

August 8, 2021

## 10. Job's Response to Suffering: Faithful Persistence — Job 1:21-22; 2:1-10 NRSV

The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason.”  
Job 2:3

This verse inspires me. Job stubbornly persisted in faith. (In Merriam-Webster's online thesaurus *stubborn* and *persistent* are interchangeable.) God was still God. Even after the death of livestock, servants, and progeny, after being besieged with open sores, after being advised by his wife to “curse God, and die” (2:9)—even then Job did not deny or blame God.

This text also incites personal consternation as I consider a fragment of chapter 2, “although you incited me against him” (2:3b). Is God blaming Satan for God's actions? After all, it was God who asked Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job?” (1:8). If I was teaching, I might wonder aloud about that.

And I might follow by ruminating on the title of this session. How is it that Job chose to remain faithful? And his faith was a *choice*. Job could have elected to follow Mrs. Job's advice to denounce God. But he didn't. He blessed God's name. He maintained his integrity. Why did Job choose “faithful persistence” rather than denial of God?

On an October Thursday in 2007, a tornado churned its way through the south side of Nappanee, Indiana, where I was a pastor at the time. More than two hundred buildings were destroyed or damaged. The following Sunday, in the same *Christian* community, some thanked God for being alive, while others shook their fists at God. Some worshiped, praising God for protection, while some stayed home, worshiping at the altar of aggravation, burnishing personal acrimony. How is it that human rejoinders to suffering can be so diverse?

The book of Job raises more questions about suffering than it answers. It contains no compact theory of why suffering exists. A personal observation as a result of writing this online series on Job: We mere humans cannot assume that there is a particular divine reason for every instance of suffering.

Sometimes stuff happens . . . and I can't always know why.

—Ruben Chupp  
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**Ruben Chupp** of Nappanee, Indiana, is a spiritual director, chaplain, and retired pastor. His personal goals: “love God and the person in front of me at any given time; read some, write some, think some, pray some, and take a nap every day; love my wife, Idella, my children, and their children with all the grace I possess; and finally, get home before dark.”

## Resources for this session

### *Salt & Light Videos*

**Hendy Matahelemual** is the presenter for unit 3, Suffering. These teaching videos are great for leader preparation or introducing each session. They are available on [MennoMedia's YouTube channel](#). Jaye is the pastor of 7 Ways Home Fellowship, Bowie, Maryland.

### **Video recommended in Leader guide**

*The Land of No Men: Inside Kenya's Women-Only Village.* <https://youtu.be/UrnmBLB-UX4>

**Additional commentary for this session is available at:**

<https://www.mennomedia.org/salt-light-supplements/>