

“The LORD Gave, and the LORD Has Taken Away” (Job 1–2)

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There’s no doubt that over the last two hundred years, we’ve made enormous technological progress. Technological progress is made at an exponential rate, so that far greater advances are made in a shorter amount of time. Think about the electronics we use: Ten years ago, very few people had smart phones. The first iPhone hadn’t been released yet. Twenty years ago, few people had cell phones. Twenty-five years ago, almost no one had Internet access, and they didn’t know what the Internet was. Thirty years ago, the CD existed, but most people bought and played audio cassettes, and VHS was state of the art. A great deal of medical progress has been made, in terms of medications and surgical techniques.

Some people assume that progress in science and technology translates to progress in other areas of life. But technological progress doesn’t guarantee moral progress. And it doesn’t necessarily guarantee a better quality of life. Despite having better gadgets, better medicine, and more convenience, we still struggle with pain and suffering. We see that in the increased use of heroin and other opioids. Why do people use those drugs? To numb the pain. Though we can decrease physical pain through those painkillers, we still struggle with emotional pain. We can see that in the increase in anxiety and depression in people, particularly younger people. *Time* magazine ran a cover story last fall that discussed the rise of depression and anxiety among teenagers. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, 3 million teenagers reported a depressive episode in 2015. Two million teenagers say they have depression that impairs their daily lives. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 6.3 million teenagers have had an anxiety disorder.¹ Given these kinds of numbers, and the rise of suicides, it’s obvious that all our technological progress hasn’t enabled us to cope better with the pain of life.

Perhaps if the twenty-first century doesn’t give us methods for dealing with pain and suffering, we need to go to another period of time. Perhaps we need to turn to an ancient book of wisdom to learn more about this subject.

¹ Susanna Schrobsdorff, “Teen Depression and Anxiety: Why the Kids Are Not Alright,” *Time*, October 27, 2016, <http://time.com/magazine/us/4547305/november-7th-2016-vol-188-no-19-u-s>, accessed February 10, 2017.

That’s exactly what we’re going to do over the next two months. We’re going to look at a book of the Old Testament called Job. It’s not often preached because it’s long and it’s a unique book.² It’s not like some books of the Bible, which are histories or letters. The book of Job is more like a drama. Most of it consists of long speeches that are actually poems. It’s almost like a Shakespeare play, with long monologues. Like Shakespeare’s plays, the book of Job is a literary masterpiece. And it’s one that requires a little work to understand. To understand this book, we need to understand a little bit of its structure and language. In other words, we need to understand what the author is trying to communicate to us.

My goal is to guide us through the book so we can understand its very important message. This message deals with suffering and loss, questions of justice, the character of God, and where we can find hope. It deals with faith. It’s about trusting God when life hurts. And that’s an important message for all of us, particularly for some of us who have had great loss and suffering, and who are facing years in which our bodies will break down, people around us will die, and we will face our own inevitable deaths. Job is ultimately a book about wisdom. Wisdom is knowing how to live rightly in this world. Job shows us how to be wise, particularly in the midst of suffering.

Since we have a lot to do today, we’ll start reading. If you’re not used to reading the Bible, we often go through whole books of the Bible. I’ll explain what’s going on as we look at the text, and then I’ll show how this is relevant to our lives.

Before we start to read Job, I’ll give a quick background to the story. We don’t know who wrote the book or when it was written. It was surely written over 2,500 years ago, possibly much earlier than that. The story is set in “the land of Uz,” which is either northeast or southeast of Israel, east of the Jordan River.³ And the story probably occurred anywhere between 3,500–4,000 years ago, though we can’t be entirely sure. While the setting may be a bit foreign, what matters most is that Job is a righteous man who suffers for reasons that he doesn’t fully understand. And in the midst of that struggle, he cries out to God to vindicate him.

Let’s begin. We’ll start by reading verse 1–5:

² “The author, a literary genius, created a masterpiece that is *sui generis*.” John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 38.

³ In the Bible, a person or place called Uz is associated both with Edom (Gen. 36:28; Jer. 25:20–21; Lam. 4:21), Aram (Gen. 10:23), and Abraham (22:20–21).

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. ² There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. ³ 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. ⁴ His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. ⁵ And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate 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 children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did continually.⁴

Job is said to be “blameless and upright.” That doesn’t mean he never sinned. We know that because later in the book he’ll talk about his own iniquity (7:21; 13:26). These terms are relative. Job was a good man, one who properly feared and worshiped God. He turned away from evil, or repented. He was so concerned about righteousness that he offered up sacrifices for his children, just in case they secretly sinned by cursing God in their hearts. The idea of sacrifices may be odd to you, but the message of the Bible is that we have sinned against God by ignoring him, rejecting him, and rebelling against him. Sin must be punished and paid for. God allowed sacrifices to be made in the place of sinners, so that their sin would be punished without destroying them.

The point the author wants us to see is that Job was a good man. He acted as a priest for his family. And the suffering he went through was not because of any particular sin he had committed.

Job was also blessed by God. He had ten children and thousands of animals. In those days, wealth was measured by your family and your livestock. Because of both his righteousness and his wealth, he “was the greatest of all the people of the east.” I should also point out that he wasn’t an Israelite. This makes Job’s story more universal and, in a way, more relatable.

At any rate, that is the beginning of the story. In the next section, the setting moves from earth to heaven. The veil of the natural world is lifted and we are now allowed to peak behind the curtain into the supernatural realm. We’re getting to see things that Job wasn’t aware of, things he didn’t know. We’re given a glimpse of things that we don’t usually see. So, with that in mind, let’s read verses 6–12:

⁴ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV).

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 The LORD said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan answered the LORD and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” ⁸ And 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, who fears God and turns away from evil?” ⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? ¹⁰ Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and 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 stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” ¹² And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

The scene is heaven. The cast of characters here include God, the “sons of God,” and a mysterious figure that in Hebrew is literally called *haśśāṭān*, which means “the Adversary.” Let’s deal with that last person first. Our translation has “Satan,” which is a Hebrew word that means “Adversary.” But in the original Hebrew, there’s a definite article. It should probably be translated as “the Adversary,” or even “the Satan.” Some theologians think this may not be *the* Satan that we think of when we hear that name. In the Old Testament, we don’t hear much directly about Satan. We have this passage, Zechariah 3, and 1 Chronicles 21. In this book and in Zechariah, Satan has the definite article: We’re told of “the Adversary,” or “the Satan.” But in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, we’re told of a dragon who is also “that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him” (Rev. 12:9). He is also called “the accuser” of Christians (Rev. 12:10). All of this perfectly matches this figure we see in Job.

Now, it may be strange to think of Satan in heaven. But if Revelation 12 is right, and if Jesus is right (Luke 10:18; John 12:31), then Satan was in heaven, or had the ability to go in and out of heaven, until roughly the time when Jesus was crucified and when he rose from the grave. Unfortunately, a lot of what we think we know of Satan doesn’t come from the Bible, but comes from literature like John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. The Bible doesn’t actually give us a lot of information at all about him. He’s a shadowy, mysterious figure. But what is clear is that he is the one who tempted Eve in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3); he’s a liar and a murderer (John 8:44); he wants to interfere with God’s plans (Matt. 4:1-11); and he accuses believers of their guilt (Zech. 3:1-5; Rev. 12:10).

The “sons of God” could be angels, though we’re never told that in the book of Job. It’s possible they’re other supernatural creatures, or that they’re the spirits of deceased believers.

One author, David Jackson, writes:

It is particularly significant that Job 1:6–12 does not mention angels. The Satan’s challenge is in fact not just a charge against Job, but against all sons of God present in that assembly. Job is simply the test case. The Satan is challenging the right of every son of God to stand before the throne of God.⁵

And that brings us to that charge that Satan brings against Job. Notice in this scene that God is the one in control. He initiates the action by asking Satan where he has been. Then he asks Satan to consider Job, for there is no one like him. Satan then claims that Job only fears and worships God because God has protected him and blessed him. In other words, Satan is saying, “Job doesn’t love you, God. He loves the stuff you give him. But take away that stuff, and he’ll curse you to your face.” Then God says, “Okay, take away everything he has, but don’t touch him.”

Now, before we see what happens, I want to reflect on this section a bit. If anyone is exploring Christianity and isn’t used to the Bible, the whole idea of a heaven populated by God, angels, and spirits may seem strange. But the Bible shows us quite clearly that there is a spiritual realm that we can’t see, but is just as real as the ground you walk on. Christianity shows us that there is more to reality than meets the eye. It shows us that we are not the center of the universe, despite what we think.

This spiritual realm is the source of good and evil. God is goodness. He is love. And though evil is a bit of a mystery, it is rooted in Satan, the father of lies and the original murderer. I think the biblical story best accounts for the things that matter most to us, like love, beauty, hope, goodness, as well as things we experience, like evil, suffering, and death. There is a real power of evil that is at work in the world, a power that wants to interfere with God’s kingdom and destroy God’s people. We call this power the devil or Satan. He isn’t an impersonal force, but a personal, wicked one. And this unseen realm is part of the key to understanding the story of Job and the story of suffering on earth.

Before we continue talking about God, Satan, and the problem of evil, let’s see what Satan does. Let’s read verses 13–19:

⁵ David R. Jackson, *Crying out for Vindication: The Gospel according to Job* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007), 21.

¹³ Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁴ and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came another 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 yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." ¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, ¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

This is a hard passage to read. Destruction hits Job in every way, from every direction. The only thing it doesn't touch is Job himself. The Sabeans came from the south and killed Job's oxen, donkeys, and servants. "The fire of God," which is surely lightning, came from the west and consumed Job's sheep and more of his servants. The Chaldeans came from the north and took his camels and killed still more of his servants. And, worst of all, a great wind came from the east, crushing the house of Job's oldest son, killing all his children inside.⁶ I'll make more comments about the horror of this event and how God could allow such a thing, but first I want us to see what Job's reaction is. Let's read verses 20–22:

²⁰ Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

²² In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Upon hearing the news, Job tore his clothes and shaved his head. These were acts of mourning in his culture. Mourning is natural. But then Job does something amazing: he worships. He realizes that everything he has in his life is a gift from God. He is owed nothing. God gave him his family and his wealth, and God can take it away if he so pleases. This isn't Job's wrong opinion, because the author tells us that Job didn't sin or charge God with wrong.

⁶ Jonathan E. Hartley, (*The Book of Job*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988], 77), makes this point about tragedy striking Job from the four points of the compass. He claims the wind was the sirocco.

Job's reaction to the worst news he could ever hear is worship. This is the kind of man that Job is.

But the story doesn't end there, of course. The next scene returns to heaven and is almost the exactly the same as the one in chapter 1. Let's read chapter 2, verses 1–6:

¹ Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD. ² And the LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." ³ And 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, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason." ⁴ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life."

This scene is almost identical to the earlier one, except when God asks whether Satan has considered Job, he claims that he still holds fast to his integrity, "although you incited me against him to destroy him *without reason*." This shows, by the way, that there is something irrational about evil. We can't really explain it because if we could, it would be less evil. The terrible thing about evil is that it makes no sense. There doesn't seem to be a reason for it. At any rate, Satan claims that Job hasn't cursed God yet because the tragedies of chapter 1 didn't affect his body. "Skin for skin!" must mean that Job was content to let the skin of his animals, servants, and children be offered up instead of his own. Now Satan says that if Job's body is affected, he'll curse God. So God allows Satan to afflict Job's body, as long as he doesn't kill him.

In the next two verses, 7-8, we see what Satan does to Job:

⁷ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and struck Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took a piece of broken pottery with which to scrape himself while he sat in the ashes.

Job gets some kind of terrible skin disease. Later, he'll describe how awful his condition is (7:5; 30:30). His whole body was covered with sores. His only comfort was to scrape at them with some broken pottery that he found in the ash heap outside the city gate. This is where trash would be dumped. Here, Job, beaten and broken, mourned, like a piece of human trash.

To make matters worse, his own wife wanted him to give up. Look at verses 9 and 10:

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.” ¹⁰ But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

This is the only time we hear from Job’s wife in the book. Her advice is to curse God. It seems she thinks that cursing God would cause Job to die. She wants Job to give in to Satan. After all, Satan wants Job to curse God, too. And that’s the drama of the story. If Job curses God, Satan wins. Job would then be worshiping God only in good times, and not in bad. But Job isn’t giving in. He tells his wife she is foolish, and then he asks, “Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” Still, Job did not sin.

The last verses of chapter 2 set up what we’ll see over the next few weeks. Three of Job’s friends come to comfort Job. Let’s read verses 11–13:

¹¹ Now when Job’s three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. ¹² And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven. ¹³ And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

Job’s friends come from a distance to comfort their friend. Because of his condition, they hardly recognize him. They, too, mourn. And then they simply keep Job company, sitting with him for a week.

That’s the beginning of the story of Job. Now, let’s think about what this story means. Since this is only the beginning of our study of this book, I can’t get into everything this morning. We’ll talk a lot more about these issues over the next few weeks.

One issue that emerges is the so-called problem of evil. The Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711-1776) captured the problem of evil rather famously: “Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance, surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive.”⁷ In other words, how can

⁷ David Hume, “Evil Makes a Strong Case against God’s Existence,” from *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religions*, Part X, in *Philosophy or Religion: Selected Readings*, ed. Michael Peterson, William Hasker, Bruce Reichenbach, David Basinger, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 262.

there be evil in a world created by all-powerful, loving God? This problem of evil is called the logical problem of evil. How can evil coexist with the God of the Bible? The only way this is possible is if God has good reasons for allowing evil to exist. If something greater comes as a result of there being evil in the world, then God is justified in allowing it to be present. There are debates about what that something greater is, but it's not illogical to say that a perfectly good, loving, all-wise, and all-powerful God has made a world in which evil now exists.

Some people say there is simply too much evil in the world. We can imagine that God could allow a small amount of evil to be present in the world to bring about good, but why is there so much? This is called the evidential problem of evil. The evidence of evil in the world makes the probability of God's existence lower. But how can we know exactly how much evil should be in the world? How do we know that great, infinite, and eternal good can't come out of evil situations? If you want to know more about the problem of evil, you can read an article I wrote on it, which is available on our website in the Articles section under the Media tab.⁸

The real problem of evil that the book of Job deals with is the existential or religious problem of evil. The problem for us is how to live in a world where there is suffering and pain and death. How do we go through the valley of the shadow of death while maintaining faith?

The book of Job answers that question. It shows us that there are things that there are things that are happening behind that supernatural veil that we don't know. God has his reasons for things and we can't demand that he reveal them all to us. God is not a genie in a bottle or a cosmic ATM. He doesn't exist merely to answer all our questions and give us all that we want.

Tim Keller, who has written a great book called *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, writes, "If you believe that the world was made for our benefit by God, then horrendous suffering and evil will shake your understanding of life. . . . [S]uffering and evil disprove God's existence only if you have a particular view of God that is already a departure from the more traditional, orthodox view."⁹ Again, if you think God is here to make you happy, and that's the point of life, then you will always be disappointed when pain and suffering come. And they will come. But if you have a Christian view of God, you can endure pain and suffering.

The Christian view of God says that he is in control of his universe. He is good and loving, he is all-powerful, he knows everything. But he also created everything for his purposes.

⁸ <https://wbcommunity.org/the-problem-of-evil>.

⁹ Timothy Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* (New York: Dutton, 2013), 56.

And for reasons that are not completely clear, he has allowed evil to exist. But evil is under his control.

We see that in this passage. God initiates the conflict with Satan. And Satan can do nothing without God's permission. The great theologian Don Carson says that "God stands behind good and evil *assymetrically*."¹⁰ Good is always directly credited to God. Any good gift comes directly from him (James 1:18). Though the Bible never credits God with doing evil, it's not outside his control.¹¹ Though we don't know exactly why God created Satan, we know that Satan is under his control. He is a dog on God's leash.¹²

Now, up to this point, you may think that God is cold or even cruel to allow suffering. But here's the thing: God is not only sovereign, in the sense that he not only reigns over everything in his creation, but he's also in control of it. God also entered into his creation. In a sense, God is not only sovereign, but he suffers, too. The story of Job points us to Jesus. Jesus is God, who, without ceasing to be God (as if he could do that), became a human being. He lived a perfect life of righteousness. Unlike Job, he never sinned. But he suffered greatly. Job was unrecognizable to his friends because of his affliction. Isaiah 52:14 says:

his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of the children of mankind.

Isaiah 53:3 says,

He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

We need to see that Jesus suffered great pain, and died in agony. When we see this, though we may not understand why there is suffering in the world, we can't say that God doesn't care. We can't say that God doesn't know what it's like to suffer. And if God allowed his perfect Son to

¹⁰ D. A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord? Reflections on Suffering and Evil*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 189.

¹¹ "A sovereign and omniscient God who knows that, if he permits such and such an evil to occur it will surely occur, and then goes ahead and grants the permission, is surely decreeing the evil. But the language of permission is retained because it is part of the biblical pattern of insisting that God stands behind good and evil asymmetrically . . . He can never be credited with evil; he is always credited with the good." Ibid., 199. See Exod. 9:16; Prov. 16:33; Isa. 45:7; Lam. 3:38.

¹² "God is always sovereign. And Satan is always only an adversary on a chain. Satan is always under God's authority and control." David Atkinson, *The Message of Job*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991), 22.

suffer, then why should we think he won't allow his sons and daughters to suffer to a lesser extent?¹³

If God is sovereign, he is control of evil. Evil cannot overtake him. And one day he will conquer evil. Jesus didn't just die. He rose from the grave in a body that cannot die again. This shows he has power of death. And if God himself has suffered, we know he cares. We need to hold on to both truths.

This story of Job confounds different people. It confounds some Christians who say things like, "God had nothing to do with that natural disaster." But it also confounds other Christians who might say, "That natural disaster occurred because you're so sinful." Job suffered disasters, but not for his own sin. Sometimes evil things occur so God can demonstrate his power or his grace (John 9:1–3; 2 Cor. 12:1–10). This story confounds atheists who believe that life is chance and that things happen for no reason.¹⁴

In fact, atheists have their own problem of evil. If we live in a world of chance, one that is not designed by God, then why shouldn't there be violence and evil? The atheistic story of how we got here is that we have evolved from lesser species through a long process of natural selection in which the strong outlast the weak. In such a story, nature is "red in tooth and claw." If the universe isn't designed, we should expect random violence to occur. We shouldn't expect it to be good.

But the Christian story shows that everything has meaning, even if we don't understand it. The Christian story shows that we're involved in a cosmic drama involving God and Satan, good and evil. Not everything that occurs is for us or is revealed to us. Sometimes things happen on earth because of what is happening in the supernatural realm.

But the question for us today, the question that confronted Job, is this: Do we love God for who he is, or only for the good stuff he gives us? Do we love God regardless of circumstances? Do we worship God only on the mountain tops, or do we worship him in the valleys, too?

¹³ "If God allowed a perfect man to suffer terribly (but for an ultimate good), why should we think that something like that could never happen to us?" Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, 198.

¹⁴ "When suffering comes upon us, we wonder why it is happening to us. The traditional religious answer is: *You must have done something wrong or bad*. The secular answer to the question is: *There is no good reason. A good God wouldn't allow this—so he doesn't exist or he's cruel*. One of the main messages of the book of Job is that both the religious and the irreligious, the moralistic and the nihilistic answers are wrong." *Ibid.*, 271.

If we're worshipping God only when it feels good, or only when we like what he's doing, then it's not worship at all. In that case, we're just using God. And when bad things happen to us, we may curse God to his face. As Tim Keller says, "it is because we don't fully love God just for his own sake that we are subject to such great ups and downs depending on how things go for our lives."¹⁵ But if we learn to love God for who he is, rather than what he gives us, we'll be able to endure great pain and suffering. That doesn't mean we'll like it. Job didn't like it, as we'll see. But we'll be able to trust God.

A God who is both sovereign and who suffers for his people is one we can trust. He has the power to save us and the desire to save us from a world of pain and death. He entered into that world and subjected himself to great pain and death so that we don't have to die an eternal death, so that we don't have to be destroyed for our sins against him. Do you trust this God? Do you worship him? Do you love him for who he is? Or do you only love what he can give you?

¹⁵ Ibid., 283.