

Why, God, Why?

Why do we suffer? Does God cause bad things to happen? If not, why does he even allow them? If he can stop human suffering, why doesn't he? How can we maintain faith in God when everything is going wrong? These are not theoretical questions; these are questions asked in the trenches of life, when the outlook is grim and hope is faint. The story of Job gives us a place to wrestle with one of life's most difficult questions: the problem of suffering. It also reassures us that it's possible to maintain a strong faith, even as we express these questions and lament our circumstances to God.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- What are some characteristics of suffering?
- When have you wanted to ask God why something happened? How did that experience impact your faith?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Why, God, Why?](#)

READ [Job 1-3](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- How do you react to host Scott Hoezee's assertion in segment 2 that as we try to make sense of suffering, it's important to remember that, "There might just be more going on than you know about, and it is not all the direct will of God"? Think about an example of suffering from your life. Does the above statement make you think or feel differently about that experience of suffering? What are the implications for your faith?
- In segment 2, host Dave Bast discusses one way Christians have tried to explain the complex relationship between what happens in our lives and God's will. Have you previously encountered the differentiation he mentions—between God's permissive will and God's active will—or is this the first time you've heard it? Do you think this distinction is helpful? Why or why not?
- In the *Groundwork* episode "[Justice, Lament, and Flourishing](#)," Dave describes what it means to lament: "Lament isn't just crying, you know; it isn't just being sad...It is a specific way of praying that we see in scripture that ought to be triggered by the circumstances in the world as we see it in its brokenness or in our own lives...It is questioning of God..." Do you find lament easy or difficult for you? Why?
- What helps you continue to have faith or continue to praise God despite suffering?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Psalm 13](#), [Psalm 22](#), [Psalm 55](#), [Lamentations 1:20-22](#), [Matthew 27:45-46](#), [Romans 12:15](#), [1 Peter 5:6-11](#)

CONCLUSION

Using Job's lament ([Job 3:11-26](#)) or one of the Psalms listed above as a model, write your own prayer of lament in response to the suffering you have experienced or are currently experiencing in your life or that you're witnessing in your local community, in our nation, or in our world right now.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/why-god-why>

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