

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT

Learning from Those Who Walked Before Us

The Most Common Reason Bad Things Happen

Job

INTRODUCTION: As I continued moving through my Bible looking at some of the people described in those sacred pages who have walked before us that have lessons to teach us, I came to some familiar names: Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. And frankly, I would have loved to preach on any or all of those, but especially Esther. The story of her faith and faithfulness and God's wondrous working through her life for the sake of all of God's people is a very special one to me. I could tell that story and preach sermons on it regularly and not tire of the blessings it brings.

However, I have preached on all three of those people who have "been there, and done that" in fairly recent times, so the Holy Spirit moved me on to the life of one I have not talked with you about in quite a while.

Some of the basics of this individual's life that I want us to consider today from God's Word are well known. And the subject matter of the book of the Bible that bears his name is also well known. However, I find that the main point of this book about his life is not well known today, often not well remembered even by believers, and this truth is not factored in to a multitude of decisions people make day to day.

- The person is Job.
- The subject matter is suffering.
- The main point is to reveal to us the most common reason bad things happen.

"Why Bad Things Happen?" is one of the most common questions people ask about life. People who believe in God ask why a good, all-powerful God would allow bad things to happen in His world and especially why He would allow bad things to happen to His people.

Do you realize that the answer to that question is one God began to give in the very first part of His revelation of Himself through His Word?

- We all know that Genesis was one of the earliest books of the Bible that was written. Jesus affirmed that Moses was the primary human author of Genesis and Moses completes that first book by giving us an extensive biography of Joseph, a good man who loved God, who endured great suffering during his life.
- But did you know that the Book of Job is probably a little older than Genesis. It was likely written by Job himself and edited by Moses during his stay in the land

of Midian, which was not far from the hometown of Job, a city called Uz. Job too had been a good man who loved God and suffered extensively.

- Both of these books of God's Word explain why a good, all-powerful God would allow bad things to happen in His world.

In the Book of Genesis, through the life of Joseph, we find two of the three reasons why God allows bad things to happen.

WHY GOD ALLOWS BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN

- **GOD ALLOWS BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOOD PURPOSE.**
- **GOD ALLOWS BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN TO BRING ABOUT GOOD FOR PEOPLE.**

In fact, Joseph refers to both of these reasons when he speaks to his brothers who had sold him into slavery, starting a cascade of troubles that tumbled over Joseph for many years and landed him in prison.

Genesis 50:20 NKJV But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

- **Through the bad things that happened to Joseph, God saved the descendants of Abraham** from extinction **so that through them He could send Jesus** the Messiah **who would offer the blessing** of salvation **to all the families of the earth.**
- **And through Joseph's sufferings, God brought great blessings to Joseph** himself, **his family and descendants**, his father, and even to his brothers and their families.

While much in the Book of Job affirms the first two reasons we saw in Joseph's life in Genesis, it adds a third reason. I would say that this reason for bad things happening in our world is the most common reason bad things happen. This is the most common cause.

- **BAD THINGS HAPPEN AS A CONSEQUENCE OF EVIL.**

This part, most of us know.

- **Bad things happen sometimes because we do evil.**

The wicked lost always ultimately reap the consequences of sin.

Psalm 37:1–2 NKJV 1 Do not fret because of **evildoers**, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be **cut down like the grass**, And wither as the green herb.

The saved do not suffer the consequences of sin, because Christ suffered the consequences of sin for us on the cross.

1 Peter 3:18 NKJV For **Christ also suffered once for sins**, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

Bad things sometimes happen to those of us who are saved as chastisement for persistent sin in our lives.

Hebrews 12:5-6 NKJV 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For **whom the LORD loves He chastens**, And scourges every son whom He receives."

- When bad things happen, the child of God should ask, "Is this coming as chastisement because there is persistent sin in my life, and I have not repented?"
- When we too quickly say to others who experience trial and tragedy, "God did not do this." Or "This is not of God."

In our attempts to magnify the mercy of God, we often obscure or even negate the holiness of God.

Without the holiness of God, there is no need for His mercy.

SO, Bad things happen sometimes because we do evil.

- **Sometimes bad things happen to us because others do evil.**

The bomb does not need to be aimed at you for you to be caught up in the explosion.

You do not have to be the one using the drugs to experience some of the bad things that happen because of drug use.

You do not have to be the cause of a dysfunctional family to suffer the pain that a dysfunctional family brings.

While sometimes bad things happen as a direct consequence of our own sin, sometimes they happen as a consequence of someone else's sin, and we are standing close by.

But here is the thing I really want you to see today, because this is the thing that there is a purposeful attempt to hide in our world today.

- **Bad things happen because Satan works evil against us.**

This is what happened to Job!

- **Job did not suffer because he was an unrepentant sinner.**

Job 1:1, 1:8, 2:3 NKJV 1 There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and **that man was blameless and upright**, and one who feared God and shunned evil... 8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him on the earth*, a blameless and upright man, one **who fears God and shuns evil?**"

2:3 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him on the earth*, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause."

➤ **Job was not caught in the fallout of somebody else's evil.**

- This was all about Job.
- He was the target,
- but he was not being punished or chastened for sin.

➤ **Bad things happened in Job's life because Satan attacked him.**

- Now, we can be distracted by asking, "Well, why did God allow it?"
- The answer goes back to what we saw in Joseph's life.
 - ❖ God had His own purpose to be accomplished which He did through Job's experience.
 - ❖ But ultimately, Job was blessed by what God allowed.
 - ❖ It all worked for Job's good and God's glory.
- But the key question here is why these bad things happened to Job.
 - ❖ Why did he lose his wealth?
 - ❖ Why did he lose his family?
 - ❖ Why did he lose his health?

➤ The answer to all these questions is because Satan worked evil against Job.

Job 1:6–12 NKJV 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ...

8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

9 So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

So Satan killed his family and took away his wealth. Ultimately he took Job's health as well.

All this happened because Satan wanted to do harm to Job.

And **this is important to you and me because ...**

- **Satan always desires to work evil against each of us.**

Jesus, calling the devil a thief, said, **John 10:10 KNJV** The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

- **Satan wants to take your life and mine.**
 - That is why the devil works so hard to tell you there is nothing wrong with drugs. He delights in lives snuffed out in their prime.
 - That is why he will spare no expense to get you to drink. A new study at Oxford shows the slightest amount of alcohol consumed negatively affects the brain. He celebrates drunk drivers killing themselves and their families or total strangers on the road.
- **Satan wants to steal what God has entrusted to you.**
 - That is why gambling is so enticing – the devil makes it so!
 - That is why the devil will give you every excuse in the world you are willing to embrace not to give the tithe to God. Because Satan knows that if you give the tithe, God becomes the protector of what He has already given you and promises to give you more. But the devil doesn't want that! His desire is to steal from you.
- **Satan wants to destroy every good thing God has sent into your life.**
 - He wants to destroy your marriage.
 - He wants to destroy your children.
 - He wants to destroy your family.

- He wants to destroy your testimony.
- If he cannot kill you, he wants to ruin your life!

And so how do we treat Satan today? How do we respond to who he is and what he is?

- We joke about him.
- We mythologize him.
- We try to get as close to him as we dare and not get burned.

We look at the devil's way as the fun way, as the good life, and we treat God like an ole stick-in-the-mud who just wants to keep us from having a good time.

Students, listen to me this morning. Young adults, listen to me this morning. Friend of every age, listen to me this morning.

One of the very important messages that you can glean from the Book of Job is to see the true character of Satan and to recognize his purposes. We each need to know Satan is real.

You want to be like Job? You want to lose it all, including your family and your health, then just give the devil the opportunity to have his way in your life.

The number one reason bad things happen in people's lives is because bad things are a consequence of evil.

CONCLUSION: So what is the solution?

- Come to Christ. Exchange your sin for His righteousness.
- Live for Christ. Put off the flesh, the ways of the devil, and put on Christ.