

21st November 2018

Prayer and Study Group Week Four

Talk about Suffering – Lesson 6

Exodus 2:23-25

²³ *During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God.*

²⁴ *And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.*

Deuteronomy 8:1-3

“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. ² And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. ³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word^[a] that comes from the mouth of the Lord

James 1:2-5

² *Count it all joy, my brothers,^[a] when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*

Psalm 103:1-2

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!

² *O Lord, hear my voice!*

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

Ed Welch:

Hardships are unique. No Two forms of suffering are identical.

Hardships share something in common. They are painful and can leave us felling at the end of ourselves. This is the reason why one Psalm can speak to so many different troubles.

In our own wilderness our aspiration is to have eyes to see Jesus.

Hardships will come. Jesus has gone before us in hardships and knows us. The love of the Father pursues us in our hardships. The Father's justice, which will silence all perpetrators and restore his people, is assured.

Discussion

1. Have any particular passages about suffering become especially meaningful to you?
2. Can you connect the Wilderness story (both Exodus and Jesus) to your own life and struggles today?
3. How could you pray for someone using the wilderness story?
4. <https://www.ccef.org/resources/blog/ten-things-do-during-suffering>
Read this article. How does this change the way you view suffering?