

HIS STORY/MY STORY

THE STORY OF PAIN

OPEN:

- God can and does use pain for His good and glory.
- Most of us, if given the choice, would not choose pain but pain is a part of life.
- Because God has given man a free will, selfishness and sin has complicated things and has introduced pain into our world.
- How does God use pain?
 - ✓ If you touch something hot it hurts...the pain causes you to pull back otherwise you might seriously burn yourself.
 - ✓ Pain tells you when you have an illness or injury that needs to be treated.

❖ Consider these benefits of pain.

1. Pain and suffering can help us learn important lessons in life...sometimes it causes us to re-prioritize.
2. Pain and suffering can bring about creativity, resourcefulness and courage.
Ex. A parent loses a child in a car accident...they work to pass laws or start an organization to protect children.
Ex. Artists and composers do some of their greatest works during times of pain and loss.
3. Pain and suffering can help shape our character.
Ex. Gold is refined by fire...the heat drives out the impurities.
Ex. Some of the most devoted followers of Christ live in countries where their faith is persecuted.

4. Pain and suffering can test us and show us where we are in our relationship with Christ.
Ex. Job, Peter...the early Christians.
Ex. Pain reveals the weakness or strength of our faith.
5. Pain and suffering can lead some to repentance and salvation.
✓ Sometimes it takes pain to turn a person around.
Ex. This is the story of Israel...God allowed difficult times so they might repent and return.
6. Pain and suffering can teach us to trust God.
✓ We are forced to turn to God because we have nowhere else to turn.
7. Pain and suffering can be an inspiration to others.
Ex. An athlete runs on a prosthetic limb...a believer walks through cancer treatment with faith in God.
8. Pain and suffering can prevent us from becoming dangerously proud.
9. Pain and suffering can result in the advancement of the Gospel.
Ex. Paul is in prison, chained to Roman guards of whom he shared the good news of forgiveness in Christ.
10. Pain and suffering can help us comfort others who are going through a similar trial.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NLT) - ³ All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. ⁴ He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

Interview: The story of pain through miscarriage and loss:

9:00 - Jason and Tori Lowery

10:30 – Zane & Nicole Petty

1. Introduce yourself and tell us briefly about your family.
2. When did you experience your loss?
3. What or who has helped you get through your pain?
4. I understand you are turning your hurt into a ministry...can you tell us about it?
5. What one thing has God taught you concerning this loss?

❖ What is clear...pain is not always the result of our own doing.

- Allow me to refresh your memory of Israel's time in Egypt.

1) **Life in Egypt was not meant to be permanent.** *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

✓ Allow me to provide a little background:

○ Joseph is promoted by Pharaoh as 2nd in command.

Genesis 41:37-40 (NLT) - ³⁷ Joseph's suggestions were well received by Pharaoh and his officials. ³⁸ So Pharaoh asked his officials, "Can we find anyone else like this man so obviously filled with the spirit of God?" ³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has revealed the meaning of the dreams to you, clearly no one else is as intelligent or wise as you are. ⁴⁰ You will be in charge of my court, and all my people will take orders from you. Only I, sitting on my throne, will have a rank higher than yours."

✓ Joseph went to work and began preparing in the 7 years of plenty for the 7 lean years to come.

✓ The famine was so severe that Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to purchase food.

✓ In time, Joseph would reveal himself, forgive his brothers and invite his family to live in Egypt.

Genesis 45:9-11 (NLT) - ⁹“Now hurry back to my father and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me master over all the land of Egypt. So come down to me immediately! ¹⁰You can live in the region of Goshen, (pasture land, good for grazing herds) where you can be near me with all your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and everything you own. ¹¹I will take care of you there, for there are still five years of famine ahead of us. Otherwise you, your household, and all your animals will starve.’”

- ✓ Jacob was relieved to hear his son Joseph was alive...the family of 70 settle in Goshen.
- ✓ Life goes on but clearly it wasn't God's plan that they live here forever.

Genesis 46:1-4 (NLT) - So Jacob set out for Egypt with all his possessions. And when he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father, Isaac. ²During the night God spoke to him in a vision. “Jacob! Jacob!” He called. “Here I am,” Jacob replied. ³“I am God, the God of your father,” the voice said. “Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make your family into a great nation. ⁴I will go with you down to Egypt, and I will bring you back again. You will die in Egypt, but Joseph will be with you to close your eyes.”

- ✓ And so it was...Jacob was laid to rest in Egypt and before Joseph died he said:

Genesis 50:24-26 (NLT) - ²⁴“Soon I will die,” Joseph told his brothers, “but God will surely come to help you and lead you out of this land of Egypt. He will bring you back to the land He solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.” ²⁵Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath, and he said, “When God comes to help you and lead you back, you must take my bones with you.” ²⁶So Joseph died at the age of 110. The Egyptians embalmed him, and his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

2) Life in Egypt becomes **problematic** (complicated). *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

- A new king (Pharaoh) came into power.

Exodus 1:8 (NLT) - Eventually, a new king came to power in Egypt who knew nothing about Joseph or what he had done.

- ✓ Years passed by, Pharaohs' came and went.
- ✓ The new leader had not personally benefitted from Joseph's work and there was no allegiance.
- ✓ Whatever accommodations had been extended to Joseph and his clan had long been forgotten.
- The Israelites were on the verge of "over powering" the Egyptians.
 - ✓ 400 years passed...this little family grew and in **Numbers 1:46** at the time of their departure from Egypt we learn that there were 603,000 men over the age of 20.
 - Add the women and the children and you could easily come up with a population of 2 million plus.
 - Current population of SC is 5 million, NYC is 8.5 million, Atlanta, GA = 5.7 million, as of 2015 Lexington County, SC = 282,000.
 - ✓ Jacob's family had grown into a nation.
 - ✓ The new Pharaoh felt the Israelites were a threat to their national existence...
 - ✓ He and his officials came up with a plan...
 - a) **They enslaved the Israelites.**

Exodus 1:11-14 (NLT) - ¹¹ So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves. They appointed brutal slave drivers over them, hoping to wear them down with crushing labor. They forced them to build the cities of Pithom and Rameses (we think these cities housed Egypt's military hardware) as supply centers for the king. ¹² But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the Israelites multiplied and spread, and the more alarmed the Egyptians became. ¹³ So the Egyptians worked the people of Israel without mercy. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter, forcing them to mix mortar and make bricks and do all the work in the fields. They were ruthless in all their demands.

- ✓ Low wages, terrible work conditions, unrealistic demands, crazy hours...used and abused.

b) Kill the baby boys at birth.

- ✓ To prevent the Israelites from continued growth, Pharaoh commanded the Hebrew mid-wives to abort the baby boys.

Exodus 1:15-22 (NLT) - ¹⁵ Then Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, gave this order to the Hebrew midwives, Shiprah and Puah: ¹⁶“When you help the Hebrew women as they give birth, watch as they deliver. If the baby is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live.” ¹⁷ But because the midwives feared God, they refused to obey the king’s orders. They allowed the boys to live, too. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt called for the midwives. “Why have you done this?” he demanded. “Why have you allowed the boys to live?” ¹⁹ “The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women,” the midwives replied. “They are more vigorous and have their babies so quickly that we cannot get there in time.” ²⁰ So God was good to the midwives, and the Israelites continued to multiply, growing more and more powerful. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, He gave them families of their own. ²² Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: “Throw every newborn Hebrew boy into the Nile River. But you may let the girls live.”

- ✓ Wow! How heart-breaking this must have been to the mothers and fathers.
- ✓ Notice God blessed the mid-wives for their courage; he gave them families of their own.
- ❖ During these troubling days for God’s people...Moses would be born, protected and rescued by Pharaoh’s daughter.
 - ✓ She would raise the one whom God would use to deliver His people.
 - ✓ 40 difficult years pass...

Exodus 2:23-25 (NLT) - ²³ Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning, and He remembered His covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵ He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.

Notice God's response to their pain:

a) **God heard their groaning – God hears our prayers.** *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

1 John 5:14-15 (NLT) - ¹⁴ And we are confident that He hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases Him. ¹⁵ And since we know He hears us when we make our requests, we also know that He will give us what we ask for.

b) **God remembered His promise – Our God keeps His promises.** *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NLT) - Understand, therefore, that the LORD your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps His covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes His unfailing love on those who love Him and obey His commands.

c) **God looked upon His people – God cares for His children.** *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT) – Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.

d) **God acknowledged or acted on behalf of His people.** *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

✓ God is capable of helping you in your time of pain.

CLOSE: Like the Israelites in Egypt, we are not on this earth forever...our days are numbered.

✓ We are travelers on the way to an eternal city.

✓ We will face challenging times...taste pain and suffering...

✓ But remember this:

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NLT) - ¹⁶That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. ¹⁷For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

- Hang in there...God is with you...Heaven's not that far away!

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Message Notes
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