

[Day #21] Part 1: Survivor's Guide to Suffering – Wonder
Read: Job 38

Preparedness is what is done in advance of a crisis to help ensure survival. A banner, hung at the front of the classroom where a preparedness course was being taught, aptly said, “At the moment of truth, you will not rise to the level of expectation, but will fall to the level of training.”

There is another kind of “preparedness,” something we can do in our walk with Christ that will ensure not just survival in times of deep suffering, but that we thrive, whether that suffering is the result of a natural disaster or a personal crisis.

The first key to surviving suffering is to cultivate and maintain a *sense of wonder and awe*. God knits this into us in the womb, but years of life have a way of pummeling this out of us. In his book, *Recapture the Wonder*, Ravi Zacharias notes, “The tragedy with growing up is not that we lose childishness in its simplicity, but that we lose childlikeness in its sublimity.” There’s just something about the years that beats out of us our ability to rise in transcendent awe and wonderment at the simplest of marvels – a flower’s beauty, a puff of wind, or a splashing wave.

Job definitely had lost his sense of wonder. From where he sat next to the ash pile, all he could see was incongruence: a God who had brought upon him great calamity even though he had done nothing so evil as to merit such treatment. It made no sense!

If what Job wanted was answers, it seems God felt what he really needed was *more questions* – 64 of them to be exact! Questions like: “Where were you when I created the world? ... Where does darkness reside? ... Does the rain have a father? Do you send the lightning bolts on their way? Do they report to you, ‘Here we are’?” (Job 38:6, 19, 28, 35)

Sixty-four questions later Job was thoroughly overwhelmed. In a spirit of deep awe and humility, he answers God,

“You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things **too wonderful** for me to know.” (Job 42:1-3)

Job still had no answer, but after his “interview” with God he was content to allow wonder to fill that space. And suddenly, that was enough.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What conclusion do you think God was leading Job towards by asking him so many impossible questions?

How could such a conclusion help us rise above impossibly difficult circumstances that don't seem to make sense? Give examples.