

## Why do bad things happen to good people?

This is a question people often ask.

GOD is eternal, infinite, omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. We simply are not, and any writing like this one can only be directed to those who are re-born children of GOD, since HIS WORD is a HANDBOOK to HIS children. We have to understand first and foremost that there are no “good people”, but by HIS grace HE sent HIS only SON, JESUS CHRIST WHO willingly died for us so that we may live (John3:16)– HIS Blood makes us righteous people.

Ecc 7:20 For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that does good, and sin not.

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of GOD *is* eternal life through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

2Co 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for CHRIST, as though GOD did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in CHRIST'S stead, be ye reconciled to GOD.

2Co 5:21 For HE hath made HIM *to be* sin for us, WHO knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in HIM.

Read Romans 3:10-18

The written WORD of GOD is key to all the questions we may ever have (regarding any topic). In the WORD (Bible) we read HIS directions for life. We learn about the blessing and the curse consequence of obedience or disobedience. This is very important, because it explains to us how we can be obedient and what the consequences of disobedience are – think of what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when GOD forbade them from eating the fruit and what the consequences were when they disobeyed (Genesis 3).

Also read as examples Deut 12 and 28.

Disobedience by us (or those in our bloodline before us) gives satan legal rights to plunder our lives. All too often GOD is blamed for things HE had nothing to do with and had warned us against in HIS WORD. HE did all HE could to ensure our safety and prosperity, but if we do not adhere to HIS system, we cannot possibly expect it to work of our good. That is why writings such as this can only apply to GOD’S children – you have to be HIS child for HIS WORD to be effective for you (applicable to your life).

Num 14:18 The LORD *is* longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation*.

GOD is never the cause of misery in our lives and when we look for the root of sickness, accidents, lack, divorce and whichever challenge you face, we really should blame the right person – satan and/or often ourselves.

The problem is that too few of us today know the WORD well enough for our own needs or even well enough to raise our children in such a way that they habitually live according to the principles we find in the WORD.

Ex 20:6 “But showing mercy and steadfast love to a thousand generations of those who love ME and keep MY commandments”

GOD really did and still does all HE possibly can to safeguard our lives, but it is as it is written “MY people perish for a lack of knowledge” GOD shows us the way to avoid “bad things”, but because we are so ignorant of HIS WORD, we are unable to apply these principles effectively in our lives.

Hos 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy GOD, I will also forget thy children.

Normally the answer to what happens can be found in bad decisions/choices made by us or our ancestors, which satan abuses simply because he can. We love blaming GOD, which is really just unwise since HE is the only ONE WHO can lead us out of the “bad things”.

satan in all of his maliciousness are very organised in causing “bad things” in people’s lives. he visits these on all people - saved or unsaved – and loves inflicting torment and pain in the lives of those who love the LORD. he uses demonic powers such as “clarparkaie and clarex” to cause car accidents, “yondacola” to cause bloodcancer, “goadfish” to cause acne, the “curse of Zelophahad’s daughters” to split families and many, many more. he also uses people in witchcraft to activate curses in people’s lives and sits eagerly and wait for us to give him the next four generations of our bloodline when we transgress the WORD of GOD without repentance, just like we are possibly now part of the four generations with active curses in our lives because of our forefather’s sins. The only deliverance can come by calling on the Name of the LORD – Joel 2:32 when you have been saved by the Blood of JESUS CHRIST.

Joel 2:32 “And whoever shall call upon the Name of the LORD shall be delivered and saved...”

There is only one example where GOD allowed a faithful servant of HIS to be tested by the devil. The book of Job deals with this issue. GOD had allowed satan to do everything he wanted to Job except kill him. What was Job’s reaction? “Though he slay me, yet will I hope in HIM” (Job 13:15). “The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised” (Job 1:21). Job did not understand why GOD had allowed the things HE

did, but he knew GOD was good and therefore continued to trust in HIM. Ultimately, that should be our reaction as well.

It is very clear in the book of Job that the LORD had a lot of faith in Job. Job chose to trust GOD even though he did not fully understand what was happening. GOD rewarded Job's faithfulness by restoring to him more than what he lost (read Job). The true test of our faith is our attitude between us asking and then receiving what we asked for. Many turn on GOD if their prayer is not answered soon enough to their liking. This shows what truly lies in their hearts. It is easy to talk, but in your heart you must know that GOD will never allow you to be tested beyond what you can overcome. The LORD promises that whatever we face is not new to man and that HE will put us in a safe place while HE prepares the way out for us – if we will only trust and rely on HIM.

Then there is the part we, ourselves, play in our own lives... the choices and decisions we make determine the outcome or consequences that we live in. Do a quick check.

Did you ask GOD:

- Who you should marry
- Where you should live
- Where and what kind of career you should follow
- When you should start a family
- What car you should buy
- What HIS WORD says about the crossroad you may be facing right now...

Sometimes we make decisions and choices that we know is sin.

For example:

- Fornication
- Adultery
- Addictions
- Dishonesty
- Gossiping
- Slandering
- Negligence

There are many more and all of them have the curse of disobedience that go with them. Graciously GOD tells us in 1 John 1:9 that HE not only forgives us, but will also cleanse us when we repent and turn from our wicked ways.

1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, HE is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Every human being on this planet deserves to be thrown into hell at this very moment. Every second we spend alive is only by the grace and mercy of GOD. Even the most terrible misery we could experience on this planet is merciful compared to what we deserve.

A better question would be "Why does GOD allow good things to happen to bad people?" Romans 5:8 declares,

“But GOD demonstrates HIS own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, CHRIST died for us.”

Despite the evil, wicked, sinful nature of the people of this world, GOD still loves us. HE loved us enough to die to take the penalty for our sins (Romans 6:23). If we receive JESUS CHRIST as SAVIOUR (John 3:16; Romans 10:9), we will be forgiven and promised an eternal home in heaven (Romans 8:1). What we deserve is hell. What we are given is eternal life in heaven if we come to CHRIST in faith.

Yes, sometimes bad things happen to people who seem undeserving of them. But GOD allows things to happen for HIS reasons, whether or not we understand them. Above all, however, we must remember that GOD is good, just, loving, and merciful. Sometimes things happen to us that we simply cannot understand. However, instead of doubting GOD'S goodness, our reaction should be to trust HIM.

(Proverbs 3:5-6) "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge HIM, and HE will make your paths straight"

We are only made righteous by the Blood of CHRIST and not by any amazing ability or performance of our own. When we accept JESUS CHRIST as our LORD and SAVIOUR, we stand a chance to change and remove satan's legal rights – that is why healing and deliverance is so very, very important.

Consider the following ground rules:

1. The Possibility of evil

For free choice to operate, it's obvious that evil has to have the possibility of existing. If every time someone chooses to do evil, GOD is going to interfere, then there's no moral choice. If every time the gun is pointed, the turret points backwards, after a few times you get the message. If you drive drunk and have an accident, then you're not "morally choosing," you just see it doesn't work. It simply becomes pragmatic not to do evil.

If the lives of the righteous were obviously perfect, that too would destroy the possibility of choice.

A world where a human being can create himself into a Moses (by his choices), also carries the possibility of a person creating himself into a Hitler.

GOD does miracles, but it is not always in a way that is obvious, that enables us to retain free choice.

After the Exodus from Egypt when the Red Sea split, it was obvious to everyone that GOD had performed a miracle. Yet the Old Testament states "that a strong east wind blew all night" (Exodus 14:21). Why was there a strong wind blowing? Because GOD

had to leave open at least the possibility for someone to say, "No, there was no miracle. It was a fluke of nature and the wind split the sea."

In the Gulf War, 39 Scud Missiles rained down on Israel and only one person was killed. What would it take for that to happen? Guaranteed you would have told me it would take a miracle, but it happened and we still have doubt.

Are you seeing the miracles GOD did and are still doing in your life/circumstance? Or are you so bitter that you cannot understand that if it had not been for HIS grace there is no telling how bad things really would be?

## 2. Intervention

In Genesis 15:13, GOD tells Abraham, "Know that your descendents are going to be enslaved in a land they don't know," which of course ends up being Egypt. So you may ask: "If GOD wanted the Jewish people to be enslaved in Egypt, why did he punish the Egyptians?"

Nachmanides explains: "All GOD said is that they would be enslaved. HE said nothing about torture and murder. GOD only said that HE wanted a certain something to happen, but the Egyptians took it beyond that."

Now the question is, "Do the Jewish people deserve intervention or not?"

In Deuteronomy, Moses says that the fate of people depends on our relationship to GOD. The more we move closer to HIM, the more HE moves closer to us. HE remains steadfast in HIS WORD and if we move away from HIS WORD we are no longer close to HIM. If we disobey HIS WORD HE "hides HIS Face from us" And when that happens, we leave ourselves open to the free will decisions of human beings and the evil of satan. Because GOD created us with a free-will, HE only intervenes upon human request by us or those interceding for us.

We have to appreciate that in the Holocaust, it was not GOD who built the crematoriums, it was the Nazis. Which of course raises the question: Why didn't GOD interfere? But do you see the difference between "GOD doing this" and "why is GOD not interfering?"

King David said, "GOD, I'd rather have direct punishment from YOU than to fall into the hands of a human being." Because that is (seriously) dangerous. Will you ask GOD to intervene in your situation?

### 3. Eternity

The question of "why do bad things happen to good people" has a lot to do with how we look at existence. The way we usually perceive things is like this: A "good life" means that I make a comfortable living, I enjoy good health, and then I die peacefully at age 80+. That's a good life. Anything else is "bad."

In a limited sense, that's true. But we have a soul and there is such a thing as eternity ... that changes the picture entirely. Eighty years in the face of eternity is a very short time.

GOD created us as spirit, we live in a body and have a soul. Soul is as real as any physical thing you can see or touch. This is the world of doing, and the "world to come" is where we experience the eternal reality of whatever we've become. Do you think after being responsible for the torture and deaths of millions of people, that Hitler could really "end it all" by just swallowing some poison? No. Ultimate justice is found in another dimension.

But the concept goes much deeper. From an eternal view, if the ultimate pleasure we're going after is the eternal relationship with GOD Himself, then who would be more blessed: Someone who lives an easy life with little connection to GOD, or someone who is born handicapped, and despite the challenges, develops a close relationship with GOD. Who would be blessed in terms of eternal existence? All I'm trying to point out is that the rules of life start to look different from the point of view of eternity, as opposed to just the 70 or 80+ years we have on earth.

### 4. The Big Picture

I heard a story I'd like to share. There once was a farmer who owned a horse. And one day the horse ran away. All the people in the town came to console him because of the loss. "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "maybe it's a bad thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the horse returned to the farm accompanied by 20 other horses. (Apparently he had found some wild horses and made friends!) All the townspeople came to congratulate him: "Now you have a stable full of horses!" "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer, "maybe it's a good thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the farmer's son was out riding one of the new horses. The horse got wild and threw him off, breaking the son's leg. So all the people in town came to console the farmer because of the accident. "Oh, I don't know," said the farmer,

"maybe it's a bad thing and maybe it's not."

A few days later, the government declared war and instituted a draft of all able-bodied young men. They came to the town and carted off hundreds of young men, except for the farmer's son who had a broken leg. "Now I know," said the farmer, "that it was a good thing my horse ran away."

The point of this story is obvious. Life is a series of events, and until we've reached the end of the series, it's hard to know exactly why things are happening. That's one reason the Bible commands us to give respect to every elderly person - because through the course of life experience, they have seen the jigsaw puzzle pieces fall into place.

The Bible (OT) itself makes this point very clear. Jacob is raising the next generation of the Jewish people, bringing to the world the message of one true (good) GOD. And the key character in that picture is his son Joseph, who is kidnapped by his own brothers and sent down to Egypt. Imagine you would come to Jacob at that point in time and ask him about a good God. What's he going to answer?- he believes his son is dead...

In Egypt, Joseph became Prime Minister, and when a grave famine hits the entire world, Joseph is in a unique position to rescue his family.

When we look at the whole story in retrospect, everything that happened to Joseph was for the good. It set into motion a chain of events where he ended up saving and building the children of GOD.

It is interesting to see that every chapter in the Bible does not have a good ending. Often we see the "working for good" in the following chapter/s. GOD wants us to understand that even though the place where we are now may be dismal, HE is not done with us and our circumstances yet.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love GOD, to them who are the called according to <i>HIS</i> purpose.
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## 5. Opportunity for Growth

Sometimes what we perceive as punishment is really an opportunity for growth. In the story of the "Binding of Isaac," the Bible says that "GOD tested Abraham." The question is: Doesn't GOD know what Abraham is capable of? So who's the test for? It can't be for GOD. It must be for Abraham.

What does it mean to be tested? You have potential. Now the question is can you actualize your potential? We grow when we have to extend ourselves. The Hebrew word for test - "Nisa," is the same as one of the Hebrew words for flag - "Nes." What's the connection? You hoist a flag; so too through being tested, we become hoisted to higher and higher levels. Was this test a "punishment" for Abraham? Of course not. It was an opportunity for growth. The Abraham before the test is not the same Abraham after the test.

Imagine a track coach training an athlete in the 110-meter high hurdles. The coach would start with the hurdles low, and then raise them steadily as the athlete progressed. Raising the hurdles is not a punishment; rather it shows the coach's increasing confidence in the athlete's ability.

As a minister I often hear these words: "When this event happened in my life, it seemed so negative; now I understand why it was there and how I grew from it." From personal experience, I agree.

A young bride lost her husband before their second anniversary. "I felt lost and like my life was not worth living". Her growth in the LORD since has turned all things around so that she says today "I would not have been the woman I am had that not happened. My life is an adventure and totally worth living". She's convinced that her suffering was integral to the growth process.

As children of GOD, we look at life as "I'm here for growth, so how does this situation help me to change and grow?" When GOD is telling you to sacrifice your only son, can there be any greater punishment? Yet it changed the whole future of the GOD'S children. "Tests" can change your future, too.

## 6. Suffering

- 10 Facts about Christian suffering
  1. Suffering is not strange or unusual for Christians – 1Pet4:12, 2Tim3:12
  2. One should rejoice when a partaker in the sufferings of CHRIST – 1Pet4:13, Matt5:10
  3. The greater the suffering, the greater the joy and glory – 1Pet4:13, Rom8:17-18
  4. Besides the greater glory to come, the Christian has the HOLY SPIRIT Who enables him/her to endure – 1Pet4:14, Rom8:26-27
  5. Christian sufferings consist of:
    - Persecution for righteousness – Matt5:10, Mark 10:30, John15:20
    - Revilings and slander – Matt5:11-12, 10:25; Acts13:45, 1Pet4:4
    - False accusations – Matt10:17-20

- Scourgings for CHRIST – Matt10:17
  - Rejection by men – Matt10:14
  - Hatred by the world – Matt10:22, John15:18-21
  - Hatred by relatives – Matt10:21-36
  - Martyrdoms – Matt10:28, Acts7:58
  - Temptations – Luke8:13, Jas1:2-16
  - Shame for HIS Name – Acts5:41
  - Imprisonment – Acts4:3, 5:18; 12:4
  - Tribulations – Acts14:22, 2Thess1:4
  - Stonings – Acts14:19, 2Cor11:25
  - Beatings – Acts16:23, 2Cor11:24-25
  - Being a spectacle to men – 1Cor4:9
  - Misunderstandings, necessities, defamation, and despisings – 1Cor4:10-13
  - Troubles, afflictions, distresses, tumults, labours, watchings, fastings, and evil reports – 2Cor6:8-10, 11:26-28
  - Reproaches – Hebr13:13, 1Pet4:14
  - Trials – 1Pet1:7, 4:12
  - satanic opposition – Eph4:27, 6:12
  - Groaning and travailing because of the curse – Rom8:17-26
6. Christian sufferings glorify GOD – 1Pet4:14, Rom8:17-18
7. Christian sufferings do not consist of:
- Sufferings for murder – 1Pet4:15
  - Sufferings as a thief – 1Pet4:15
  - Sufferings for being an evildoer
  - Sufferings for being a busybody – 1Pet4:15
  - Sufferings for any crime listed in Rom1:18-32, 1Cor6:9-11, Gal5:19-21
8. It is an honour and not a shame to suffer as a Christian – 1Pet4:16
9. Though suffering begin with Christians, they end in eternal weight of damnation to the ungodly – 1Pet4:17-18
10. Sufferings should be borne by Christians in patience as in the will of GOD, realizing that GOD is always faithful to HIS own in their sufferings – 1Pet4:19, 1Cor10:13
- 10 Rewards for Christian suffering 1Pet4:13
    1. Greater glory in Heaven – 2Cor4:17
    2. Eternal consolation – 2Cor1:7
    3. Making JESUS known – 2Cor4:11
    4. Life to others – 2Cor4:12
    5. Making grace manifest – 2Cor4:15
    6. Guarantee of judgment – 2Thess1:5
    7. Reign with CHRIST – 2Tim2:12

8. SPIRIT upon us – 1Pet4:14
9. Glory to GOD – 1Pet4:16
10. Great joy – 1Pet4:13-14

## 7. Individual and community

We are living in a very complex world and in a complex world, GOD doesn't only deal with individuals, HE also deals with nations.

When GOD decided to destroy Sodom and Gomorra, Abraham complained. He asked GOD, "If I can find 50 righteous people in Sodom and Gomorra, will YOU spare the cities?" GOD said, "No problem, I won't destroy it." Abraham bargained with GOD until he got down to 10 righteous people and GOD said, "Okay, if you can find 10 righteous people I won't destroy it."

Abraham could not find a group, though the city was destroyed, GOD in HIS grace did save those who were righteous and lived according to HIS WORD.

## 8. The Benefits of Punishment/Chastisement/Correction

One of the greatest lies satan has manage to sell to people is that GOD is out to get them. GOD is our merciful FATHER. HE is an infinite being that has no needs. Punishment cannot mean that HE is "getting something." And this is the key to understanding the concept of chastisement.

Heb 12:7 If ye endure chastening, GOD dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
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A parent should punish his/her child for wrongdoings to avoid them later ending up in jail (eg taking a friends toy) These are consequences of the good and the bad. When I do what's right, I receive positive reinforcement, when I do what's wrong I receive "punishment" – a face the negative consequence of my actions.

We believe that punishment exists because GOD is reacting to the fact that I've done something wrong and HE wants me to change. Hopefully I'll hear the message and learn from that. GOD is not out for revenge. HE is doing this for my own good. If HE wouldn't react to my negative behaviour that would be the worst punishment of all - because that would mean indifference. This is why King David says in Psalms (23:4): "YOUR rod and YOUR staff comfort me." I know that according to what is written in 1John1:9, GOD forgives me when I repent and turn from wickedness, HE cleanses me and we are once-again in right standing. There is protection in "punishment/chastisement/correction" and unpleasant as it is, GOD "prunes" me

because HE loves me and for my own good.

### Putting it all together

It is very difficult for us to "judge" GOD because we are stuck in time and space. And because our view is so limited. When "bad" things happen, there are many possibilities of why it's happening. "Is this a challenge in life that was given to me so I could become an example to inspire others? Or is this to realise my sin and move to repentance? Or is this due to historical/national forces that are affecting me as an individual? Or is what's happening to me now through a choice that I've made? Or that I'm on my own because I've distanced myself from GOD?, Is this because my ancestors made covenant with satan regarding my life?"

The fact that there are so many possibilities makes it easier to come to terms with the question, to be more comfortable realizing that if I had GOD'S infinite view I would understand.

And it is important to know that HE does understand. HE understands my desperation, my anger, my heartache and HE wants to save me and move on my behalf, to deliver, heal and restore me. All I need is to call upon HIS Name and HE will rescue me. Joel 2:32.

### Attitude

I've seen so much suffering, and it seems to me that the key is "attitude." How people deal with it depends on what attitude they have. I have seen people whose attitude were of anger or hurt to such an extent that they never got beyond a particular event - which then became the defining moment of their lives. In a certain sense, life stopped at that particular moment.

On the other hand, I have seen people who have gone through the most horrendous things, but their attitude was a positive one of believing that there is an ultimate good, of asking how I can learn and grow from this. It was incredible to see their sense of dignity, and the inspiration they gave to others. How they moved on with their lives. The contrast is so unbelievable between these two attitudes. Living with the concept of a good GOD is so much more uplifting and gives a person the ability to remain joyful and hopeful and have the strength to go on and fight. It is written "Hope does not disappoint".

There is a saying: "when under pressure, some choose to shine while others run and hide". Will you choose to shine.

I have made my mind up. I will shine. Not that I never ran, just that when I did and I saw GOD saving me, I felt embarrassed that I had an opportunity to make HIM proud of me and never did. I understand I had the opportunity to encourage others in my test and now choose to learn what I can, stand on HIS WORD and rejoice as HIS Hand lifts me out. I have found this do-able when I keep my focus on HIS WORD instead of on my emotions and reasonings.

Some people that have suffered tragedies have found some degree of solace by setting up some time of a fund or organization to help people, in memory of for example the loved-one that died. This enables them to channel some of the great emotion that have into an area that offers them some degree of comfort. We need to make things count in our lives. Make them count for the good and benefit of others. CHRIST did this when HE had to die on the Cross – satan thought he defeated the LORD, but HE made HIS sacrifice mean something and that something is our salvation!

I want to share a story that I heard. If you've ever ridden a bus in Israel, you know how people enter the bus from the front door and pay the driver, and people exiting the bus do so from the back door. Sometimes the crowd is so great that people will also enter from the back door, and then pass their money up front to pay the driver. Well, this one time the driver decided he wasn't going to allow that. So he announced that whoever had entered from the back door must now get off the bus and walk around to the front. Everybody complied grumpily, except for one very old man who could barely walk in the first place. Well, the driver stuck to his guns and announced that the bus would not move until this old man came on through the front door. So slowly, slowly, one small step at a time, the old man got off the bus and walked around. And all the while, the people on the bus were shouting at the driver for not only his insensitivity to the old man, but for wasting everyone else's time!

Finally, the old man managed to make it up through the front door and pay the driver. And then he turned toward the bus full of angry people and told them: "Please, don't be upset. We should be grateful that my legs still work and I still have the strength to walk. Thank GOD!!"

Look, I don't mean to trivialise what you have to deal with. We all face our own challenges in life. What I do want you to realise is that the LORD is the only ONE WHO can help you. Being angry at HIM does not serve your interests. If you are, please make right with HIM. Bring your petitions before HIM and choose to trust

HIM with thanksgiving until the breakthroughs come. Allow no doubt to pollute your thoughts. Don't hang around negative people. When you need to be strong, you need people around you who will stand on HIS WORD with you. Make GOD and HIS WORD your business and HE will make you HIS.

You can do this.

I want to conclude with the following poem I once read:

I asked for strength and  
GOD gave me difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom and  
GOD gave me problems to solve.

I asked for prosperity and  
GOD gave me brawn and brain to work.

I asked for courage and  
GOD gave me dangers to overcome.

I asked for love and  
GOD gave me troubled people to help...

My prayers were answered.