HELP AND HOPE FROM STORIES OF SUFFERING IN SCRIPTURE

WHEATON, Ill.—Suffering is a part of life that everyone experiences. It can be as mild as a bad headache or as profound as a cancer diagnosis or the loss of a child or spouse. Regardless of its degree or depth, suffering can produce confusion and distress, causing sufferers to wonder why life isn’t going as they expected. It can also prove challenging for Christians to know how to reconcile their suffering with their faith and trust in a loving God.

In his new book, When the Stars Disappear: Help and Hope from Stories of Suffering in Scripture (Volume 1) (Crossway, August 2020), author and professor Mark R. Talbot writes to those who are puzzled by the affliction facing them. “This book tries to help you see that your suffering, no matter how awful it may be, is no worse than the suffering that some of God’s people have already faced,” writes Talbot. “Their stories, as they are found in Scripture, show us that we are not alone in our suffering. They show that even the most severe suffering can be survived and that we, like these people before us, can emerge from it with our faith and hope in God intact.”

When the Stars Disappear encourages readers to learn the lessons of biblical figures like Naomi, Job, Jeremiah, and David, who, when faced with profound suffering, learned to trust in the steadfast love of God. Talbot also helps readers practice the “breathing lessons” the psalmists model in their laments.

Ultimately, through retelling the stories of these biblical figures, Talbot aims to help Christians place their hope in the providential care of their Lord, who will one day bring an end to all suffering. “I want to help you, my fellow Christians, trust that our suffering is part of God’s loving care for us as his people, and that we shall ultimately see each piece of it as an unsought gift from him, no matter how difficult or perplexing it may now be,” writes Talbot.

When the Stars Disappear is the first book in Talbot’s projected four-volume series, Suffering and the Christian Life, which seeks to offer full answers to the questions Why do we suffer? and Why is there any suffering?
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Talbot (PhD, University of Pennsylvania) is associate professor of philosophy at Wheaton College. His areas of expertise include philosophical psychology, philosophical theology, David Hume, Augustine, and Jonathan Edwards. He and his wife, Cindy, have one daughter and three grandchildren. Mark attends Christ Presbyterian Church in Roselle, Illinois.

Founded in 1938, Crossway is a not-for-profit global Christian publishing ministry that publishes gospel-centered, Bible-based content to honor our Savior and serve his church. Crossway seeks to help people understand the all-encompassing implications of the gospel and the truth of God’s word—for all of life, for all eternity, and for the glory of God alone. Crossway is the global publisher of the ESV® (English Standard Version®) Bible, more than 1,000 Christian books, and an extensive list of gospel literature. For additional information, visit crossway.org.

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