

*If God Exists, How Can He Allow*  
***Suffering & Evil***  
*Part 4*



# *Where We've Been*

## *WEEK ONE:*

*Traditional Christian Explanations of Suffering*

*Your Explanations of Suffering*

*Began to Explore Free Will*

## *WEEK TWO:*

*Why Did God Create Us If He Knew We Would Fall?*

*Why Gives Us Free Will If He Knew Most Of Us Would Turn Against Him, and Suffer Eternally as a Result?*

*Is God Culpable for Sin Because He Allows Sin to Exist?*

## *LAST WEEK:*

*Biblical Explanations of Natural Disasters*

# *Where We're Going*

## *TONIGHT:*

*Continuing Our Examination of Biblical Views on Suffering*  
*Reviewing Your Evaluation of Traditional Responses*

## *COMING UP:*

*Starting to Put It All Together*  
*Considering Other Alternative Views*

## *THEN:*

*November 1 & 8: Women In Ministry*

# *Responses to Suffering Resulting From Natural Disasters*

1. *God has created the world to operate within certain laws of nature.*
2. *The earth is under a curse, so that the very laws of nature have been tainted by sin, leading to natural disasters and suffering.*
3. *Our free will plays a role in natural disasters.*
4. *Sometimes God uses natural disasters to punish evil.*
5. *Sometimes Satan is allowed to inflict suffering through natural disasters.*
6. *God sends natural disasters to turn His people back to Him.*
7. *Other explanations:*
  - *Disaster leads to self-examination of our own mortality*
  - *Disaster can bring out the best in people*
  - *Disaster can lead to spiritual renewal*
  - *Disaster shapes our character*

# *Responses to Suffering Resulting From Natural Disasters*

*If some disasters simply occur in nature,  
why doesn't God do more to prevent such widespread  
death, destruction and suffering?*

*What about small scale "natural disasters,"  
that free will cannot explain?*

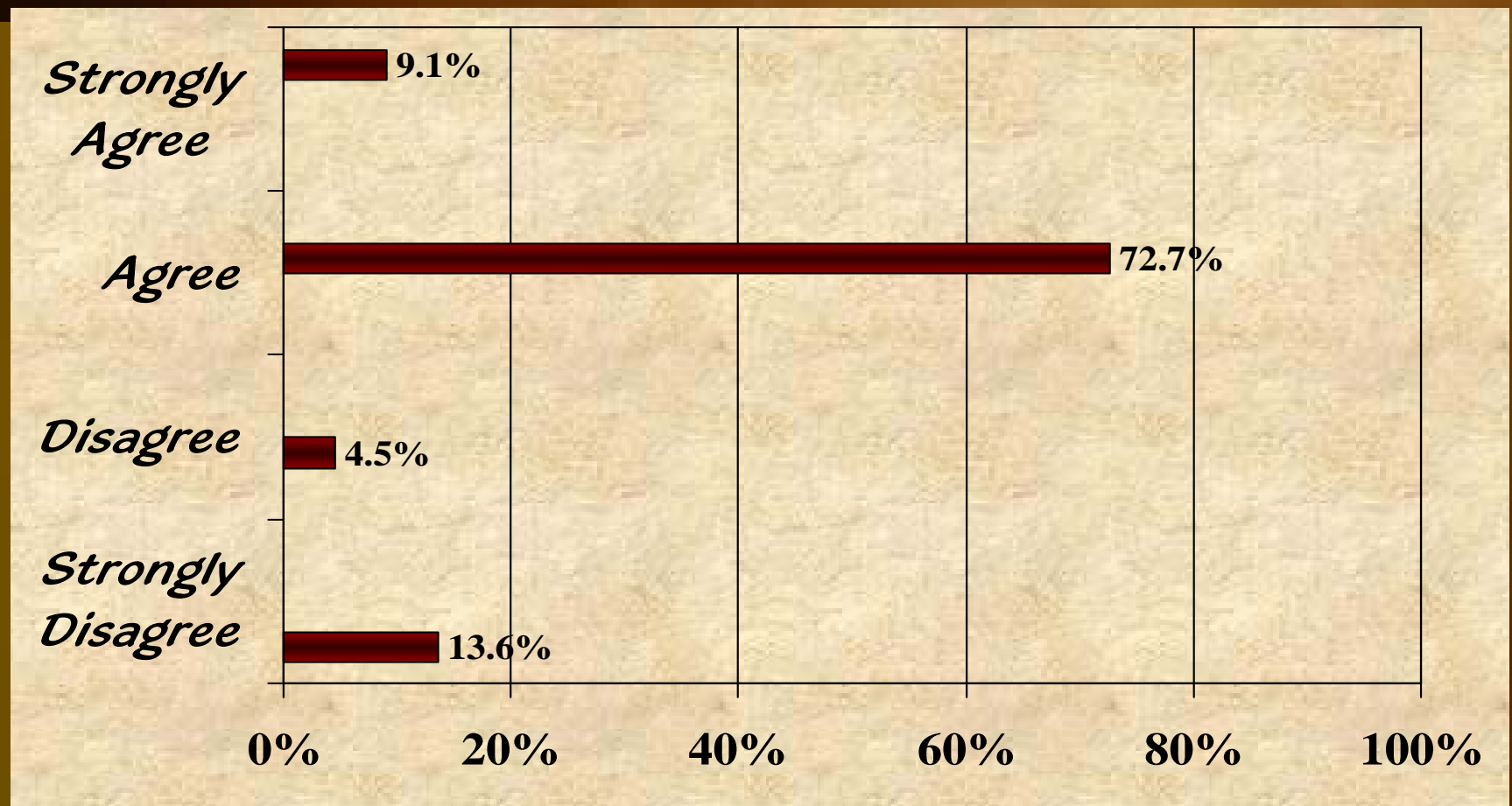
*What about severe illness, disabilities and death?*

*When is an illness shocking or tragic to us?*

*What kind of stories make us doubt the very existence of God?*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

*Suffering Results From God's Punishment On Unrepentant People*



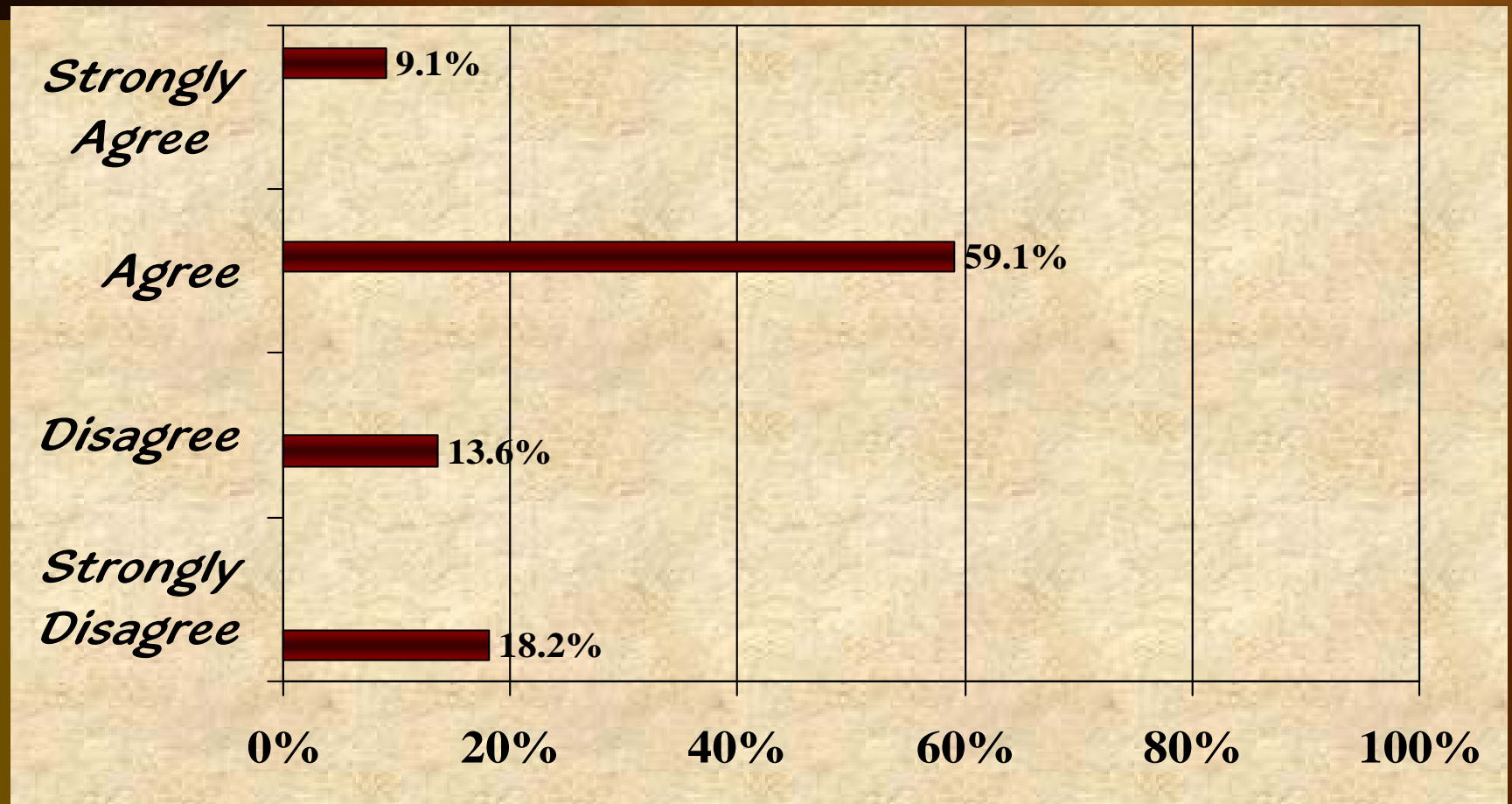
# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From God's Punishment On Unrepentant People*

- *Plagues Upon Egypt*
- *The Captivity of Israel and Judah*
- *Verses from Amos regarding Natural Disasters*
- *Cast Out of the Garden*
- *Curses upon the Serpent, Adam & Eve*
- *Sodom and Gomorrah*
- *People Suffer Because they are Wicked (Wisdom View)*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From God's Discipline In Our Lives*





# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From God's Discipline In Our Lives*

*"In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons:*

*"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,  
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,  
because the Lord disciplines those he loves,  
and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."*

*"Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons.*

*For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!*

*Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best;*

*but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.*

*No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

*(Hebrews 12:4-11)*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From God's Discipline In Our Lives*

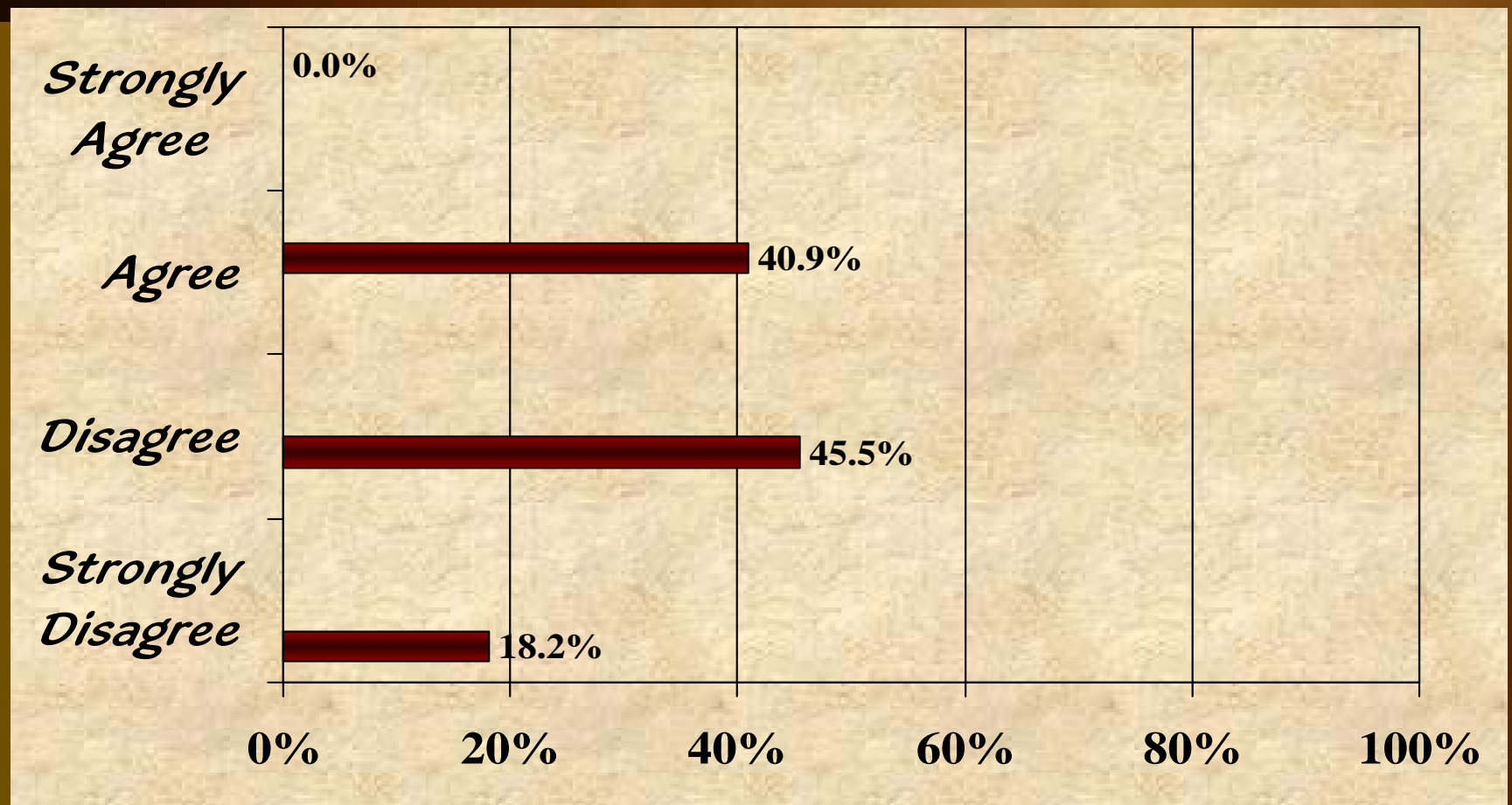
*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.  
He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit,  
while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes  
so that it will be even more fruitful.  
(John 15:1-2)*

*You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.'  
But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.  
I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich;  
and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness;  
and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.*

*Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.  
Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the  
door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes,  
I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down  
with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear,  
let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."  
(Revelation 3:17-22)*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

*Suffering Results From A Test We Face From God*



# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From A Test We Face From God*

- *God's Test of Abraham Sacrificing Isaac*

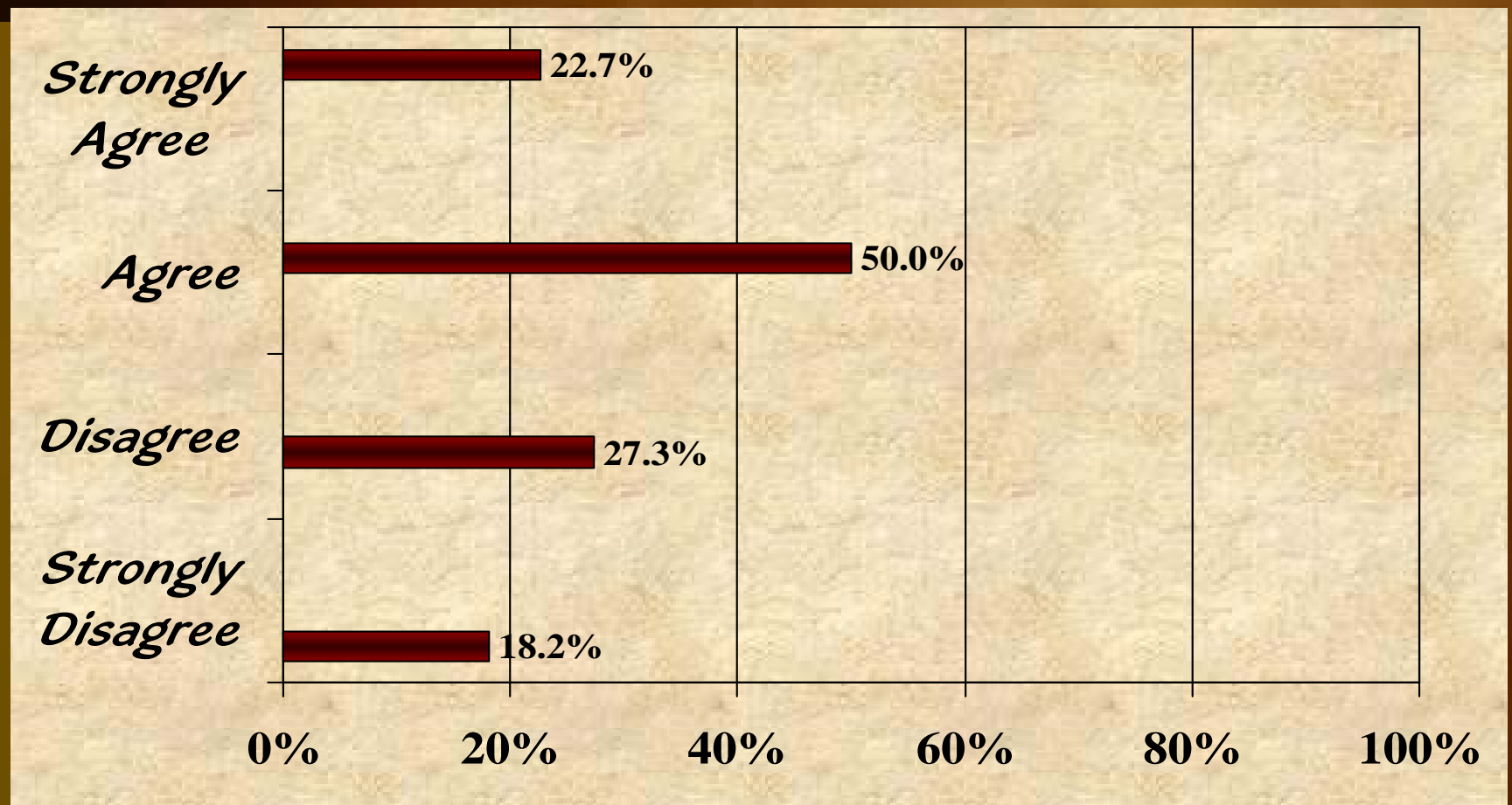
- *Testing of Peter (Luke 22:31-32)*

*"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."*

- *The Testing of Job*

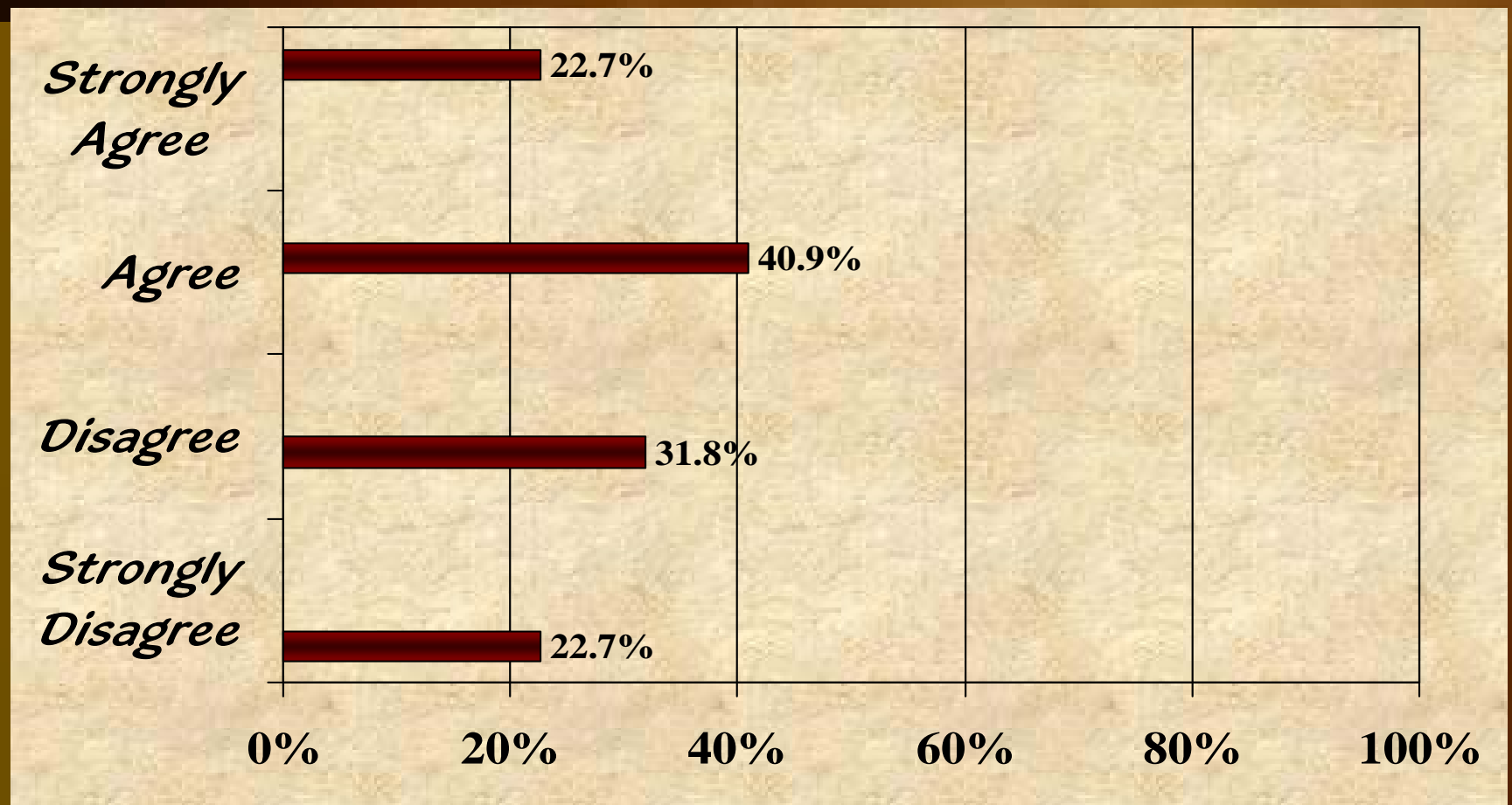
# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Suffering Results From Acts of Satan And His Demons*



# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

*God Allows Suffering To Better Sympathize With Others*



# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

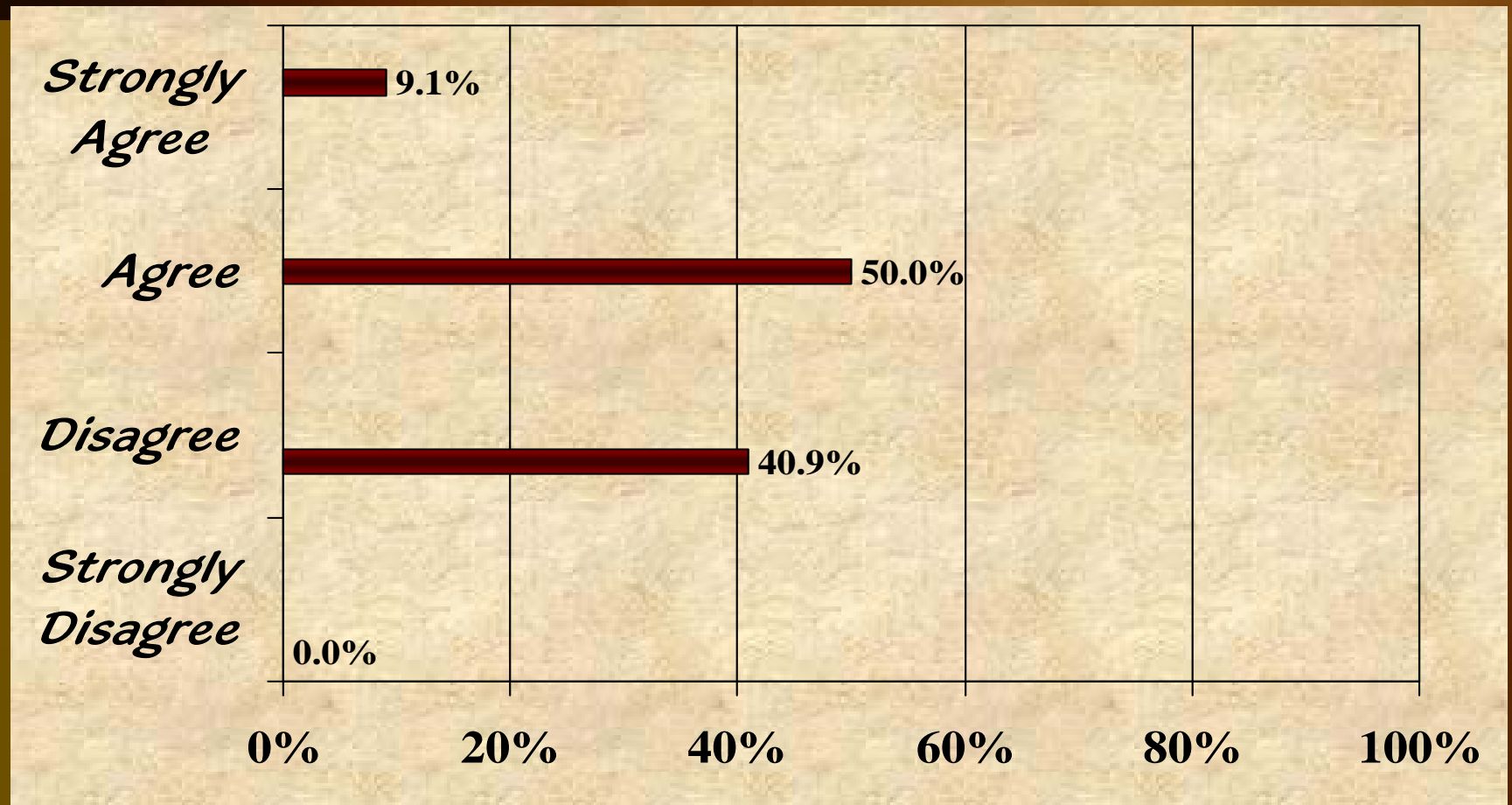
## *God Allows Suffering To Better Sympathize With Others*

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort."*

*(2 Corinthians 1:3-7)*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *God Allows Suffering To Keep Us Humble*





# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *God Allows Suffering To Keep Us Humble*

*"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."*

*(2 Corinthians 12:7-10)*

# *Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

## *Some of Jesus' Teachings on Suffering & Evil:*

- *Satan is real; evil is real and working in the world*
- *Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds*
- *John 16:33: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*
- *Jesus often spoke of judgment/justice/reckoning in the future tense.*
- *Suffering and self-denial now, laying down your life for a friend now, then glory later.*

*But Is Later Ever Going To Come?  
(2 Peter 3:7-9)*

# *Starting To Put It Together*

God created everything  
All good comes from God  
Without God's allowance, nothing can happen  
God knew humanity would fall  
God created humanity  
God allowed free will  
Sin, death and suffering enter the creation



God judges all people  
Evil is punished  
New heavens and new earth  
God dwells with His people  
No suffering, no death



## WELCOME TO EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM

### INTERACTIVE



Participate, ask questions, talk back...

What if we listened to what everyone had to say — and discovered that God can speak through us all? After all, we all learn better when we talk things out, hear different points of view, and give room for the Spirit to speak through our deliberation.

[Read more](#)

### THOUGHTFUL



Test everything, hold on to what is good...

Many hours of research are dedicated to prepare each one of our series. We explore the scriptures, the breadth of Christian scholarship, contemporary authors, and consider a wide range of sources outside of our faith.

[Read more](#)

### FAITHFUL



Set apart Christ as Lord...

We all have questions. But we learn together in a way that tackles the deepest part of our doubts while making sure that our purpose is clear: to always know the reason for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, and to be prepared to share that answer with everyone who asks us about that hope.

[Read more](#)

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF  
EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.

WE WELCOME YOU TO SEND  
FEEDBACK, QUESTIONS OR  
COMMENTS, AND WE WOULD  
LOVE TO HEAR HOW EXODUS HAS  
IMPACTED YOU. EMAIL US AT:

[INFO@EXODUSPODCASTS.COM](mailto:INFO@EXODUSPODCASTS.COM)

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

[WWW.EXODUSPODCASTS.COM](http://WWW.EXODUSPODCASTS.COM)

- ALL OF OUR PODCASTS
- POWERPOINT SLIDES
- PODCAST TRANSCRIPTS
- BLOG UPDATES
- REFERENCE MATERIALS

© 2013 EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

YOU MAY FREELY DISTRIBUTE WITHOUT ALTERATION.