

# Pilgrims Problems No. 9 Pain and Suffering

by Willie Mullan

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*The sermon explores the problem of pain and suffering, and how the devil's role in it can be understood through the story of Job, emphasizing the importance of trusting God's sovereignty and control.*

**Duration:** 58:28

**Scripture:** Job 1:1, Isaiah 49:1, 2 Corinthians 12:7, Hebrews 12:5-7

**Topics:** "Pain and Suffering"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Isaiah 49 and the prophecy spoken by Isaiah. He emphasizes that God called Isaiah from the moment he was born and made his mouth like a sharp sword. The preacher also discusses the idea that sometimes God allows his children to suffer in order to glorify his name. He mentions that sufferings can come from sin, Satan, or even from God for the sake of his blood. The preacher uses the example of Job to illustrate how God allowed suffering in his life to test his faith, and despite losing everything, Job still worshipped God.

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## Transcript

Now we're thinking about the problem of pain and suffering. Of course you know that next Tuesday it will be a night off. I'll be at Newcastle at the conference and Easter Tuesday's a night off for you, not for me, and remember that.

Tonight we're looking at this problem of pain and suffering, and every human being on this planet must at some time experience suffering and pain and agony. That goes for everybody on the planet, black and white and red and yellow and learned and literate and high and low, rich and poor, young and old, Protestant and Catholic and Jew and Arab. I suppose that everyone in this meeting has suffered pain at some time, even if it was only the toothache when you were small.

And in my days, you know, when I went to school we looked back at this and sometimes we wonder about it all. If you had a pain from toothache when I was going to school, remember I went to, first of all, the church school. The church owned it.

And then it became national school, then it became the public elementary school, and it changed down through the years. But when I was going to school first, there was a little fellow on my bare feet. If you took the toothache and the master got to know what's wrong with you boy, and you said I've got the toothache, then he wrote you out a line and sent you with another lad to the dispensary.

Some of you younger ones don't know even what a dispensary is, but it doesn't matter. Some of you older ones know quite well what the dispensary was. Well you should have seen the dispensary in our town.

The old doctor was Dr. Jemison. He wore a top hat. Know what a top hat is? They come here to get married in these top hats sometimes.

An old grey top hat and he wore a swallowtail coat, but when the dispensary opened they always took the coat off and rolled the sleeves up, but kept the top hat on. So I would like you to sort of get the picture. And the dispensary, you queued up outside, it was a queue like a picture tube.

And when it came your turn, I can remember this as well, there was a counter in the dispensary, and he's standing with the hands on the counter, top hat on. What's up with you, he said. Nearly hit you every time.

And I said I've got the toothache, sir. Open your mouth. And then he leaned over and then he shouted, open your mouth.

Then he just reached back onto his chair at Sheffield without looking back, and there's an old pair of rusty pliers. You wouldn't use them for the car. You should see them.

Show me it. Open your mouth, stuck these in, get the tooth, and she's out in two seconds. Nearly pulled the jaw off you.

Yes. Come on here, he said, and wash it out and put something into a glass. I think it was Domestos, but I'm not sure.

At least it seemed to taste like that. I'm sure that everybody here has had pain of some kind. And you know, I want you to get the hold of this.

Some suffer pain continually. Excruciating pain. Unbearable pain.

And they need to get drugs. Some people are even on morphine in their last days for pain. A man on Saturday at the meeting at Lisburn waited behind to talk to me, and he's just out of bed after 24 weeks with brucellosis.

It's a disease that cattle get, and he is a farmer's servant. Working on a big farm outside of Lisburn, three of them got this disease, and two of them died. And he tried to describe to me the pain that he'd gone through for the last 24 weeks.

He says, I felt my body was in hell. I'm taking my time for just sort of on the line that there are all kinds of pain. We've all suffered pain.

Unsaved people suffer pain. Unsaved people suffer pain. But there is a difference between the two.

I want you to get that. You know, I used to call into a ward in the hospital there, where a sister was in charge. And I led her to the Lord many years ago.

Sometimes she's in this meeting, and I'm not sure if she's not here now. And as we sat on this particular day, she said, there's a little woman up the ward I would like you to speak to. She's just had the baby some weeks ago, and the baby's blind.

And she's in a terrible way about it. And I think you're the one to go to talk to. I said, how did this baby become blind, sister? She said, well, the woman is really rotten with venereal disease.

And I think the man is too. And so as I went up the ward, the little woman in the bed just started waiting for me. And I don't think I ever saw a face so much distorted with anger.

I'm sure the devil was working with her. Before I got near the bed, she called out in a loud voice, you and your God. Look what your God has done to my child.

I said, now dear, I don't think you have any right to say that. Because I don't think it was God at all. I think it was your sin.

Sometimes we blame God for things, when it's really sin and Satan. I want you to take your time with that. You see, sometimes Satan sort of works on minds.

And in this sexual fashion works on minds. Until they're running after everybody. Until this disease spreads.

You're intelligent enough to listen, aren't you? Now don't blame God for your sin. And then I'll tell you when something happens because of the sin that Satan has tempted you to do continually. Then Satan tempts them again to curse God for it.

It's a pretty good line of things he's on. And mind you, that multiplies. You see a man, and he becomes a real boozier, an alcoholic.

And he just gurgles whiskey and brandy. And the devil keeps him at it. And he starves the children while he's doing it.

And then his liver goes to pieces. And then he's lying in bed with pain that he can't suffer. And he's going to die.

And he blames God. I'm afraid he needs to take his time. I'm afraid it's sin and Satan.

I think you need to get the hold of this line of things before we get started this evening. Yes, I can see the old devil at work at times. Yes.

You know, it's the same with a whole lot of things. I don't think I need to go into them. Sometimes I think it's the same with smoking and cancer.

I've seen lung cancer, you know, when it's pushing the bones out. I have. And I could tell you what I believe was the foundation of its beginning, too.

It was smoking, wasn't it? Now I want you to just steady on that, because sometimes pain and suffering and agony and and anguish, I believe it's sin and Satan is there. But then when you think that believers have the very same kind of pains. Oh, I don't think they have venereal disease unless they had it before they were saved.

But you know, believers have tumors and strokes and heart trouble and arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis and rheumatism and paralysis. And can't we go on with the pains? And some of the dearest saints of God tonight are locked in arthritis with the pain that's really excruciating. And I don't believe that it's sin and

Satan now.

I believe it's God and his glory now. That's different. But that takes a bit of balancing out.

I think I told you about Dr. Barnhouse. Dr. Barnhouse was a great scholar. I think he had one of the clearest minds of all the preachers I ever knew.

And he penned a book on parallels in the two kingdoms. You see, if we look at this big world of ours tonight, this planet, oh, I know there are many kingdoms, but just leave them to the side and look at it in a broad sense. Actually, there are only two kingdoms in this planet Earth of ours.

There's the kingdom of darkness, where Satan rules. He's the thought of boss there, and the whole world of that kingdom of darkness lies in the lap of the wicked one. And he has a terrible crooked way of going about things.

Hurts his own children even. But there is not only the kingdom of darkness down here, there is the kingdom of God's dear son, and every believer. Doesn't make a matter who you are, or what you are, or whether you're Methodist, or Presbyterian, or free Presbyterian, or belong to the Episcopal Church.

Doesn't matter at all. If you're gloriously saved, born again, washed in the blood, if you have faith in the Lord Jesus, then you're in the kingdom of God's dear son. Want you to get that in his broadest sense.

Because Dr. Barnhouse made a whole book of parallels. I told you about a professor he found in a hospital bed in the corner. He was 28 years of age.

He had eight letters to his name. He was married. He had two children, I think.

And he had this paralysis that paralyzed right from the toes right to the neck. And he could only move his head just a little bit when Dr. Barnhouse found him. And he was praising the Lord.

He was saying to the doctor, just a week or two, and I'll see the Savior, you know. Could you say this if it was your turn? But you see, he goes across the city of Philadelphia to another hospital on the other side, and finds a professor, 28 years of age, same number of degrees, married, two children, with the very same disease, at the very same peak. He can only move his head, and he's cursing God.

Why should God do this of me? Made the old doctor think. And I think if I'm right in saying that at the last he had about 500 parallels. He'd found them.

That's worth thinking about. You see, when you think about the kingdom of darkness, and all the sinners that are in the kingdom of darkness, and when you think of what sin can do and the pain it can bring, and when you think of how cruel Satan is, you know, would it be right that all folks in the kingdom of darkness should suffer sin, and God's children should have none? Perhaps as it is, we'd have a lot of converts, but they wouldn't be through you know. They'd just be coming over to our side because there was no pain.

Oh, but God allows! Let's get this word on the line right now. God allows! And not only allows, but God directs. You see, if we could see our God, you know, God's permissive will is a very wonderful thing.

He permits things to happen to his saints, just to prove that they love him, and that they will glorify his name even in the fires. Oh, but sometimes God directs his children into the furnace. Now that's what we've got to work out this evening.

Now let's begin tonight in the book of Job. Let's begin in the book of Job, and we're at the first chapter. Need to do a bit of reading here.

Remember, there are always young believers with us, and we must establish things for them. Job chapter 1 verse 1, there was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. And that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.

And don't forget that little bit, because that's the character that the Spirit of God first of all gives him. Yes, he was a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God. Godly man he was, eschewed evil.

The word eschewed just means that he kept away from evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred sheehouses, and a very great household.

So that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. He was a very rich man. You can see the, he was a farmer.

You can see the farmer, and you can the farm, seven thousand sheep. Now look at verse 6. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. And I'm perfectly sure that the phrase here, the sons of God, means the angels of God.

All the angels of God who were messengers for God and coming to earth with messengers, just like Gabriel came to the Virgin Mary. They're getting back to heaven to present themselves before the Lord. And Satan came also among them.

Yes, we must never forget, you know, that he was an angel. Oh, I know a fallen one at this particular time, but he felt he had the right, the right to line up now, stand with the angels, came among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, because the Israelites don't believe that Satan is a person.

You like to come around and tell me who God is talking to. Because if there's nobody there, I would want to know what's gone on with God. Because he's talking to them.

And this is what he said to them. And the Lord said unto Satan, whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. You see, this book tells us that Satan was a liar from the beginning, and this must be a lie.

Never told the truth in his life. I remember walking along Port Stewart Strand with Dr. Barnhouse. He said, do you see what the devil said? From going up and down in the earth, and from going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it, it was a lie.

He was in Job's backyard all the time. He was after this farmer. This man was living for God, and the devil was going to give him trouble.

And if you're determined to live for God, the devil is determined to give you trouble. I never had a trouble. Thank God.

All who live godly shall suffer persecution. And the Lord said unto Satan, he didn't argue about it, hast thou considered my servant Job? He knew right well he had considered his servant Job. Then God backed this testimony up.

God said, there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that fears God and eschews evil. Here's Satan's answer. In Satan's answer, the Lord is arguing with the Lord, mind you.

He said, doth Job fear God for naught? You know why he fears you. You know why he serves you. Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? How did he know that Job had a hedge round about him? Because he was trying for days to get in on him, and he couldn't get in.

Of course he knew all about it. He wasn't walking up and down on the earth, he's trying to get in on this wee man. Can't get in.

Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But, here's the challenge, put forth thine hand now, and touch all that they have, and he will curse thee to thy face. He's challenging God.

He's standing on the street of heaven, and he's challenging God about his servant down there on earth. Says, you just take a lot of stuff from him. I'll tell you what he'll do to you, he'll curse you to your face.

And the Lord said unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power. Here's the only restriction. Only, only, upon himself put not forth thine hand.

Don't you dare touch him. Go ahead, take the cattle off him if you like. Do whatever you like.

Now this is God allowing Satan to deal with Job's farm. And I don't need to read the rest of the chapter, you can read it at your leisure. But in 24 hours from that moment when God gave Satan permission, 24 hours he lost seven sons and three daughters, and 7,000 sheep, and 3,000 camels.

And you've never seen 7,000 sheep dead on the land in your life. A lot of old farmers here. And if you went out tomorrow morning, and there were five sheep dead, you would nearly go crazy.

What about 7,000 of them? As far as your eye can see, they're all dead. The devil has mighty power, we must never minimize this. But he can't touch you, unless God allows him.

And God might allow him, not today. Just to see what's there. You see, what I see is this, that Job had his faith in God.

Ah, but God had his faith in Job. God can trust Job. Says okay to the devil, I'll take you on, all right, I'll allow you to do things, because I can trust this wee man.

And when he lost 7,000 sheep and 3,000 camels, here's how at the end of the day came. Verse 20, because we need to save time. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, fell down upon the ground, a lifeless bit, and worshipped.

How would you worship God if you lost everything? Some of you Baptists would have bothered. Everything's gone. The whole family's gone, and the farmer's gone.

Everything's gone. He's on his knees. It's not bluff, you know.

He's worshipping God. Listen to the language, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return, for the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord in all this, Job sent not, nor charged God foolishly.

The devil must have got a great smack that day. Yes, God trusted Job. Now look again in the second chapter, and there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord.

It's the angels again. And Satan came also among them to present themselves before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And it's the same answer.

And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down. It was not true. He had destroyed Job's farm.

The Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Still he holdeth fast his integrity. Of all thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause. Here is Satan's argument.

Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. And don't forget it was Satan who said that. You know we used to have a great KC here in Ulster called Sir Edward Carson.

Probably the best orator at the bar of the High Court that this land has ever seen. And once he was defending a man, and he put the man in the dock, and the man gave a great defense, so great that the other KC on the other side was almost speechless at the end. But the KC jumped to his feet and said, Your Honor, I know that he has spoken well for himself, but remember the good book says, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

And Sir Edward Carson said, It's a pity of his KC sir, cause it wasn't the good book that said it at all, it was the devil. He's just coping with what the devil says. You always get these things right now.

And old Carson was a very clever man. Oh this is the argument of the devil. He says verse 5, But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone, and his flesh.

You get that now, cause that's bone and flesh. He will curse thee to thy face. And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand.

That's a tough moment isn't it? There's a but in it, but, but save his life. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. That's an old Eastern disease.

It's not just boils, it's a disease called elephantitis. There are sort of boils all over you from the soles of your feet, right to the crown of your head. But it's the most stinking, horrible, painful, excruciating pain that any man ever bought.

And that's a mighty thing you know, because it shows you what the devil could do if he was let loose. Old Barnhouse said to me coming down the road, he said, Do you see Satan coming out from God's presence? Do you see him touching Job? Did you touch him? And he has such power when God allows him that one touch covers this man with this loathsome disease. I said that's right.

He says, answer me this question. Could he touch him the next second and heal him? Believe me he can. He's got to watch it you know.

Because we're just in the day and age, right at the end of this age, where there are going to be miracles wrought by the devil. And that's going to put some people in the fix. One thing more we must not miss as we're here, and it's this, that the devil can't touch you except God allows him.

Not a bit. We used to have a man who came about this meeting who didn't like me. I'm sure he wasn't the only one, but he's the one I know anyway.

Said to me in the little room one day we were having a real go, I threw him out of there. He says, I hit you. I said, I don't worry about you.

He says, I'll tell you something. I've got out of my bed every morning at four o'clock for the last six weeks to pray to the devil that he'll destroy me. You must be a clone.

You should buy comic books. I'll tell you, if the devil could destroy me he wouldn't live on a bed. I'd be gone in before I get up these steps.

Ah, that's baloney. The fella's daft. Doesn't he work that way? He will not be allowed to touch me, and the day that God allows him, then I'll have the grace to go through with it.

Don't you worry yourself. What I want you to see is this, that sometimes sufferings are defensive sufferings. It's for your defense.

God is defending you. Many a good man, many a godly man, many a man who lives with God. I think back to see Joaquin, and if there was a holy man on the face of this earth, it was Joaquin.

And yet I can remember the sufferings he went through, and I believe it was something like this, that God had allowed the devil to touch his body. Because for Ian Frazer, who I was with today, I went for him to come for Joaquin, and he said to me, he said, you know, I don't really know what's wrong, but I'll have to take this leg off, and I'll take it off tonight. Gonna take Joaquin's leg off.

He said, you know, he's such a godly old fella, you'll have to break the news to him. And so Ian went on to get the theater ready, and I went in to sit beside Joaquin and go about it as easy as I could, and I said, Joaquin, if you want to take this over to Ian, you've got to lose this leg where it's been, and knock out your life. That leg has been, you know.

I'll keep him that way. I'm glad that he did. I believe, I believe, that God allows the devil to touch his servants, and they have great pain, and it's just that God is defending the man that he trusts.

It should come your turn. Come your turn. Yes, it is.

Now let's shift to another side of this. Hebrews chapter 12, Hebrews 12, verse 5, and Paul is writing here to these believers, and he's saying, Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.

For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and that's a terrible phrase.

They're not sons at all. For the more we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? I think you can see this, you know. Sometimes God has to chasten us children.

It's got nothing to do with the devil, and it's got nothing to do with defending our faith in God. It's just that we're wayward children. It's just that we're just going to do what we like, at least that's what we think we will do.

And then God hits us, and you feel the pain. That's what you call corrective sufferings. Let's go to 2 Corinthians chapter 12.

And this is the very important bit. Paul's writing to this church at Corinth, and he's got to really talk to them, because they were belittling him. And it's not a good thing to belittle the gift that God sends among you.

You know, they said his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. He was God's gift. He says, it is not expedient for me, doubtless to glory, I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God, nor such an one caught up to the third heaven. Mind you, that's a mighty thing, because he's talking about himself. He sort of covers it over, saying, I knew a man in Christ.

It was Paul himself, fourteen years before this, he was stormed up the city of Lystra, and dragged out of the city for dead. And it was there while he was lying on the ground, and lots of folks thought he was dead. God had really taken him out of the body and taken him to heaven.

What a wonderful thing. You know, if some of us just got to walk around heaven, and just saw the throne, and the lion, and the angels, and the saints, and the golden street, maybe we would come back to be something for the Lord. Or maybe if we came back, you know, this town wouldn't be big enough for us.

And the Belfast Telegraph wouldn't have enough pages for what we would want to say. But Paul had had this experience, and he had never cheeped about it. He says, I knew such a man whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell.

For he was caught up in the paradise, it's the word he uses for heaven, and heard unspeakable words which are not lawful for a man to utter. Oh, he heard things he wasn't even allowed to utter again on earth. Of such in one will I glory, yet of myself I will not glory, but in my infirmity.

Verse 7 says, unless I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. You see, sometimes God has to send us in defense of sufferings, just to let the devil know that we're really true, and we'll go through for God, and we'll trust God even though he slay us. And then there are times when God really hits us, like a father hits his children to correct us.

And then there are these restrictive sufferings. Some of us God is very good to. Well, I think that I'm an old boozier who got saved, and once upon a time I was a tramp, and I tramped the boards and lay out onto the hedges.

And yet I'm allowed to go to preach to 800, 900 students at Queen's, and the governor lets me in to talk to the prisoners. And this morning I was talking to all the nobility in the land. Sometimes, no wonder I've got

things wrong with me, just to keep me in peace.

I got a thorn or two in the flesh too, you know. I don't think you should be well, even. I come up the street to my daughter.

That's on daughter's own. Yes, this is very important, you know. You have to suffer just in case you would get too big for your boots.

Keeps you in your place. These are all different kinds of sufferings. Can't you see God? It's all for his glory.

These defensive sufferings, and corrective sufferings, and restrictive sufferings. I think that this is a very wonderful one here. We're at John 21.

John's Gospel 21. For you younger ones, you try to get this. Because this is the Lord Jesus at the Sea of Galilee, and he's talking to Peter.

He's called Simon, son of Jonas. Verse 17. He, the Lord Jesus, saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.

Jesus saith unto him, feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, and he's just talking to Peter now, when thou wast young. Well, that should teach us all that Peter wasn't young anymore.

When thou wast young, that's in the past tense, you know. You're away from those days now, Peter. Thou giddest thyself, and walkest where thou wouldest.

When he was a young fellow, like a good lot of other young fellows, he just did what he liked. That's just the way he was brought up, as a young fisherman. He did what he liked when thou wast young.

But when thou shalt be old, isn't that something? Oh, he cannot die middle-aged, can he? If the Lord Jesus came in and said, Willie, when thou shalt be old, boy, there is no pain, and there is no disease, and there is no devil, and there is no nothing that will take me away, and may I already have a chance. Nobody could touch him, you know. You're going to grow on to your old.

Our Lord is the boss of time, as far as we're concerned. My times are in thy hand. He'll settle it.

Oh, how you can put your head on the pillow, even if you stagger on your feet. It's up to you. Now, watch this.

When thou shalt be old, when you're an old man, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands. Let's do it, see how it works out. That's how you stretch forth your hands, like that there.

And another shall get thee, good to tie your hands up there, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he signifying by what death he, Peter, should glorify God. He was going to be crucified at the end.

That's what they tell me. That's how he died. The historians say he was crucified.

And when they were putting him on the cross, he said to the men who were putting him on, oh, don't do it like that. Turn me upside down. I'm not fit to be crucified the way the Lord was.

And they say he was crucified upside down. You know, he glorified the Lord. Oh, look, let's get the hold of this.

This is very difficult to get, but try and get it. You know, you can die to glorify God. Oh, we were always afraid of this thing.

Living with death is what we were talking about this morning. And I was bringing these dignitaries to this, to let them see that there were men on this very planet who didn't fear death. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.

And Paul looked dead in the eyes and said, I am ready to be offered. The time of my departure is at hand. Oh, yes, there'll come pains of death.

Oh, they could be for the glorifying of the Lord. You know, that's effective sufferings. My, I have seen some folks die.

I'm 27 years here, and I've seen a lot of deaths. One of our deacons, and I can't push this too much, can I? I'm not allowed to. He and I sat all night, one night, watching the last moments of his life.

And I've never seen anybody suffering pain like that. And her eyes dropped in, there was only sockets there, and the face was scary. And the rattles, and she tries to say something, and they get down close to try to hear it.

And she said, in a minute or two, I've seen him. And I remember coming home and crying and saying, Lord, if I could die like that wee woman, I could do this. It had an effect, you know.

There are sufferings that come to believers that are just defensive because they're sent to us by God. And some are corrective, just like God cuffing your ear. And some are just to keep you from being too big for your brooch.

And some are to be effective. One night, we took a good look at this. Have a look at this.

This is Isaiah 49. And I promised you that one day I would preach on this in the morning meeting. The prophecy of Isaiah 49.

And this is Isaiah speaking. Listen all eyes unto me, this one, and hearken ye people from far. The Lord hath called me from the womb.

He felt that God called him when he was born as a little baby. From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword.

In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me and made me a polished shaft. You know what that is? That's a narrow. That's the thought of others they used to have.

A polished shaft. In his quiver hath he hid me. You know in the British Museum at this moment, there is one of these polished arrows in a glass case.

And on the front side of the glass case, there's a stripe of magnifying glass that really lets you see every little detail of this arrow. If you're looking through the ordinary glass, not the magnifying bit, you know the arrow is polished, it's like a billiard ball. But if you come around and look through the magnifying bit, there's

a thousand little facets where the chisel has chiseled this into shape.

And this is exactly what Isaiah had got to hold on. You know, sometimes God has to give us sufferings just to make us the polished shaft that he wants. You see how wonderful it says here, in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.

You know, it's just there where the arrow was, it was on this side it was, and this scabbard for the arrows, it was just there. You know, it was available to God. And then because it was polished, it was usable for God.

And then because it was hid in the quiver. Ah yes, I want you to get that, you know, it was invisible. You see, it was available and usable and invisible.

And if God wants to make some of you young fellows a polished arrow, he'll have to chisel a bit at you. And you might get a thump or two and take the edges off you, and it'll do you good. You see what this is for, don't you? You can see this, can't you? Because this is construct of sufferings.

God's building a man now. You remember when Paul was put in prison? You remember that he said that, well there are all the folks who wax confident by my bonds. You know, it's great to see a man in prison glorifying the Lord.

You know, I suppose that some of you don't know this, and it doesn't matter. When Dr. Paisley was put in prison, while he's a free Presbyterian, he signed me in as the Padre. That's a bit of a blow from a Presbyterian, isn't it? And so I have to go to the prison every week to see him.

And I'll tell you there were some days there I shall never forget. You see, there's a little cubicle just right next to the governor's office. The governor and I were very friendly.

He was Major Moran. He was an old friend of mine or anything like that. And I would say, I'm here to see the doctor.

And he said, all right, I'll have him sent in next door to you. And you know, little Warder would, I think they got the smallest Warder in the prison to look after Paisley. He was about up to Paisley's knees.

And you should see this little Warder, all shepherding this great giant of a man in. And I would say, good morning, doctor. And they say, good morning, Willie.

And I would say, let's pray. And I'd get down on my knees and Paisley would get down on his knees and the little Warder would stand straight. And then I would pray and I would say, would you like to pray, Ian? Well, the prayers that he prayed, I don't think you could really print them in a book.

I don't really believe it. He would pray for this little wart of a Warder beside me. And what abuse that little creature got in these prayers.

I hope he goes to heaven after all that. But then he would pray for this old demon in the office next door. And you know, when Paisley prays, you could hear him in there far from here, never mind in the office next door.

But I assure you this, that response. Yea, when he was in prison, everybody knew he was there and everybody knew he loved the Lord. Make no mistakes about that.

He wasn't quivering or anything like that or sniveling or crying. The hallelujahs, it would have scared me, never mind the rest of them. I tell you this, sometimes God puts his children in prison just to glorify his name.

I think we've got this, haven't we? You see, sometimes sufferings, they come from sin, from Satan. We've got to watch that. The world will argue with you if you don't watch it.

Sometimes sufferings for God's people, they come from God, because they're for his glory. Now when we come back after Easter Tuesday, we're going to look at evolution. Oh, they tell me, you know, it took millions of years to produce bits and pieces.

We'll see.

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