



# Shepherd's Path

## A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

### Seeing God Through Suffering Series, Lesson 10

**Lesson Title:** Asking the Big Question, "Why?"

**Take Home Point:** When suffering, ask "Who?" not "Why?"

#### Warm-Up:

A little girl watched her mother sit on the sofa working on an intricate embroidery project. She was fascinated because her mother had told her how beautiful it would be. Each evening the girl's mother would work on her project. Day after day the child watched. She could not see the front of the picture, but on the back she saw threads cross each other and small knots with string ends attached. She couldn't see pattern or beauty. Finally she could stand it no longer and said, "I don't know, Mom. From here it's just a mess!" Her mom smiled and replied, "That's because you only see the working side. Look at it as I see it. What you can see doesn't make sense, but when I am done, it will be a beautiful picture for everyone to appreciate and enjoy."

**Read:** Job 38:1-11, 42:1-6; Isaiah 55:8-9

#### Observation (What happened?):

How did the Lord respond to Job's questions for the "why" of his suffering?

What was Job's response to God's words?

#### Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think God didn't just tell Job exactly what was going on and why?

What did Job learn?

#### Insight:

Countless volumes throughout history address the "problem" of human suffering. Some attempt to explain it in terms of human reason; some are angry polemics against a mean, unjust God. Some stay away from asking why and simply strive to provide comfort or ways to cope. Others, particularly non-Christian religious books, offer supernatural explanations such as angry gods, another life on the path to perfection, planetary alignments, etc. Typically, most present two perspectives – your suffering is either God's fault or your fault. There are, however, two other perspectives that are not commonly presented, both based on God's word. First, God gave us free will. We make choices. Choices have consequences. Since our choices are not always perfect, bad consequences result for others as well as the person making the choice. Second, we live in a world corrupted by sin. Bad things happen. The Bible says that all bad things are the result of sin corrupting the world. Not everything has a rational explanation, and it is clear from the account of Job that God doesn't feel compelled to explain everything, either. That is part of our faith walk – leaving in our perfect Father's hands what we don't understand.

#### Application (What does it mean to me?):

Who controls your way of thinking toward suffering? How does it show to others?

To whom do you turn when you experience pain and loss? How is God a part in your reaction?

#### Kingdom Quest Year 2 – Lesson 10