weeping (Romans 12:15). When we see or hear things that make us sad, it's OK to cry. Psalm 147:3 says: He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Let's take time to call out to God and pray for the hurting families. **(Take a moment to pray for the people hurt today.)**

Remember, despite all of Job's suffering here on Earth, God did not forget Job. **He will not forget you, or any of His children, either** (Hebrews 13:5b). Today, grieve with loved ones, pray for those who suffer and reach out to your heavenly Father for comfort. **He will never leave you.**

* MORE TO EXPLORE

OT-NT CONNECTION

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, suffering has been part of humanity's reality. In Romans, Paul talks about how death entered the world through one man, but so did life! **Read Romans 5:12-21.**

- Why is there suffering in this world? (Hint: It's because of an action that took place in the garden of Eden.)
- Will people who are saved by Jesus always experience suffering

JOURNAL

Sometimes when we are hurting, it helps to express our feelings through poetry or song. Write a tribute that honors the people who were hurt today. In your tribute, ask God to heal the brokenhearted (Psalm 147:3).

If you don't feel like writing, grab a camera and take a nature photo that shows an element of sadness, but also hope. For example, maybe you take a photo of a cloud with the sun coming out behind it. Remember, Christians have hope because, one day, we will live with God in a world with no pain or suffering (Revelation 21:3-4).

WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO PEOPLE WHO FOLLOW GOD?

Because our world is under the curse of sin, bad things happen. We feel the effects of sin regardless of whether we follow God. This means everyone experiences pain, hurt, struggle, frustration, anxiety, loss, broken relationships, grief, illness and death.

Thankfully, people who have chosen to follow God will not experience the curse of sin forever. When we reach heaven, suffering will stop (Revelation 21:3-4).

Even here on Earth, where the curse of sin impacts everyone's lives, God is still in control. In the end, He will see that justice reigns (**Matthew 5:45b**).

DOES GOD LOVE PEOPLE WHO HURT OTHERS?

It may be hard to understand, but God does love people who hurt others (John 3:16). We've all hurt someone at some point in our lives. None of us deserves Jesus' gift of salvation, but He offers it to us anyway.

No matter what we've done, if we confess our sins, trust Jesus and put our faith in Him, we become part of God's family. Keep in mind, God is just (Romans 12:19-21). There is no place for evil in His presence. People who hurt other people can be saved from eternal punishment because of God's great love, but they will still face consequences for the evil actions they do.

WHY DO PEOPLE HURT EACH OTHER?

It is difficult to understand why people choose to hurt one another. God alone can look at the heart of a person and understand why they do bad things (1 Samuel 16:7, Psalm 7:9). He is the only one Who can judge our minds and hearts (James 4:12).

We may never know the reason why someone chooses to hurt people, but we do know God is aware and present when someone gets hurt. He sees, knows and understands what we go through — and it matters to Him (1 Peter 5:7, Psalm 56:8).

We are promised that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6), and that He can work good out of the bad things that happen to us (Romans 8:28).

WHY DOESN'T GOD STOP PEOPLE FROM HURTING OTHERS?

When God created Adam and Eve, He gave them free will (the ability to make decisions on their own). No other creation has been given the freedom to accept or reject its Creator. When we choose to accept the gift of salvation, we choose eternity with Him. When we choose to go our own way, we choose eternal separation from God. The sinful decisions we make can hurt the people around us.

★ THRU-THE-WEEK SHEET

♥ MEMORIZE

FOR I KNOW
THAT MY
REDEEMER LIVES,
AND AT THE LAST
HE WILL STAND
UPON THE EARTH.

JOB 19:25

Q: WILL PEOPLE
ALWAYS SUFFER?

A: FOLLOWERS OF
JESUS WILL GO
TO HEAVEN,
WHERE THERE IS
NO SUFFERING.

SING



Listen to this playlist throughout the series to praise God and God alone!

*SCAN HERE TO LISTEN
WHEREVER YOU ARE!*

FIND



This week's verse is found in the book of Job. Help your child find the book of Job. Is this book in the Old or New Testament? How many chapters are there?

Talk about how Job went through suffering, too, and where he found comfort when he was hurting.

✦ PRAY

DEAR LORD, TODAY MY HEART IS HURTING. GOOD PEOPLE WERE HURT TODAY, AND I'M STRUGGLING TO UNDERSTAND WHY. LORD, PLEASE COMFORT MY HEART AND THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO ARE HURTING. PLEASE HELP ME TO TRUST YOU WHEN THINGS SEEM OUT OF CONTROL. THANK YOU FOR MAKING A PLACE FOR CHRISTIANS WHERE THINGS LIKE THIS WON'T HAPPEN ANYMORE. AMEN

DRAW



Invite your child to draw a picture of how they are feeling while listening to one of the songs on today's playlist.

CREATE



Listen to this week's playlist and pick a simple activity to do together. (This could be doing a chore, watching clouds or making a snack.) During the activity, remind your child of the promise from Hebrews 13:5b; God will not leave them, even during this difficult time.

SHARE



Earlier in the lesson you encouraged your child to share some of the feelings they felt. Now, take some time to share with your child some of your feelings about today's tragedy. Remind them that God has not left His children (Hebrews 13:5b). Grieve together and ask God to comfort you and the people who are suffering.

WRITE

Ask your child to help you write out a prayer to God about the tragedy that happened today.