

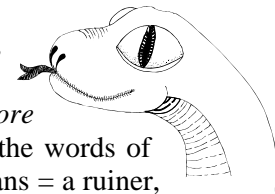


“Why Bad Things Happen”



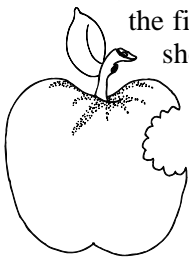
Whenever tragedy or misfortune happens to someone, there are always those who ask, “why did God let this happen?” They say if He was such a good God, why would He let these things happen. Christians ask the same question. At a time of shock or grief, most people try to defend God from blame by giving their own ideas of why it happened, based on their own religious beliefs. They come up with statements like: “God knows best, and all things work together for good to those who love God.” Or, they may say, “God had a reason for taking him.” Such statements imply that God killed the people or put sickness on them and make the God of love and mercy look like a cruel God.

What does the Bible really say? Is God the destroyer? Jesus answered this very clearly when He said, “*The thief (the devil) comes only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly* (superior, beyond measure).” (John 10:10). Obviously, from the words of Jesus, the devil is the destroyer of abundant life. The word “destroyer” means = a ruiner, a venomous serpent.



Remember the story of Adam and Eve, (Genesis 3:1). It says the serpent (the devil) came to tempt Eve in the Garden of Eden (paradise, where there was no evil). Eve told him there was one tree that God said she could not eat the fruit of or she would die. But the devil said, “*You won’t die! God just knows if you eat it your eyes will be opened to know good and evil.*” She went closer to the forbidden fruit and desired it to make her wise – so she ate it and gave it unto Adam and he ate also. The eyes of both of them were opened to evil, and evil entered the paradise God had intended life on this earth to be. From the first man and woman until now, the devil has planned wicked schemes with his demon spirits to steal from God’s people, to kill God’s people and to destroy God’s people as it says in John 10:10.

Sickness, disease, death, wickedness and every evil thing entered the world unto this day because the first woman and man disobeyed God. What a tragedy! Eve didn’t know that when she disobeyed God her heart was opened to evil, and that she and Adam brought evil in to the world and gave the devil an entrance to bring pain, tragedy and suffering into the life of every person who would be born, from the day they ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil until today.



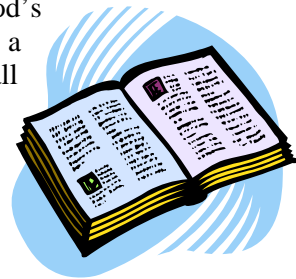
When God saw what had been done – He knew from that day on that His people would experience toil and trouble in the world instead of the paradise He had planned for them to live in. He gave the 10 Commandments to assure right living to avoid evil, but He finally saw that man’s heart was evil continually. So, God sent a Saviour; His own Son to overcome the works of the devil and the sin of the world. Jesus overcame the works of the devil by His death on the cross and His resurrection to eternal life. He made it possible for us to overcome the evil that comes against us by using the power of His Name, His shed blood, and the written Word of God. His death did not mean we would never have bad things happen to us, but Jesus made it possible for us to resist the devil when temptation to evil comes, (James 4:7) and He made a way for us to recover from any tragedy or trouble that comes our way. He will comfort us and strengthen us in any situation, if we will share our troubles and sorrows with him.

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All evil comes from the devil – it's even written in his name. No evil comes from God because there is no evil in Him. His glory is a spiritual fire that consumes evil, for He is a holy, loving, tender, Father to His children. So when trouble, death, accident or a tragedy happens, before you blame God and ask why He let it happen, look at the cause and you will always see that God did not do it.

If a beloved mother, child or other family member is hurt, or killed, or suffers an illness – look at the cause. If an auto accident happens, one of those drivers was careless or made an error – maybe due to drugs, alcohol or inexperience. That was the reason for the accident, not God. If illness strikes a loved one, there is a weakness somewhere in their immune system that they have not been able to overcome – God did not put that virus in them. Or, if a person smokes or eats junk food all their life, they cannot expect to be healthy.

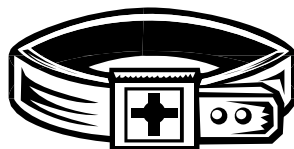
Most people who believe God causes someone to die or suffer, don't know Him and have not studied His Word. A famous preacher once made this statement, "God's people don't need so much inspiration as they need information." What a true statement for our life today with so much suffering and tragedy all around us in the world. God said through His prophet Hosea, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*" (Hosea 4:6) The knowledge they lack is the way God showed us how to live in His Word. He told us about the things that will hurt us if we do them. If we don't know what those things are, or if we know them and don't obey them, we will make wrong choices with sorrowful consequences.



God is not just a spiritual 911 to be called only in emergencies expecting to get a supernatural answer to a natural problem. If you don't stay near Him in His Word, and in prayer, to keep you strong when adversity comes, you will be helpless against the attacks of the devil. We need to know His promises like 1 Corinthians 10:13, "*There has no adversity, experience or temptation to sin over taken you that is not common to man – and such as man can bear – but God is faithful (to His Word and to His compassionate nature) and will not let you be tested and tried beyond your strength and power to endure it, but He will always provide the way out – so that you may be capable and strong and powerful to patiently bear up under it.*"

Turn now to Ephesians 6 and read verses 10-18 aloud.

Now read the following words from the article "Dressing for Battle" by Charles Stanley; based on Ephesians 6:10-18.



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"By faith I put on the belt of truth. The truth about You, Lord – that You are a sovereign God who knows everything about me, both my strengths and my weaknesses. Lord, You know my breaking point and have promised not to allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able to bear. The truth about me, Lord, is that I am a new creature in Christ and have been set free from the power of sin. I am indwelt with the Holy Spirit who will guide me and warn me when danger is near. I am Your child, and nothing can separate me from Your love. The truth is that You have a purpose for me this day – someone to encourage, someone to share with, someone to love.

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“Next, Lord, I want to, by faith, put on the breastplate of righteousness. Through this I guard my heart and my emotions. I will not allow my heart to attach itself to anything that is impure. I will not allow my emotions to rule in my decisions. I will set them on what is right and good and just. I will live today by what is true, not by what I feel.

“I put on the sandals of the gospel of peace. I am available to You, Lord. Send me where You will. Guide me to those who need encouragement or help of some kind. Use me to solve conflicts wherever they arise. Make me a calming presence in every circumstance in which You place me. I will not be hurried or rushed, for my schedule is in Your hands. I will not leave a trail of tension and apprehension. I will leave peace and stability wherever I go.



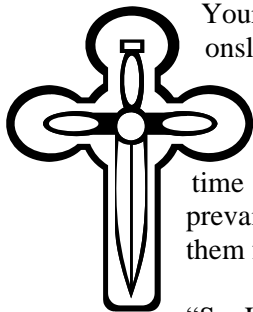
“I now take up the shield of faith, Lord. My faith is in You and You alone. Apart from You, I can do nothing. With You, I can do all things. No temptation that comes my way can penetrate Your protecting hand. I will not be afraid, for You are going with me throughout this day. When I am tempted, I will claim my victory out loud ahead of time, for You have promised victory to those who walk in obedience to Your word. So by faith I claim victory even now because I know there are fiery darts headed my way even as I pray. Lord, You already know what they are and have already provided the way of escape.



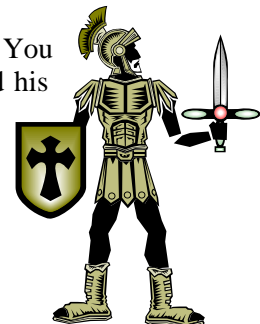
“Lord, by faith I am putting on the helmet of salvation. You know how Satan bombards my mind day and night with evil thoughts, doubt, and fear. I put on this helmet that will protect my mind. I may feel the impact of his attacks, but nothing can penetrate this helmet. I choose to stop every impure and negative thought at the door of my mind. And with the helmet of salvation those thoughts will get no further. I will take every thought captive; I will dwell on nothing but what is good and right and pleasing to You.



“Last, I take up the sword of the Spirit, which is Your Word. Thank You for the precious gift of Your Word. It is strong and powerful and able to defeat even the strongest of Satan’s onslaughts. Your Word says that I am not under obligation to the flesh to obey its lusts. Your Word says that I am free from the power of sin. Your Word says that He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world. So by faith I take up the strong and powerful sword of the Spirit, which is able to defend me in time of attack, comfort me in time of sorrow, teach me in time of meditation, and prevail against the power of the enemy on behalf of others who need the truth to set them free.



“So, Lord, I go now rejoicing that You have chosen me to represent You to this lost and dying world. May others see Jesus in me, and may Satan and his hosts shudder as Your power is made manifest in me. In Jesus’ name I pray, AMEN.”



“Why Bad Things Happen”

1. What question do people always ask when bad things happen?

2. What do people usually say based on their religious beliefs?

3. Is God the destroyer? If not, who is?

4. What does the word destroyer mean?

5. When did the devil first appear as a serpent?

6. What do people need today more than inspiration?

7. What does the devil always try to make us do? Why?

8. What is our most powerful weapon against the devil’s attacks?

9. What did God say through His prophet Hosea about knowledge? (Hosea 4:6)
(The answer to this question will be your memory verse)

MEMORY VERSE _____

“Why Bad Things Happen”

1. What question do people always ask when tragedy strikes?

Why would God let this happen?

2. What do people usually say based on their religious beliefs?

Well, God knows best.

3. Is God the destroyer? If not, who is?

No. The devil is the destroyer.

4. What does the word destroyer mean?

Ruiner, a venomous serpent.

5. When did the devil first appear as a serpent?

In the Garden of Eden.

6. What do people need today more than inspiration?

Information about God.

7. What does the devil always try to make us do? Why?

Make wrong choices. So people will blame God for the consequences.

8. What is our most powerful weapon against the devil’s attacks?

The Word of God.

9. What did God say through His prophet Hosea about knowledge? (Hosea 4:6)

MEMORY VERSE “My people perish for lack of knowledge.”