

**Providence Reformed Baptist Church – Sunday, July 10, 2022**

**Hope, Love, Glory, and Christ: God’s Answer to the Problem of Evil, Pain, and Suffering**

**Job 1, 2, 13:15, 19:25, 38-42; Romans 3:21-26, 8:18-30, 9:14-24**

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**Introduction**

The philosophical/theological problem of evil, pain and suffering is that God is all-good, all-knowing, all-powerful, yet evil is real, pain is real, suffering is real, which is often argued to be a contradiction.

- A. “Natural” Evil (Tsunamis, Earthquakes, Plagues, Disease)
- B. Moral Evil (Every act of sin from little white lies, the holocaust, etc.).

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The pastoral/Christian experience problem of evil is that we hurt, that we suffer loss, that evil is done to us, that justice is often not meted out on this side of eternity, and it is often difficult to see how God is fulfilling his promise to work all things for our good and his glory.

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- I. The Christian experiences evil in the context of hope.

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- II. The Christian experiences evil because of God’s love and not in spite of it.

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- III. The Christian experiences evil to see the glory of God and unto God’s glory.

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IV. God revealed in the person of Christ is the end and answer to the evil, pain, and suffering we experience.

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**Application**

Things to remember as a Christian as you experience evil, pain and suffering.

1. God is sovereign (the Lord gives and the Lord takes away).

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2. God is loving (but his love is not to give you what you want but to make you like Christ).

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3. God is working your good and his glory.

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4. God's always answers evil, pain, and suffering with his own person (climatically on the cross).

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## References

### Job 1

1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. 2 And seven sons and three daughters were born to him. 3 Also, his possessions were seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred female donkeys, and a very large household, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the East. 4 And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5 So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly. 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 8 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" 9 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 12 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. 13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15 when the Sabeans raided them and took them away—indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 16 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 18 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, 19 and suddenly a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" 20 Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." 22 In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

### Job 2

2 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. 2 And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." 3 Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause." 4 So Satan answered the Lord and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" 6 And the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life." 7 So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the ashes. 9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!" 10 But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. 11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this adversity that had come upon him, each one came from his own place—

Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. For they had made an appointment together to come and mourn with him, and to comfort him. 12 And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. 13 So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

### **Job 13:15**

15 Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him.

### **Job 19:25**

25 For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth;

### **Job 38**

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: 2 “Who is this who darkens counsel By words without knowledge? 3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. 4 “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 “Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; 9 When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; 10 When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; 11 When I said, ‘This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!’ 12 “Have you commanded the morning since your days began, And caused the dawn to know its place, 13 That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, And the wicked be shaken out of it? 14 It takes on form like clay under a seal, And stands out like a garment. 15 From the wicked their light is withheld, And the upraised arm is broken. 16 “Have you entered the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in search of the depths? 17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you? Or have you seen the doors of the shadow of death? 18 Have you comprehended the breadth of the earth? Tell Me, if you know all this. 19 “Where is the way to the dwelling of light? And darkness, where is its place, 20 That you may take it to its territory, That you may know the paths to its home? 21 Do you know it, because you were born then, Or because the number of your days is great? 22 “Have you entered the treasury of snow, Or have you seen the treasury of hail, 23 Which I have reserved for the time of trouble, For the day of battle and war? 24 By what way is light diffused, Or the east wind scattered over the earth? 25 “Who has divided a channel for the overflowing water, Or a path for the thunderbolt, 26 To cause it to rain on a land where there is no one, A wilderness in which there is no man; 27 To satisfy the desolate waste, And cause to spring forth the growth of tender grass? 28 Has the rain a father? Or who has begotten the drops of dew? 29 From whose womb comes the ice? And the frost of heaven, who gives it birth? 30 The waters harden like stone, And the surface of the deep is frozen. 31 “Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, Or loose the belt of Orion? 32 Can you bring out Mazzaroth in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear with its cubs? 33 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you set their dominion over the earth? 34 “Can you lift up your voice to the clouds, That an abundance of water may cover you? 35 Can you send out lightnings, that they may go, And say to you, ‘Here we are!’? 36 Who has put wisdom in the mind? Or who has given understanding to the heart? 37 Who can number the clouds by wisdom? Or who can pour out the bottles of heaven, 38 When the dust hardens in clumps, And the clods cling together? 39 “Can you hunt the prey for the lion, Or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, 40 When they crouch in their dens, Or lurk in their lairs to lie in wait? 41 Who provides food for the raven, When its young ones cry to God, And wander about for lack of food?

## Job 39

“Do you know the time when the wild mountain goats bear young? Or can you mark when the deer gives birth? 2 Can you number the months that they fulfill? Or do you know the time when they bear young? 3 They bow down, They bring forth their young, They deliver their offspring. 4 Their young ones are healthy, They grow strong with grain; They depart and do not return to them. 5 “Who set the wild donkey free? Who loosed the bonds of the onager, 6 Whose home I have made the wilderness, And the barren land his dwelling? 7 He scorns the tumult of the city; He does not heed the shouts of the driver. 8 The range of the mountains is his pasture, And he searches after every green thing. 9 “Will the wild ox be willing to serve you? Will he be led by your manger? 10 Can you bind the wild ox in the furrow with ropes? Or will he plow the valleys behind you? 11 Will you trust him because his strength is great? Or will you leave your labor to him? 12 Will you trust him to bring home your grain, And gather it to your threshing floor? 13 “The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, But are her wings and pinions like the kindly stork’s? 14 For she leaves her eggs on the ground, And warms them in the dust; 15 She forgets that a foot may crush them, Or that a wild beast may break them. 16 She treats her young harshly, as though they were not hers; Her labor is in vain, without concern, 17 Because God deprived her of wisdom, And did not endow her with understanding. 18 When she lifts herself on high, She scorns the horse and its rider. 19 “Have you given the horse strength? Have you clothed his neck with thunder? 20 Can you frighten him like a locust? His majestic snorting strikes terror. 21 He paws in the valley, and rejoices in his strength; He gallops into the clash of arms. 22 He mocks at fear, and is not frightened; Nor does he turn back from the sword. 23 The quiver rattles against him, The glittering spear and javelin. 24 He devours the distance with fierceness and rage; Nor does he come to a halt because the trumpet has sounded. 25 At the blast of the trumpet he says, ‘Aha!’ He smells the battle from afar, The thunder of captains and shouting. 26 “Does the hawk fly by your wisdom, And spread its wings toward the south? 27 Does the eagle mount up at your command, And make its nest on high? 28 On the rock it dwells and resides, On the crag of the rock and the stronghold. 29 From there it spies out the prey; Its eyes observe from afar. 30 Its young ones suck up blood; And where the slain are, there it is.” 40 Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said: 2 “Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? He who rebukes God, let him answer it.” 3 Then Job answered the Lord and said: 4 “Behold, I am vile; What shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. 5 Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; Yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.” 6 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said: 7 “Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me: 8 “Would you indeed annul My judgment? Would you condemn Me that you may be justified? 9 Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His? 10 Then adorn yourself with majesty and splendor, And array yourself with glory and beauty. 11 Disperse the rage of your wrath; Look on everyone who is proud, and humble him. 12 Look on everyone who is proud, and bring him low; Tread down the wicked in their place. 13 Hide them in the dust together, Bind their faces in hidden darkness. 14 Then I will also confess to you That your own right hand can save you. 15 “Look now at the behemoth, which I made along with you; He eats grass like an ox. 16 See now, his strength is in his hips, And his power is in his stomach muscles. 17 He moves his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are tightly knit. 18 His bones are like beams of bronze, His ribs like bars of iron. 19 He is the first of the ways of God; Only He who made him can bring near His sword. 20 Surely the mountains yield food for him, And all the beasts of the field play there. 21 He lies under the lotus trees, In a covert of reeds and marsh. 22 The lotus trees cover him with their shade; The willows by the brook surround him. 23 Indeed the river may rage, Yet he is not disturbed; He is confident, though the Jordan gushes into his mouth, 24 Though he takes it in his eyes, Or one pierces his nose with a snare.

## Job 41

“Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, Or snare his tongue with a line which you lower? 2 Can you put a reed through his nose, Or pierce his jaw with a hook? 3 Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak softly to you? 4 Will he make a covenant with you? Will you take him as a servant forever? 5 Will you play with him as with a bird, Or will you leash him for your maidens? 6 Will your companions make a banquet of him? Will they apportion him among the merchants? 7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons, Or his head with fishing spears? 8 Lay your hand on him; Remember the battle— Never do it again! 9 Indeed, any hope of

overcoming him is false; Shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him? 10 No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up. Who then is able to stand against Me? 11 Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is Mine. 12 "I will not conceal his limbs, His mighty power, or his graceful proportions. 13 Who can remove his outer coat? Who can approach him with a double bridle? 14 Who can open the doors of his face, With his terrible teeth all around? 15 His rows of scales are his pride, Shut up tightly as with a seal; 16 One is so near another That no air can come between them; 17 They are joined one to another, They stick together and cannot be parted. 18 His sneezings flash forth light, And his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. 19 Out of his mouth go burning lights; Sparks of fire shoot out. 20 Smoke goes out of his nostrils, As from a boiling pot and burning rushes. 21 His breath kindles coals, And a flame goes out of his mouth. 22 Strength dwells in his neck, And sorrow dances before him. 23 The folds of his flesh are joined together; They are firm on him and cannot be moved. 24 His heart is as hard as stone, Even as hard as the lower millstone. 25 When he raises himself up, the mighty are afraid; Because of his crashings they are beside themselves. 26 Though the sword reaches him, it cannot avail; Nor does spear, dart, or javelin. 27 He regards iron as straw, And bronze as rotten wood. 28 The arrow cannot make him flee; Slingstones become like stubble to him. 29 Darts are regarded as straw; He laughs at the threat of javelins. 30 His undersides are like sharp potsherds; He spreads pointed marks in the mire. 31 He makes the deep boil like a pot; He makes the sea like a pot of ointment. 32 He leaves a shining wake behind him; One would think the deep had white hair. 33 On earth there is nothing like him, Which is made without fear. 34 He beholds every high thing; He is king over all the children of pride."

## **Job 42**

Then Job answered the Lord and said: 2 "I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. 3 You asked, 'Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?' Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. 4 Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, 'I will question you, and you shall answer Me.' 5 "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You. 6 Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes." 7 And so it was, after the Lord had spoken these words to Job, that the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is aroused against you and your two friends, for you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has. 8 Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and My servant Job shall pray for you. For I will accept him, lest I deal with you according to your folly; because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." 9 So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the Lord commanded them; for the Lord had accepted Job. 10 And the Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before, came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the Lord had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold. 12 Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. 13 He also had seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch. 15 In all the land were found no women so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. 16 After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations. 17 So Job died, old and full of days.

## **Romans 3:21-26**

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that

were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

### **Romans 8:18-30**

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. 26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

### **Romans 9:14-24**

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." 16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to the Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth." 18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens. 19 You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?