

How God's Comfort Helps Us Overcome – May 18 & 19, 2019

Follow-up Bible Studies

Written by Maggie Baxter

Day One: Job 2

- Who presented themselves to the Lord (1)? Summarize Satan's conversation with God (2-6). When considering that Satan couldn't afflict Job without the Lord's permission, this may churn up some pain or hard questions regarding any abuse you've suffered. Ask God these questions; show him your pain. May he comfort you.
- Following the horrific losses of chapter one, what additional suffering did Satan afflict on Job (7-8)? What conversation did Job and his wife then have (9-10)? If her aim was to comfort Job and to help him overcome, what should she have done differently?
- How did Job's friends enter the scene (11)? How did they react to his plight (12-13)? How do you think Job felt to be comforted in this way? Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 and ask the Lord to reveal ways *you* can truly comfort to those in pain. What roles should silence, weeping, mourning and sitting alongside play?

Day Two: Psalm 40:1-5

- Describe David's manner of waiting for the Lord (1). How did God respond to this (1)? What's it like for you to wait on God? When awaiting his comfort, read psalms of lament aloud, testify to your own soul about God and draw close to his people. Start with one of these options, and see where it takes you.
- What did the Lord do when he heard David's cry (2-3)? What "new song" of overcoming has God given to you? What compels you to sing it out? What are your "old songs" about? May they be drowned out by God's comfort.
- In whom do the blessed trust (4)? What false comforts do they forsake (4)? When you've been harmed or abused, what comforts do you seek? How do you renew your strength? Why is it worthwhile to anchor your hope in God (5)? What wonders of overcoming has the Lord done in your life?

Day Three: Isaiah 51:1-3

- Who is the audience of this passage (1)? Do you count yourself among this group? Why or why not? What does it look like for an abuse survivor to "pursue righteousness" and "seek the Lord"? How can you support survivors on this journey?
- Where does Isaiah first tell his listeners to look (1-2)? How does he describe Abraham and Sarah (2)? How did they manage to overcome their own pain and hardship? What inspiration do they offer? Where else in the Bible can you find people overcoming? What role does God's comfort play in their stories?
- What will God do for Zion (3)? What is your response to Isaiah's use of the word "surely"? If you or a loved one doesn't sense that God's comfort will "surely" come, may you see him in the midst of whatever trial befalls you, and may his people comfort you. How will Zion respond to God's comfort, compassion and restoration (3)? How do you respond to God's comfort?

Day Four: Luke 10:25-37

- What question was posed to Jesus (25)? How did he respond (26)? What did the expert in the law go on to say (27)? What clarifying question did he ask (29)? Jesus answered by telling a parable; summarize it (30-35). Describe each character (30-33).
- What final question did Jesus ask the lawyer (36)? What was his response (37)? What did Jesus then say (37)? The lawyer wanted to do the bare minimum and avoid entering

into others' pain. Do you think he would ever "go and do" what the Samaritan did? Why or why not? How do you comfort others, especially abuse victims? What precautions do you take to avoid causing additional harm?

- Consider how the victim in the story must've felt about the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan. He likely expected comfort from the former two, but instead got it from the disdained outsider. Pray for keen spiritual eyesight to see true comforters among us, and may you do as the Samaritan did: be a comfort to victims.

Day Five: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

- What imagery does Paul use to describe his care for his readers (7-8)? What is it like to have children among you? What is a nursing mother's care like? What does this imagery teach us about church leaders' important call to comfort others?
- Out of his love for the church, what did Paul do (8)? How do you share your life with others, and what impact does this have on them? Why did Paul work so hard, pursue righteousness, etc. (9-10)? When it comes to abuse survivors, what are some ways the church fails to not be a burden to them? How can we do better?
- Paul then returns to family imagery to describe his relationship with the church; describe this instance (11-12). A "father dealing with his own children" may evoke a negative connotation for many. What does it evoke for you? Just imagine if every survivor in our church felt encouraged, comforted and called into God's kingdom and glory. How can you help this to become a reality?