

# The Presbyterian Banner



## October 2023

**“From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint.  
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” Psalm 61:2**

## This Issue

"You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." Ephesians 2:19

### Table Of Contents

- 1 - *Cover* - Members and visitors at the Hawkesbury Nepean church in West Sydney.
- 2 - *This Issue*.
- 3 - *History Corner* - "Letters of Rev. William Nathaniel Wilson (Part 3)," Introduced by Tom Reeve and John Audet.
- 4-7 - *Church News* - Reports from Brisbane, Carrum Downs, Hawkesbury Nepean, Hunter, Manning, Northern Presbytery, and Central Presbytery.
- 7 - *October Search Work*.
- 8-10 - *Meditation* - "The Goodness of God in the Sufferings of Job and His Wife," by Tom Reeve.
- 11 - *October Prayer Points*.
- 12 - *Back Cover* - Top: Members and visitors at the Hawkesbury Nepean church in West Sydney.  
Bottom: Photo taken at the Central Presbytery meeting held at the Hawkesbury Nepean church.

### From the Editor



Being in Christchurch for a couple of weeks, I was reminded of something our family was involved with while we lived there. We volunteered for a Christian food bank, delivering food parcels to folks who requested them. I was thankful to find out that it is still operating today.

Our kids, quite young at the time, would go with us. They had a special name for the man who ran the food bank: Mr Grumpy. Well, he may have projected a gruff demeanour, but he had a soft heart. Every week as we picked up the parcels, he would give each of them a treat, usually an ice cream bar.

Ice cream is a great motivator, isn't it? But is that why they helped, for the reward?

Will it look good on my C.V. if I do volunteer work at a retirement home? Will giving blood have positive health benefits for me? Will I get a treat when I help deliver food parcels?

Calculating how we benefit from doing good shouldn't be our focus. Not that it's a problem to reward kids with ice cream. But you hope that as they grow, they mature in their realization that doing good is not about what's in it for them, it's about God's work in them. We do good because of what God has done for us, and what he continues to do in us by His Spirit. "You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Jim Klazinga

The Presbyterian Banner [ISSN 0729-3542] is the official magazine of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

The PCEA was founded in 1846 and adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) as a correct summary of the teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

There are congregations in Kalinga in QLD; Maclean, Wauchope, Kindee, Taree, Cardiff, Raymond Terrace, Sydney CBD, and Mt Druitt in NSW; Wantirna, Mulgrave, Narre Warren, Carrum Downs, and Geelong in VIC; Ulverstone in TAS.

Subscriptions: \$30 per year in bulk (5 or more) and \$35 for Australian individual subscriptions and \$50 overseas.

Bank details for Direct Credit: Bendigo Bank, BSB 633 000 Ac: 163 581 242 Please add your name in the details panel when making payment.

**The opinions expressed in the articles and news reports are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editor, his assistants, or of the PCEA itself.**

Reproduction of articles is usually allowed but permission to do so must be sought first.

The magazine is available as a pdf file for free download on the Church website: [www.pcea.org.au](http://www.pcea.org.au)

Editor: Jim Klazinga, 3 Padua Place, Boondall, QLD 4034

Mobile: 0466 213 763 Email: [editor@pcea.org.au](mailto:editor@pcea.org.au)

Assistant Editors: Ben Klazinga and Julie Klazinga

The editor is grateful for the assistance of an informal network of Banner liaisons from various PCEA congregations.

## Letters of Rev. William Nathaniel Wilson (Part 3)

Introduced by Tom Reeve and John Audet

In this third letter from Rev. Wilson to student Mr Herbert Ramsay, the arrangements for three weeks of pulpit supply on the Hunter River were firmed up. This ministry was appointed for Mr Ramsay to gain experience, to cover for Mr Wilson while he was away on the Clarence, as well as to fund his journey to Sydney to meet with the Church Extension Committee (see letter 2 in the September issue). Rev. Wilson repeated some of the things he had mentioned in previous correspondence by way of encouragement. It was then, and still is, daunting to take up the work of faithful Christian ministry.

### Letter 3

W.N. Wilson to H.W. Ramsay  
Raymond Terrace,  
6th Nov. 1908

Dear Mr Ramsay,

Yours of the 3rd current just to hand. I am glad you are planning to come down to take the services here; also that you are willing to conduct services on the Barrington, for that is one of our neglected fields. I think now it would be better for you to give Sabbath the 29th inst. on the Barrington and the two following Sabbaths here [Raymond Terrace], and then on the return journey to give another Sabbath on the Barrington. I will arrange with the treasurer to hand you the collections at all the services towards your expenses.

It will make it easier for you to take only two services here for you may need two sermons each Sabbath here. You need not be at all nervous, because my people are not critical but homely and they come to hear the Word and to worship no matter who preaches. The chief drawback is that the congregations are not large. There is something about a crowd that creates enthusiasm, but still it should be easy to preach to people who are hungry for the Word of life and not novelty hunters.

Your examination will not be severe, our aim will not be to puzzle you with hard questions, but to see that you are sound in the faith. The chief qualification is love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will not be at home when you come God willing, but on the Clarence River, but my wife will make you welcome, and you will soon be at home among many friends here. I am sure you will not regret coming. Do not be nervous, but just remember we want to be your friend and to give you all the help in our power, in order that you may become a useful worker in the vineyard of the Great Head of the Church. I will write at once to the Barrington and make arrangements for your stay there.

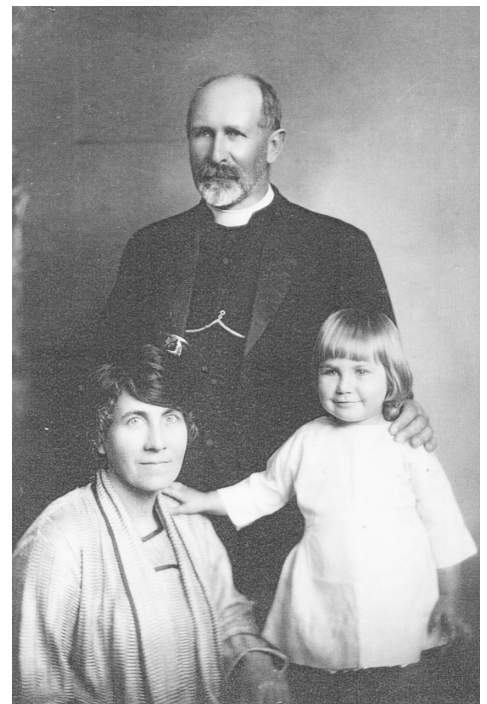
With kind Christian regards to your parents, Mrs R [Emily], yourself and all the members of your home circle.

I am yours truly  
W. N. Wilson

P. S. If all goes well I will see you on my return from the Clarence and we may have to journey to Sydney together.

You could bring any books you may wish to look up and look through them on the journey and during your stay here.

W. N. W.



Pictured: Rev. Herbert W. and Mrs Flora Ramsay in 1925, with their daughter Margaret aged about three.

Herbert's first wife Emily nee Brenton, died in 1914. They had five sons together. Two years later, in 1916, he married Flora McQueen and they had two children, Stewart (who became a PCEA minister) and Margaret (born in 1922) who became a teacher. Late in life (1977) she married Ted Hockett, an elder in the Hastings congregation.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Brisbane

[Report by Jim Klazinga]

One of our faithful regular visitors, Milton Emms, is scheduled to have long-awaited heart surgery on 25 October. Please pray for him and his wife Del. They recently celebrated their 50th anniversary. Pray that the operation may go well, and may accomplish what it is intended to accomplish.

We give thanks that Jim Busch was able to return home after an extended stay in the hospital, following surgery on a broken hip. Pray for him, for his wife Jean, and for the other older members in our congregation, a number of whom continue to deal with long-term physical struggles.

Please pray for the two young couples in our congregation (that we know of) who are expecting children: Ben and Claire Klazinga,



expecting their second child in November, and Micah and Lauren Klazinga, expecting their first child around next April.

Pastor Jim and Julie were blessed by their twelve days in

Christchurch, visiting with their oldest son Josh and his wife Milda and their two boys. Their older son, James (Jim and Julie's oldest grandchild), turned five years old during the visit.

Jim and Julie will be celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary this month.

Hainian and Naomi Yu and friends, the group Lucem Vitae, are preparing to perform a psalms concert, "Make a Joyful Noise," to be held at our church on 25th November.

Preparations are being made for our annual church camp, scheduled to be held again in December at Camp Drewe in Lennox Head NSW, from Friday the 8th to Monday the 11th. The cost is increasing substantially this year, as the venue no longer permits self-catering. If interested in registering for the camp, please contact Elder Stewart Carswell at [sccarswell@optusnet.com.au](mailto:sccarswell@optusnet.com.au).

Please pray for Stephen and Jessie Smith. Stephen is serving in the military, and has been assigned to be stationed in Sydney next year. Pray for them as they prepare to head south in December.

It was noted with thankfulness at a recent Deacons' Court meeting that our contributions continue to be greater than our expenses. We hope to begin collecting monthly offerings to help build up our Maintenance Fund account, which is currently empty. We are doing this in part to help raise money for painting the outside of the church, a rather expensive project that will need to be done in a year or so.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Carrum Downs

[Report by Ian Hall]

Our services in Carrum Downs continue as normal with periodically visitors present at our worship. In recent times Rev Hall has been preaching some teaching messages from Paul's letter to Titus and evangelistic sermons from the book of Acts. One encouragement has been the return to worship of the Rev David Kumnick. Our brother continues to have significant health issues but we are thankful he has been able to attend some of the services in September.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Hawkesbury Nepean

[Report by Elizabeth Muldoon]

The September holidays have come, and with them, the end of Year 12 for two of our young people, Pallu Fihaki and Landice Fillisi. They have had their graduations and now, of course, are preparing for their HSC. Both of them want to do nursing and we pray that God will bless them as they study and enable them to persevere and work faithfully at this time. It will be wonderful if they both get into the course they want.

A young couple from our Tongan congregation, Ben and Priscilla, were married recently. A Tongan tradition is to attend church the first Sunday after the wedding. Thus, on this first Sunday, Priscilla and Ben and many of their friends and relatives came to the Tongan service. It was very nice to see them all and to know that Ben and Priscilla want

to be faithful Christians in their married life.

We have had the joy of welcoming Arthur Adams and his wife Vivienne to our church when they are able to come. Arthur and Vivienne were missionaries in Fiji for many years and Arthur taught at a Reformed Bible College there. He still does a lot of teaching on-line at this college and preaches in a number of different churches. We always enjoy it when they are free to spend Sunday with us.

Our elder Tom was blessed with a new little granddaughter, Eleanor Margaret, born to his son Peter and his daughter-in-law, Jen. Finau and Lopeti also had the joy of a new little grandson born to their daughter, Rachel and her husband. Children are truly a gift from the Lord and we pray God's blessing on these little ones and that he will draw them to himself.

We have been studying Thessalonians in our morning service. We have been encouraged to learn about this young church who accepted the gospel with such joy, and whose lives were completely transformed in spite of suffering and affliction. We pray that our lives, too, will continue to be transformed by our love for Jesus, and that we will be known for our love for each other.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Hunter

[Report by Ian Miller]

A baptismal service was held on Lord's day 3 September at Cardiff. Baby Esther Tamata, daughter of Elle and David Tamata (grand daughter of Rev Sam and Muriel Tamata) was baptised by the Rev

Tso.

We enjoyed the company of family members and friends. A pleasant time of fellowship and lunch followed.

Rev Victor Atallah provided an interesting and encouraging presentation of the work and challenges of the Middle East Fellowship (MERF). The evening presentation on 7 September was well

attended including visitors and online participants. We were heartened to learn of many daily professing saving faith in Christ Jesus. In common with many genuine Reformed Christian endeavours, the need for more labourers is a matter for continuing prayer to the Lord of the harvest.

Rev Tso has accepted an invitation to conduct Communion at the Australian Free Church, Melbourne on 22 October. Rev Arthur Adams has kindly agreed to provide pulpit supply for the day.

We continue to pray for the



prospering of the gospel in our nation and beyond, for our sister congregations, their sick and afflicted and especially for the vacant congregations.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Manning

[Report by Joyce Bennett]

Our Wednesday morning Bible Study group is going through a booklet called 'Rest Assured' which is an Interactive Bible Study on 1 John. Just a little section from the book:

"Give thanks and pray.

"Thank God because of his love



we are able to be his children, even though we don’t deserve that rich privilege.

“Praise God for the love he has shown us through Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for us.

“Ask for wisdom and insight so that you can discern areas of genuine need for other Christians you might know. Ask God to give you a proactive, practical love of Jesus’ love, so that you might sacrificially help with these needs as they become apparent to you.”

Could you please uphold Jim & Val Cromarty & their family, in prayer as their health is declining & they need wisdom regarding their health care & what is best for them at this time.

Also please pray for our Elders and Deacons as they seek to find a new Pastor for next year. We will be sad to see George and Rhoda go. We all have to do what the Lord leads us to do and I am sure he won’t be lost to the ministry, and will continue to preach God’s Word faithfully.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Northern Presbytery

[Report by Jim Klazinga]

Members from our three congregations gathered together



*Sonya Hamilton helping the bass singers learn their part*



on Saturday, 30 September in Maclean for our second annual psalmody Day.

After John Forbes began the day with a brief devotional, Julie Schmidt and Sonya Hamilton helped us learn the parts for two tunes. After a time of lunch and fellowship we learned two more tunes, followed by an opportunity to give praise by singing psalms requested by attendees.

Thanks go out to Julie and Sonya for their capable leadership, and to the Northern Rivers congregation for hosting the event.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Central Presbytery

[Report by Tom Reeve]

The most recent meeting of the

C e n t r a l  
Presbytery was held in the Mount Druitt church building on the afternoon and evening of Friday 15th September. It included an  
o r d i n a r y

presbyterial visitation’ of the Hawkesbury-Nepean congregation – a kind of a spiritual check-up, though deacons’ procedures are under scrutiny as well. At the conclusion, a suitable draft ‘Finding’ was prepared for the local congregation.

A devotion on Philippians 3:1-15 was given by the incoming Moderator, Rev. Robin Tso, who reminded us of the importance of ‘pressing toward the goal’ in the work which the King and Head of the church, our Lord Jesus Christ, has called us to fulfil. The meeting was then officially constituted by prayer.

V a r i o u s i t e m s o f correspondence and general business were attended to, with plenty of discussion before motions were agreed upon by the majority - usually unanimous, but not always so. The matters before us included the re-alignment of the internal boundary of the Mount Druitt church to include the carpark, and the resumption of CP psalmody conferences. No positive move was made on the psalm sessions due to the lack of a suitable teacher, and the difficulties of having three different psalters in

## Church News

"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift." Ephesians 4:7

use within the bounds of our Presbytery. The latter issue is under review by the Synod Psalmody Committee.

The main item, a somewhat sad one, was the receiving and approving the resignation of Rev. George Ball as minister of the Manning congregation. A letter from their Session and Deacons' Court was received, confirming the good character of Mr Ball who is retiring after 42 years in the Christian ministry. Various members of the court spoke in appreciation of Mr Ball's ministry in Australia since 1997; the last 15 years in the Manning. His name will be placed on the roll of retired ministers but George assures us of

his intention, with the Lord's strength, to continue to be useful in the ministry where needed. His letter to Presbytery concluded with his acknowledgment of the Lord's grace: "I wish to thank the Lord for surprising me by saving me and making me a new creature in Christ, and for putting a very shy and unlikely young man into the ministry of his Word."

Rev. Dennis Muldoon was appointed Interim-Moderator to the Manning session, and it was agreed that Mr Ian Miller will take over as Clerk of Presbytery, both effective from the 1st January 2024. Presbytery also resolved to conduct a visitation of the Manning congregation to assist

their transition into vacancy (as per Handbook 4:53) and to hear the concerns of members expressed in their Session's correspondence dated 24th August 2023. The date was confirmed for Wednesday 8th November at 2 pm (DV).

After a delicious meal, the Moderator conducted public worship with members of the congregation present. Deuteronomy 33 was read, and the Moderator preached an encouraging message from the text, 'The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms' (Deuteronomy 33:27).

## October Search Work

"Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!" Psalm 119:5

Senior and Intermediate  
(Intermediate omit questions 7 and 8)

### 2 Corinthians Chapter 5

1. What do we still have even if our earthly house be dissolved [destroyed]?
2. Why was Paul willing to be absent from the body?
3. For what purpose will we all appear before the judgment seat of Christ?
4. Why did the love of Christ constrain the apostles? (2 verses)
5. What things have changed in the one who is in Christ?
6. Why was Christ made sin for us?

### Chapter 6

7. Why should we not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers? (2 verses)
8. Write out verses in Lev. 26 and Is. 52, quoted by Paul, where it is said that God will walk among his people but they are to come out from the world.

Junior

### Luke Chapter 23

1. When Pilate had examined Jesus, did he find any fault in him?
2. Where was Jesus crucified, and what did he say when they crucified him? (2 verses)
3. What was Jesus' answer when the malefactor [criminal] said, "Lord, remember me"?
4. What did Jesus say after he had cried with a loud voice?

Find the verse(s) in the Bible that answer the questions, write/type them out, and send to:

Mrs Irene Steel

18/1-55 West Parade, West Ryde NSW 2114  
or Email: [iesteel@gmail.com](mailto:iesteel@gmail.com)

A book voucher is awarded at the end of each year to children who send in the answers.

# The Goodness of God in the Sufferings of Job and His Wife

By Tom Reeve

**Readings:** Job 1-2, James 5.

## Introduction.

The book of Job in the OT is a unique part of Holy Scripture which deals with the 'problem of pain and suffering.' Ever since the Fall of Adam and Eve, recorded in Genesis chapter 3, there has been the problem of suffering. And God in his great wisdom has given us this wonderful book to help Christian believers find good answers.

All of us at some time or other, perhaps at multiple times, are called upon to go through the deep waters of suffering and grief. In our congregation, some of you are passing through the fiery trial right now, and when one member suffers, we all suffer together.

Painful afflictions of the body affect our whole being, and can give rise to the darkness of depression, the so-called 'black dog'. But more usually spirits are depressed by the sorrows of the heart. This is a higher level of suffering as Proverbs 18:14 testifies: 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?'

Our Lord Jesus in the days of his sufferings endured the cross. But it was not the physical crucifixion that was the ultimate suffering for him. No, it was his becoming sin for us, being cut off and forsaken of his Father for a time. It has been well said that 'the soul of his sufferings was the suffering of his soul'. For the Christian the consideration of our sufferings

should always bring us back to the Cross.

What lessons can we learn from the sufferings of Job? Four key aspects.

## 1. Preparation for suffering.

Job chapters 1 and 2 tell us of the afflictions which came upon Job and his wife. Now Job was a historical figure living in the land of Uz. The date is unknown, but generally believed to be in the days of the patriarchs, between the Flood (Noah) and Moses. There is no reference to the law, the Jews or the land of Israel, but two groups of raiders known as Sabeans and the Chaldeans are in the record.

As we consider the sufferings of Job it is helpful to ask the question: how prepared was Job for the calamity that suddenly befell him and his family?

The Scout Motto is: BE PREPARED which means you are always in a state of readiness in mind and body to do your DUTY.

Answer: Job was well prepared.  
Q: How? In four ways at least.

A. Job treasured the word of God. How Job became acquainted with the word of God is not told, but some knowledge may have come down orally from Adam and his descendants, including Noah and Abraham. However, it is more likely that the mind of God was revealed directly to Job as he called on the Name of the Lord and communed with Him.

His estimate of God's word is summed up in Job 23:12. "I have esteemed the words of his mouth

more than my necessary food." The spiritual food of God's holy Word should be esteemed by his people as more important than our daily bread. Jesus reinforced this truth when he was tempted by the devil - Matthew 4:4. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

B. Job believed God and trusted in him. He believed the word of the Lord revealed to him and placed his trust in God. This shines through in the book in many places - Job 13:15 is notable, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"

C. Job had a surprisingly good knowledge of God. It is an edifying task to go through the whole book and collate all Job's utterances referring to the character and works of the Lord - the omnipotence of God, the omniscience of God, sin, repentance, faith and prayer. Job also looked forward to the resurrection of the body at the last day (Job 19:25,26).

But in dealing with his sufferings, there is one doctrine which needs highlighting; that is the sovereignty of God. Job had a more correct knowledge of this truth than most Christians today. He understood that it is the Lord who determines our sufferings and sends them, supervising every detail of them. Stop and think of that. When taken on board it is a life-changing truth which will give us great comfort.

Job 2:10. "What shall we not

receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

Job 1:21. “The LORD gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Mysterious? Yes! Hard to fathom? Yes! But gloriously true, comforting and liberating.

If I have a problem with that truth, the fault lies with me, not God! See Job 9:12.

God is the primary cause of every ill that I suffer in this world and ordains them for His glory and my good. We shall come back to that later.

D. Job lived an upright, righteous life, fearing God and obeying his commands. Knowledge is one thing but Job had the better part joined to it – putting it into practice. He was a doer of the Word, not a hearer only. His was a faith with works. He was a righteous man, an upright man, - others could see it, including Satan. He was diligent in carrying out his duties before God and man. He loved God and he loved his neighbour; His light shone in this dark world.

In all these things Job was prepared for suffering.

## **2. Personal sudden tragedy - the overwhelming grief of Job and his wife.**

“Now there was a day...” Chapter 1 verse 6 takes us to a heavenly scene (of which Job knew nothing) where the Lord brings to the attention of Satan, the character of Job. He is praised by God as “a blameless and an upright man, one who fears God and eschews (shuns) evil” (v. 8). Satan then presents the false argument that Job only follows God because

he had been prospered by the Lord and had become a rich man.

Satan is then given permission by the Lord to test Job - to learn whether he serves God out of a pure heart or not.

Chapter 1: Enemy raiders (Sabeans and Chaldeans) and a fire from heaven take all Job’s livestock, and a freak wind causes the roof to fall in on the house where his children are feasting. All are killed, all ten of them. These events all happen in the one day. Imagine the shock of this news to Job and his wife, especially regarding their precious children. But Job worships God in deep humiliation and grief, then acknowledges his right to take away what he has graciously given. He does not speak wrongly of God and does not sin.

Chapter 2: There is a review in the heavenly places and Satan suggests a further trial to undo Job. He is afflicted with painful boils. Now one large boil can make you very sick but Job had many such infections all over his body, so he sits down in the ashes with a piece of pottery to scrape the pus oozing from the sores.

The grief now is overwhelming them both and Mrs. Job, the weaker vessel, cracks first. She says to her husband: Are you still holding fast to your faith in God - His goodness and right to afflict? “Curse God and die” she says. Give up on God. Now that is very bad advice especially from a spouse and Job rightly rebukes her. “What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil? (Job 2:10). God does not rebuke her, but Job does – that is his responsibility and

duty as head of the family. But he does so in a sensitive way, not by saying that she was a foolish woman but acting like one. He knew the worth of a good wife. Nowhere does God rebuke Mrs. Job – indeed God blesses her with Job at the end of the trial. She was behaving out of character I believe.

This brings us to the subject of grief and what it can do to you. It is one of the most debilitating things in life. It can be described it as a heart-rending, deep sorrow that heals very slowly. Donald Howard in his helpful booklet on grief, notes that the word bereaved comes from a verb that means to commit ravages. He goes on to say, ‘A bereaved person is literally one who is broken up in an intensively personal experience.’

When I worked in Papua New Guinea, the tractor driver on our Government seed potato farm was killed, the only son of older parents. Old Palai, the grief-stricken father went out of his mind for a while. Others told me, “em i olsem wanpela longlong man” – he was behaving like a mad man. I believe that was the case with Mrs. Job.

With Job himself, the effects of his deep grief show up during the unhelpful debate with his three friends. There he says things which he later regrets. The lesson for us is that, like God Himself, we should be kind to those who weep and make allowances for their behaviour when struck by tragedy and the loss of loved ones.

## **3. Patience and prayer - Job’s God-given response to suffering.**

At length (recorded in chapters 38-41), the LORD himself enters

into dialogue with Job. He shows his own glory as Creator and disposer of all events and shows Job how little he is and how foolish it is to contend with the Almighty. Job is convicted of his sin and unable to say anything further (40:4,5). After the Lord speaks further, Job abhors his wrong attitude and repents in dust and ashes. He is then directed to pray for his three friends who had to offer burnt offerings also.

Job then emerges from his testing with all his brothers, sisters and friends coming to comfort him and help him re-establish again. Through them and the direct blessing of God, he again rises to a prosperous life. His wife bears him another seven sons and three beautiful daughters, Jemima, Kezia and Keren. And he has a long life to follow, living to see four generations of his descendants.

In the New Testament there is one reference to Job and it remarks on his patience (perseverance) under his trial.

James 5:11. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.”

A most significant Bible verse on the lessons we receive from studying the Old Testament is Romans 15:4. “Whatsoever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

See how all these wonderful Christian words are linked together here and in the life of Job – patience, prayer, comfort and hope.

Matthew Henry’s definition is

good (from his commentary on James): ‘Christian patience is a humble acquiescence in the wisdom and will of God, with an eye on the future glorious recompense.’

**4. Purpose of God in Job’s sufferings  
– to display the glory  
of His goodness and mercy  
in refining his servant.**

James declares that the purpose of the Lord in the life of Job was to show that he was “very c o m p a s s i o n a t e a n d merciful” (5:11). That needs some explaining. It may seem to us that God, in sending us pain and suffering is doing the opposite of being merciful and good. The devil will also make us think that God does not love us if he hurts us. But that is wrong thinking: “Whom the Lord loves, he chastens” (Hebrews 12:6).

Job was already glorifying God by his exemplary life when God ordained this fiery trial for his servant and his wife. Why more suffering?

Here are a few answers:

A. The reason why some suffer more than others must remain with the Lord; it is one of those secret things spoken of in Deuteronomy 29:29. We don’t know the mind of God.

B. He will not allow us to be tried and tested more than we can bear and he alone knows that limit. But there is a limit, both in degree and time. We must trust God in appointing our trials according to his wisdom. 1 Corinthians 10:13 is a precious promise from our faithful God.

C. The purpose of God in the sufferings of his saints is to make

them more like Himself, more conformed to the image of Christ. [Jeremiah 13:11; Romans 8:28,29;

“Go for gold” is a slogan for athletes who train and discipline their bodies to reach for the top prize. God wants us to “Go for Gold” – to be the best we can for Him. And He will only achieve that end by the gift of suffering. It is one of those ‘good and perfect’ gifts that God sends. Let us not fear what might come, but embrace it with joy, as James says in the opening verses of his epistle (1:2-4). That is what we must aim to do at a personal level.

D. All the truths of Scripture must be held together in the right balance. Within our church fellowship here and amongst our neighbours and communities, let us weep with those that weep and bear one another’s burdens. Help them through their times of sadness and suffering by showing empathy and practical help. Pray for strength to cope and for healing, if it is God’s will.

In conclusion, we may not easily hold all these truths together in our minds or understand fully why hard things happen to us. But let us rest quietly in the Fatherly dealings of a good God, saying with Job, “But He knows the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.” Job 23:10. I don’t know, but “He knows!” and He does all things well (Mark 7:37).

Such assurance of the constant goodness of God in our lives is a most valuable asset in the day of trouble.

May the Lord be pleased to grant us His peace, and to bless His word to our hearts. Amen.

## October Prayer Points

“Keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18

---

**Sunday, 1st:** Pray that God may use the preaching from our pulpits today to call and build up his people.

**Monday, 2nd:** Pray for the ministry of the Hastings congregation in Wauchope.

**Tuesday, 3rd:** Pray for the Hastings office-bearers: for Rev John Forbes; for elders Doug Hamilton and Glen Hamilton; and for deacon Neil McKinnon.

**Wednesday, 4th:** Pray for the work of the Annie Soper school in Peru.

**Thursday, 5th:** Pray for Pallu Fihaki and Landice Fillisi of the Hawkesbury Nepean congregation, who have completed their Year 12 schooling and hope to study nursing.

**Friday, 6th:** Give thanks for the baptism on 3 September in the Hunter congregation of Esther, daughter of Elle and David Tamata.

**Saturday, 7th:** Please uphold in prayer Jim & Val Cromarty of the Manning congregation, as their health is declining.

**Sunday, 8th:** Pray that God may work in and through the preaching from our pulpits tomorrow to build His people up in the saving knowledge of God and his will.

**Monday, 9th:** Pray for the ministry of the Northern Rivers congregation in MacLean.

**Tuesday, 10th:** Pray for the Northern Rivers office-bearers: for Rev David Kerridge; for elders Ross Campbell, John Greensill, and John McPhee; and for deacons Gordon Law, Bruce Campbell, and Ernie Really.

**Wednesday, 11th:** Pray for the work of Mark and Rahel Landrum of the International Mission for Jewish People.

**Thursday, 12th:** Give thanks for the recent wedding of Ben and Priscilla of the Hawkesbury Nepean congregation.

**Friday, 13th:** Give thanks that Pastor Andres Miranda of Narre Warren could spend time with family in Chile, and that he could return home to Melbourne.

**Saturday, 14th:** Give thanks for the Central Presbytery meeting held on 15th September, which included presbyterial visitation with the Mount Druitt congregation.

**Sunday, 15th:** Pray that in our worship service we may avoid “any religious worship not instituted by God himself.” (WLC Q&A 109)

**Monday, 16th:** Pray for the ministry of the Brisbane congregation.

**Tuesday, 17th:** Pray for the Brisbane office-bearers: for Rev Jim Klazinga; for elders Stewart Carswell & Wes Hanna; and for deacons Micah Klazinga, Keith Schmidt, and Matthew Schmidt.

**Wednesday, 18th:** Pray for the continuing ministry of the Presbyterian Free Church of Central India. Give thanks for our relationship with them.

**Thursday, 19th:** Pray for churches in the ICRC with us, including the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Free Reformed Churches of North America, and the Reformed Church in the United States.

**Friday, 20th:** Please pray for the two young couples in the Brisbane congregation (that we know of) expecting children: Ben and Claire Klazinga, expecting their second child in November, and Micah and Lauren Klazinga, expecting their first child around next April.

**Saturday, 21st:** Give thanks that that David Kumnick has been able to return to worship at Carrum Downs, in spite of his ongoing health issues.

**Sunday, 22nd:** Pray that God by His Spirit may enable us as assembled congregations to worship in a manner consistent with the second commandment.

**Monday, 23rd:** Pray for the ongoing ministry of the Ulverstone congregation.

**Tuesday, 24th:** Pray for Zach Dotson’s work in Ulverstone. Pray also for the Ulverstone office-bearers: for elder Ian Hamilton, and for deacon Robert Hingston.

**Wednesday, 25th:** Pray for Milton Emms of the Brisbane congregation, who is scheduled to undergo heart surgery today.

**Thursday, 26th:** Pray for the work of the Dumisani Theological Institute in South Africa.

**Friday, 27th:** Pray for Rev George Ball as he prepares to retire at the end of the year.

**Saturday, 28th:** Pray for the preparations for the Brisbane church camp in December.

**Sunday, 29th:** Pray that those attending our services today may come with a sense of how God alone is worthy of all worship and adoration.

**Monday, 30th:** Pray for the ongoing ministry of the Geelong congregation.

**Tuesday, 31st:** Pray for the Geelong office-bearer, elder Donald Ramsay, and for his work as clerk of Southern Presbytery.

