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Crossroads Community Church

Wonderful sunshine ushered us in to praise the Lord, worship was joyful and exuberant, Pastor Don shared announcements and prayed, ?Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the blessings you shower upon us each day, we pray for you Holy spirit to rain down on us now and refresh us, give us strength to face the week ahead in Jesus Name, Amen.?

Our friend, and brother, Bob, shared a divinely inspired message this morning on a common question we hear often: ?Why does the world have to suffer??

It is a subject that Jesus had forewarned us of in John 16:33, ?I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows, but take heart, for I have overcome the world.?

This no doubt requires faith in God's perfect plan and that He allows trials and struggles to bring about His purpose. He is not the cause of suffering but He is the one walks with us through it to overcome it.

So, where does suffering come from?

It comes from the human heart that has given into the lures of the evil one, our enemy Satan, ?The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?? Jeremiah 17:9.

Jesus knew it and He knew mankind needed saving and this wickedness in the hearts of men and women are what brought about the crucifixion of our Lord. It stands to say that if our Saviour suffered, we too will suffer at the hands of wicked people who have not yet accepted Jesus, ?For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps,? (1 Peter 2:21).

Every day, we read or hear about tragic events and atrocities humans commit, these sufferings happen because many do not walk with a Holy God, they do not live for Him, they do not love their neighbour as themselves as Jesus commanded, rather they follow their wicked hearts and minds.

How about natural disasters? These too are the cause of human greed, inconsideration and wickedness.

The earth is responding to what man has done, (Romans 8:22). We as believers also react to these things, we are called to bring justice and comfort to a suffering world all the while pray for its deliverance; ?And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.

We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us,? (Romans 8:23).

Since right now the ruler of this world's order is Satan we cannot escape suffering, however God does not let it go in vain, He uses trails to grow our faith, to teach us about Him and about the things we need to change.

We all sin and fall short of His standards and His desire is to remove sin from our souls.

God turns sufferings into tools to help us focus on Him instead of worldly sinful desires, (James 1:2-3).

Suffering also helps us identify and relate to Jesus; it allows us to understand His heart for others who are suffering as it develops His compassion and empathy within our hearts, this makes us co-heirs of His blessings in heaven, (Romans 8:17-18).

The comfort we receive from Jesus we ought to offer it to those who suffer, ?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. For the more we suffer for

Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us,(2 Corinthians 1:3-7).

Beloved, no matter how deep our darkness, God's love is deeper, our tears become His tears, Jesus mourns with us, He is a man acquainted with sorrows, He knows our sufferings but His love knows no bounds and to experience this gift of love we must choose Him of our own free will.

Then when Jesus takes a hold of our hearts we begin to see things clearly, we develop endurance, perseverance and our faith worth more than gold is purified, (1 Corinthians 13:12-13, Romans 8:18,1 Peter 1:6-7). We know that the Lord works out all things and turns them into good for those who love Him, just as Job loved God and suffered the loss of everything on earth, but he did not lose His faith for

He trusted God. With Jesus we have hope, we have peace like no other for we know that He is coming again. So let us be truly glad, there is wonderful joy ahead, even though we must endure many trials for a little while.

These trials will show that our faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold?though our faith is far more precious than mere gold. So, when our faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world,

Asherey Shalom!