

Overcoming Depression
Or
Why Do Bad Things
Happen To Good People?

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Throughout life, we face various adverse circumstances that often cause us to be overwhelmed by the mental anxiety they produce.

Especially is this true when we feel we have done nothing to deserve such trials.

We become discouraged and downcast. Then we try to reason things out because we cannot figure out *Why Bad Things Happen to Good People*.

In other words, there does not seem to be a cause, and because there is no cause, we often become depressed.

God is very gracious in giving us some wonderful examples in His Word such as Job, David, and Joseph, who faced evil circumstances that happened without an explainable cause.

Job 2:3- "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that fears God, and shuns evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him, to destroy him, without a cause."

1 Samuel 17:29—"And David said what have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

His brothers had in anger criticized him and belittled him and falsely accused him all without a cause.

Psalm 105: 17-19 "He sent a man before them even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him."

As we consider again, "Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People?" we might have several questions.

1. Who are good people? Answer: Those who love God and desire Him to be glorified in their lives.
2. What does it mean without cause? Answer: They did not deserve this adverse situation in their life. In other words, this is not the Lord chastening them for something they did wrong.
3. When do bad things come into good people's life? Answer: Solely at our Lord's discretion, as our Omniscient God.

It is helpful to understand that God often permits trials under his permissive will to bring us into a more fuller conformity to his perfect will.

Psalm 23: 1-3 – "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Why does He make me to lie down? Answer: To restore my soul (the seat (place) of my affections and my emotions).

4. What did this do for David? Answer: So that David could walk more fully in paths of righteousness for the Lord's name sake (more fully in God's perfect will).

So Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People? Answer: So that God might be more fully glorified in our life.

I Corinthians 10:31 – "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the Glory of God."

We must not forget God's promise to us when these bad things happen.

I Corinthians 10:13 – "There hath no temptation (or testing) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you (under his permissive will) to be tempted (tested) above that ye are able: (God knows where we are spiritually in our walk with Him), but will with the testing also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

5. What does God mean by that statement "Make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it?"

Answer: As believers, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us, to comfort us, to convict us, and to encourage us. John 14: 26, 27 – "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

As believers we also have the examples of those whom God was not well pleased with in their wilderness journey. They lusted after evil things, they murmured. (They complained and doubted God. I Corinthians 10: 10.)

Satan's attack on God's children is the same today. He sends his demons to cause us to doubt God's word.

These doubts can even lead to God's children doubting their own salvation.

6. What are Christians to do when doubts like these arise? Answer: We must rely on the authority of God and His Word, the Holy Bible.

God reminds us of a very important truth we should not forget. II Corinthians 10: 3-6 "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds: casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ: and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled."

7. Do we understand what God is trying to get us to see? Answer: God is simply saying – when these times or trials are permitted to come your way, do not let Satan get you off course by causing you to doubt.

That is the fleshly (carnal) approach to your situation. Take the spiritual approach by obeying God's Word. Doing what God says to do when any adversity comes our way.

We may not know at the time why God is permitting such a trial but we will understand it later.

Jesus said to Peter in John 13:7 "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Later Peter would remember this and other statements Jesus made to him, and would go out and weep bitterly.

Luke 22: 62 "And Peter went out and wept bitterly." Why did he weep bitterly? Verse 61 says Peter remembered. Up until this stage in Peter's life there were many doubts.

Later in Peter's life he would pen these lines. I Peter 5: 6-10 "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who has called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Satan does not want us to permit Christ to be glorified in our life. He tries to get us to let our mind be filled with fear and doubts.

Isaiah the Prophet gives us great advice. Isaiah 26: 3, 4 – "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

8: What is the lesson God is wanting us to learn? Answer Proverbs 23: 7 – God reminds us in His Word, "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he..."

Jesus rebuked an evil generation in Matthew 12: 34, 35 "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Verse 35 "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

As born-again believers we are not to permit evil thoughts to be a part of our thinking. Why? Because God has said, in Proverbs 4:23—"Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life."

9. How did Job respond to the severe trials that confronted him? Remember there was no

human cause for his trials. Answer: Job 1: 21, 22... "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not nor charged God foolishly."

Job 42: 12 "So the Lord blessed the later end of Job more than his beginning."

James 5: 10, 11 reminds us "Take my brethren the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold we count them happy which endure. 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."

What a great example Job has been to millions down through the ages.

10. The question comes: What does his example mean to you and me? Can we identify with him in any area of his suffering?

1. Have you lost your job or your means of income? 2. Have you faced the loss of a loved one? 3. Have you, or are you facing physical problems with great hurt? 4. Have you faced hurts from those you thought you could trust—family, friends, fellow workers, social circle's associates? Answer: May you and I say with Job, in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

11. Remember what David said in all of his adversities of life? Psalm 119: 71 – "It is good for me that I have been afflicted Oh Lord, that I might learn to keep your statutes." (God's commands)

We dare not forget how Joseph responded to all of his hurts in life that were without cause. Genesis 50: 19, 20 "And Joseph said unto them, (his brothers) fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive."

God teaches us so much through Paul's life. After all of the trials and suffering he went through, Paul penned these lines. Philippians 4: 4-9 "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice. Let your kindness be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful (anxious) for nothing, but in everything (all your trials) by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding (no one can explain it, but we can experience it) shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me do, and the God of peace shall be with you."

Remember God's promise: The peace of God comes through the God of peace, when we do what we know God has told us to do.

What a wonderful God – He gives us a mind to know Him. He gives us a heart to love Him. He

gives us a will to serve Him.

Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People? So that God might be more fully glorified in our lives. That is why God says in I Thessalonians 5: 18 "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We must remember in any trial that God permits to come our way, that others may be facing the same kind of trial. If we respond the right way to our trials, we grow in faith, are strengthened by the Word, and we can be used of God as an example for others who need to be encouraged, and reminded how God wants us to more fully understand His Word and His ways.

We grow from strength to strength, faith to faith. Others need to know how we have let God give us strength, victory to overcome, and spiritual growth through His Word, and His faith building promises. Romans 15: 4 – For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Romans 8:18 "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

Webster says, Depression is the act of pressing down – forced lower-a sinking of the spirits – dejection – a state of sadness – want of courage. The word depression is not found in the Bible, but the many meanings of Webster's definition are mentioned multitudes of times throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 4: 8-10 "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair: persecuted, but not forsaken: cast down but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body." That is God's goal in any trial and testing in our life. That Jesus might be manifest in our body (more fully glorified). Whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Colossians 3: 17-"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

To overcome depression we must rely upon the authority of God's Word and the strength He gives us when we do.

It is important to remember where our victory, our strength to overcome adversity, despondency, depression comes from. We have the many promises of God. We walk by faith, not feeling, not circumstances or situations that God entrusts to us throughout our lifespan. We have the Promises of God to assure us, counsel us, and guide our reasoning.

As Paul has encouraged us in Romans 8: 35-39 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake, we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor

things present, nor things to come. Neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

These various lessons in scripture teach us that God in each case is preparing that vessel for an enlarged ministry later on in life.

Should you be wondering why you are pressed down, keep in mind that God may be permitting you to be going through what you are experiencing, so that after your victory and conquering your trial in Christ, God may have a larger opportunity for you to serve and glorify Him.

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