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KEAVY CHURCH OF CHRIST

371 LEVEL GREEN ROAD, CORBIN, KY 40701

Across from Keavy Elementary School

MEETING TIMES

Sunday Bible Classes (All Ages)	10:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 PM
Tuesday Support Group for Addicts and Survivors of Domestic Violence	6:00 PM
Wednesday Afternoon & Evening Jail Ministry @ Knox County Detention Center	1:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	5:00 PM

Learning To Live With Trauma[1]

(More Bible Studies Available @ marktabata.com)

Lamentations 3:14-30 (CEV)

14 I am a joke to everyone—
no one ever stops making fun
of me. **15** God[2] has turned my
life sour. **16** He made me eat
gravel and rubbed me in the
dirt. **17** I cannot find peace or
remember happiness. **18** I tell
myself, "I am finished! I can't
count on the LORD to do
anything for me." **19** Just
thinking of my troubles and my
lonely wandering makes me
miserable. **20** That's all I ever
think about, and I am

depressed.[3] 21 Then I
remember something that fills
me with hope. 22 The
LORD's kindness never fails!
If he had not been merciful, we
would have been destroyed.
23 The LORD can always be
trusted to show mercy each
morning. 24 Deep in my heart
I say, "The LORD is all I need;
I can depend on him!" 25 The
LORD is kind to everyone who
trusts and obeys him. 26 It is
good to wait patiently for the
LORD to save us.[4] 27 When

we are young, it is good to struggle hard

28 and to sit silently alone, if this is what the LORD intends.
29 Being rubbed in the dirt can teach us a lesson;[5] **30** we can also learn from insults and hard knocks.[6]. 31. The Lord won't always reject us! **32** He causes a lot of suffering, but he also has pity because of his great love.[7] **33** The Lord doesn't enjoy sending grief or pain.[8]

1. Where Is God?
2. Why Is God Letting This Happen?
3. How Can I Live With Such Pain?

Study Questions

1. Is God responsible for the physical suffering in this world?[9] Why or why not?[10]

2. What are some examples of trauma that you have experienced in your life?

3. Consider Lamentations 3:19-20. How is our thinking related to dealing with trauma?[11]

4. How is Jesus the ultimate Answer of God to trauma, evil, pain, and suffering?[12]

[1] trauma noun BrE /ˈtrɔːmə/ NAmE /ˈtraʊmə/ 1 [U] (psychology) a mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for a long time the effects of trauma and stress on the body The children showed no signs of trauma after their ordeal. 2 [C, U] an unpleasant experience that makes you feel upset and/or anxious She felt exhausted after the traumas of recent weeks. 3 [U, C] (medical) an injury The patient suffered severe brain trauma." (A.S. Hornby, Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 8th edition (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary), 605855-60859 (Kindle Edition): Oxford University Press)

[2] Jeremiah seems to place blame on God for his trauma. Like many people in the Bible throughout time, the hardship of suffering leads to questions and doubts about God's role in our hardships. The Bible invites us to bring our questions and heartache to God. The Book of Psalms clearly shows us this.

Approximately seventy percent of the recorded Psalms in the Old Testament are psalms of complaint, lament, or imprecation, which means vengeance. By praying these Psalms we lay our stuff honestly at God's feet. God is big enough to let us beat on his chest. We need not pretend we have no negative, angry feelings toward God. In fact, he already knows we have those feelings anyway. Rather, we have both permission and language to open our hearts and show rage, disappointment, and anger at God.…"So the Psalms supply language and permission to express our negative feelings. This, in turn, offers therapy—and ultimately healing. Psalms help us voice the unspeakable and uncomfortable and give us permission to pour out our hearts to God. And who better to hear us than the God who knows our grief and welcomes our lament? (Lynn Anderson, Talking Back to God: Speaking Your Heart to God Through the Psalms, 69-74 (Kindle Edition): Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press)

[3] "Hell" comes up often. "Hell came to pay me a surprise visit." "If there is a hell upon earth, it is to be found in a melancholy heart," observed Robert Burton in the 1600s. The poet Robert Lowell wrote, "I myself am hell." A mother describes her child's experience as "Danny's Descent into Hell." "A Room in Hell." "A lonely, private hell." John of the Cross called it "the dark night of the soul." "Hellish torments," recounted J. B. Phillips. "Hell's black depths," said William Styron, author of Sophie's Choice and other popular but sometimes dark novels. 2 As Dante understood, there is an intimate connection between hell and the hopelessness of depression. The entrance to Dante's version of hell read, "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here….Abraham Lincoln thought the pain would lead to death; the body couldn't tolerate it. I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on earth. Whether I shall ever be better, I cannot tell; I awfully forbode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible. I must die or be better, it appears to me. 15 What tortures many people is the fact that they don't die….Being alone is terrifying. Abandonment is a constant fear. "I fear everyone and everything."…The only certainty is that misery will persist. If certainty of any good thing ever existed—and you can't remember when it did—it is replaced by constant doubt. You doubt that you are loved by anyone. You doubt your spouse's intentions…The only thing you know is that you are guilty, shameful, and worthless. It is not that you have made mistakes in your life, or sinned, or reaped futility. It is that you are a mistake, you are sin, you are futility. "In this regard, depression can be a form of self-punishment, however subconsciously or involuntarily administered." 17 God has turned his back. Why bother going on in such a state? You might as well join God and turn your back on yourself too. (Edward Welch, *Depression: A Stubborn Darkness-Light For The Path,* 16-24 (Kindle Edition); Greensboro, North Carolina; New Growth Press)

[4] The argument against God from evil makes some arrogant assumptions. Just because evil is not destroyed right now does not mean that it never will be. The argument implies that if God hasn't done anything as of today, then it won't ever happen. But this assumes that the person making the argument has some inside information about the future. If we restate the argument to correct this oversight in temporal perspective, it turns out to be an argument that vindicates God. 1. If God is all-good, He will defeat evil. 2. If God is all-powerful, He can defeat evil. "3. Evil is not yet defeated. 4. Therefore, God can and will one day defeat evil. The very argument used against the existence of God turns out to be a vindication of God in the face of the problem of evil. ...God isn't finished yet. The final chapter has not been written. Apparently God would rather wrestle with our rebellious wills than to reign supreme over rocks and trees. Those who want a quicker resolution to the conflict will have to wait. (Norman L. Geisler & Ronald M. Brooks, *When Skeptics Ask: A Handbook On Christian Evidences,* 64-65 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Baker Books)

[5] God's punishment throughout Scripture are seen to have a remedial (redemptive/ healing) purpose, in one way or another.

Isaiah 19:19-22-19 In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. 20 And it will be for a sign and for a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to the LORD because of the oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Mighty One, and He will deliver them. 21 Then the LORD will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day, and will make sacrifice and offering; yes, they will make a vow to the LORD and perform it. 22 And the LORD will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to the LORD, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.

Isaiah 26:9-With my soul I have desired You in the night, Yes, by my spirit within me I will seek You early; For when Your judgments *are* in the earth, The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

6 The verse suggests that it is good to be forced to endure misfortune when one is a youth, for during those formative years suffering can serve a disciplinary or even a redemptive function...Although these verses follow immediately upon the expression of hope, they do not presume that suffering will be removed or withheld from those who trust in God. Rather, they indicate the good that can be derived from suffering if it is accepted and allowed to accomplish its educative and even salvific ends. (Dianne Bergant, Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries: Lamentations, 1381-1386 (Kindle Edition); Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press)

7 Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection story poses as many questions as answers—as great stories often do. Jesus suffers multiple forms of abuse, all of which are wrapped up in the spiritual abuse that catalyzed his torture and death. And yet he ultimately survives the abuse and trauma. Jesus is a trauma survivor. His resurrection offers hope that his wounds and traumatic death do not have the last word but are rather eclipsed by life and healing. (Charles Kiser, Elaine Heath, Trauma-Informed Evangelism: Cultivating Communities of Wounded Healers, 123 (Kindle Edition): Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company)

[8] James 5:11-Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended by* the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

James 5:11 (ESV)-Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

The word translated "end" here, telos, often with the significance of termination, consummation, etc., also designates purpose, aim, design, it's obvious meaning here. We, in our day, and from our vantage point (James is saying), can now see the purpose and design of God's plan in Job's case, which was not nearly so apparent then. The over-all-lesson here indicated ought not to be lost on us today. There is "a divinity that shapes our ends," and though, for the moment, we are unable to discern the purpose or plan which God has, we should patiently wait for the unfolding thereof, knowing that eventually he will vindicate himself and all matters will turn out for our good...That is, "the end" (design, purpose, plan) of the Lord is to show great pity and much mercy for his suffering saints. In Job's case, the Lord exhibited the greatest pity and compassion; and, this will he also do for all who similarly endure. The phrase "full of pity" denotes the fact that God is tender-hearted; he is not unmindful of the agonies of his people, nor does he turn a deaf ear to their cries. He abounds in pity (polusplagchnos), he is filled with it. Moreover, he is "merciful," (oiktirmon), I.e., full of compassion for those who suffer. (Guy N. Woods, A Commentary On The Epistle Of James, 287; Nashville, TN; Gospel Advocate).

[9] In reply, the theist can argue that all physical evil is connected to free will. Some is connected directly, some indirectly. Most is connected with human free will, though some may be connected to free actions of evil spirits (demons). But all physical evil is connected with free moral agents in one way or another. 1. Some Physical Evil Is Directly Self-Inflicted...2. Some Physical Evil Is an Indirect Result of Free Choice…3. Some Physical Evil Is the Direct Result of the Free Choices of Others...4. Some Physical Evil Is the Indirect Result of the Free Choices of Other…..5. Some Physical Evil Is the Byproduct of a Good Process…6. Some Physical Evil Is Necessary for the Greater Physical Good...7. Some Physical Evil Is Needed for a Greater Moral Good…8. Some Physical Evil May Be Inflicted by God's Justice in Punishing Evil Actions.…9. Some Physical Evil Is a Result of Adam's Free Choice.…10. Some Physical Evil Is a Result of Evil Spirit Beings...Some have objected to claiming that physical evil results from the abuse of free will, insisting that God could miraculously intervene and prevent these evil results; that He does not makes God culpable for allowing them to occur. However, as we later show in more detail (see chapter 8), regular miraculous intervention for this purpose would upset the whole world's moral order. Without the regularity of nature, moral decisions are impossible and moral improvement cannot occur; both of these are necessary to producing the best of all worlds. (Norman L. Geisler, If God, Why Evil?: A New Way to Think About the Question, 73-79 (Kindle Edition): Grand Rapids, MI: Bethany House Publishers)

[10] I used to be very angry with God about that tree. Tempting them like that? It was only a matter of time before they wouldn't be able to restrain themselves. And then what? He blames them ? How long did God expect they would make it before, to their ears, the "you can eat everything but that one tree" became "you can eat everything but that one tree"?...I have come to appreciate the risk of that tree for God— and the necessity of that tree for us. Simply put, that tree made us real: it gave us choice. God wasn't looking to make some complicated hamsters that he could set up in a sweet cage. He created us for real relationship with him. Real relationship simply cannot exist if you cannot choose something else other than that relationship. We pity a woman whose husband or boyfriend keeps her locked in their house, monitors the few phone calls he allows her to have, and keeps even her family at arm's length. No one would call that love. Had God not offered the tree and with it the opportunity to rebel against him, he would have been that guy. Love that isn't chosen is forced. In giving us that tree and making the warning very clear, he gave us choice, even the option to reject his guidance and companionship. He knew very well that decision would cost him dearly, but it was what was best for us. (Jim Pace, Should We Fire God? Finding Hope In God When We Don't Understand, 829-842 (Kindle Edition); New York, NY; FaithWords Hachette Book Group)

[11] Proverbs 23:7-For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he…

Philippians 4:8-Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

At least nineteen times in these four chapters, Paul mentions joy, rejoicing, or gladness….Yet, in spite of his danger and discomfort, Paul overflowed with joy. What was the secret of this joy? The secret is found in another word that is often repeated in Philippians: It is the word mind. Paul uses mind ten times, and also uses the word think five times. Add the time he uses remember and you have a total of sixteen references to the mind. In other words, the secret of Christian joy is found in the way the believer thinks—his attitudes. After all, outlook determines outcome. As we think, so we are (Prov. 23:7). Philippians, then, is a Christian psychology book, based solidly on Bible doctrine. It is not a shallow self-help book that tells the reader how to convince himself that "everything is going to turn out all right." It is a book that explains the mind the believer must have if he is going to experience Christian joy in a world filled with trouble. (Warren W. Wiersbe, Philippians: Be Joyful: Even When Things Go Wrong, You Can Have Joy, 17-19 (Kindle Edition): Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook)

[12] Matthew 1:23-"BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which is translated, "God with us."

We were clearly moving toward the climax of our discussion. The clues Kreeft had mentioned at the outset of our interview were converging, and I could sense an increasing passion and conviction in his voice. I wanted to see more of his heart—and I wouldn't be disappointed. "The answer, then, to suffering," I said in trying to sum up where we've come, "is not an answer at all." "Correct," he emphasized, leaning forward as he pleaded his case. "It's the Answerer. It's Jesus himself. It's not a bunch of words, it's the Word. It's not a tightly woven philosophical argument; it's a person. The person. The answer to suffering cannot just be an abstract idea, because this isn't an abstract issue; it's a personal issue. It requires a personal response. The answer must be someone, not just something, because the issue involves someone—God, where are you?" That question almost echoed in his small office. It demanded a response. To Kreeft, there is one—a very real one. A living One. "Jesus is there, sitting beside us in the lowest places of our lives," he said. "Are we broken? He was broken, like bread, for us. Are we despised? He was despised and rejected of men. Do we cry out that we can't take any more? He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Do people betray us? He was sold out himself. Are our tenderest relationships broken? He too loved and was rejected. Do people turn from us? They hid their faces from him as from a leper. "Does he descend into all of our hells? Yes, he does. From the depths of a Nazi death camp, Corrie ten Boom wrote: 'No matter how deep our darkness, he is deeper still.' He not only rose from the dead, he changed the meaning of death and therefore of all the little deaths—the sufferings that anticipate death and make up parts of it. "He is gassed in Auschwitz. He is sneered at in Soweto. He is mocked in Northern Ireland. He is enslaved in the Sudan. He's the one we love to hate, yet to us he has chosen to return love. Every tear we shed becomes his tear. He may not wipe them away yet, but he will. (Peter Kreeft in Lee Strobel, The Case For Faith: A Journalist Investigates The Toughest Objections To Christianity, 45-52 (Kindle Edition); Grand Rapids, Michigan; Zondervan)