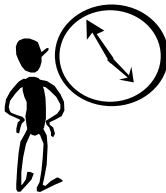


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Time of Assembly



Sunday:

Bible Study	9:00 a.m.
Worship	10:00 a.m.
Worship	5:00 p.m.

Wednesday: 7:00 p. m.

Why Do Bad Things Happen?

By T. Sean Sullivan

How often is your life visited with a bad day or bad news? How often do we suffer in this world? One specific area that I know visits every family at one time or another is sickness. Yes, ailments come and sometimes they bring an end to a loved one's life. Some find themselves asking if it was God's will that this individual would stay sick or even die. Many of us whether we fully admit it or not fall prey to the mindset that says, "What have I done to deserve this?" We immediately turn to God with questions as to "Why?" or "What have I done?"

We need to examine more closely the Word to see if God has given us any indications to help us understand. We need to understand the things we consider to be "bad things" especially when they happen to loved ones. Let's take the time to look at ending some of the improper assumptions concerning bad things, sickness, and death.

THINGS THAT DO NOT CAUSE SUFFERING

We Do Not Suffer Because of Some Hidden Sin.

It is remarkable just how many people think that bad things or illnesses are punishment for wrong-doing. Even if it is not directly admitted, many of us have a twinge of conscience that provokes us into thinking, "Maybe this is what I deserve." In the days of Job his friends assumed this "punishment" scenario concerning his troubles. They witnessed what he was going through and assumed it was because of sin in his life. We can read the various indictments spoken by these three men: Eliphaz ([Job 4:8, 9](#)), Bildad ([Job 8:6](#)), and Zophar ([Job 11:5, 6](#)).

I know that this thought is still common. I hope that no one here takes on those thoughts. I was told that my Dad's great-grandmother died of cancer. His grand-mother would not tell anyone that fact. She was ashamed and embarrassed, afraid her mother had committed some horrible sin that caused the cancer. Job's friends were wrong and my great-grandmother was wrong. Consider what God had to say concerning Job (Job 1:22; 2:10)—“*in all this Job did not sin.*” God emphatically states that Job's friends had not spoken correctly ([Job 42:7-9](#)).

Granted, sometimes sinful choices result in illness (STD's; IV drug users). These illnesses are not punishment for the sin, as it is merely the consequences of their actions. If illness were punishment for sin than no innocent people would have sexual transmitted diseases like AIDS today. Sin does not cause physical disease—the action involved in some sins may result in conditions that such diseases require. The truth is that sin is not punished by disease, sin is punished by separation from God ([Isaiah 59:1-2](#); Romans 6:23).

We Do Not Suffer Because God Lacks The Power To Help.

For someone to come to this conclusion they must not know God at all. Some, however, do come to this conclusion. We know better, don't we? God is not limited by any mortal illness. God was able to extend Hezekiah's life ([Isaiah 38:1-5](#)). Jesus Christ worked great wonders and healings: [Mark 1:38-42](#) healed a leper; [Mark 5:25-34](#) healed a long-term illness; [John 11:39-45](#) He raised Lazarus from the dead.

God created us (Acts 17:26). His power is limitless within His will. Those who turn against God are just looking for someone to blame.

We Do Not Suffer Because God Just Doesn't Care.

Again, to come to this conclusion we must not know God at all. We are commanded to cast every care on God because in fact He does care for us ([1 Peter 5:7](#)). We must trust in, and rely on, God (Matthew 6:25-33; [Hebrews 11:6](#)). The Bible makes us aware of the fact that Jesus was the full expression of the His Father ([Colossians 2:9](#); [John 14:8-9](#)). He acted in the same manner as the Father and we know that Jesus was continually moved with compassion over the situations we face in this life (Matthew 9:36, 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; John 11:35).

What we have learned so far.

Ailments are simply part of mortality. We must understand, however, that we are mortal and the fact is that we will know illness and death—both are part of being in this mortal body.

Is it God's will that any one would become sick or die? In a manner of speaking,

I suppose. God created us with mortal flesh; sickness and death are ways of life as we know it. We need to be reminded that we are not here forever.

There is an even more important illness that we all need to be aware of. We have an immortal soul housed in this mortal flesh. A soul that needs to be freed from the bondage of sin to be prepared for the life eternal after this temporal life is over. Our caring God has willingly offered us hope through His Son Jesus Christ. Do you want to take hold of that hope today?

THINGS THAT DO CAUSE SUFFERING

We Suffer Because of Our Ability To Choose.

God created us in such a way that we have free will. We are intelligent and able to reason and choose for ourselves. God desires that we, His creations, would use our freedom of will to choose to serve Him. God did not create robots. God desires that we would by choice seek Him and love Him ([Acts 17:24-28](#); Psalm 100). We are free to choose whether or not we will serve our Creator.

Our freedom to choose can result in bad things happening. We could choose carelessly resulting in injuries from accidents caused by self or others. We could choose ignorantly, for example taking a prescription or eating a food—not knowing that you were allergic to it. We could choose lustfully, pursuing some illegal or immoral satisfaction. This carnal choosing may result in STD's or innocent third party infection. We could choose irrationally: doing without thinking through to the results. We could choose maliciously: seeking to directly harm others. Because everyone is free to choose, they may choose poorly and may affect you or me.

Sometimes We Suffer Because We Are Effected By Natural Calamities.

Natural events that are destructive such as tidal waves, floods, tornadoes, or hurricanes, are considered "bad things." It has been reasoned that natural calamities bring our minds back to the perspective that life here is uncertain. This world is not the permanent home of our soul (Hebrews 11:13-16). There is a better land prepared ([John 14:1-6](#)). There is a place in the presence of God (Revelation 21:22-27). We are clearly told that our life here is short in comparison to eternity and that we have an uncertain amount of time (James 4:14).

Natural calamities do not have reasoning abilities. By design nature follows cycles. It is well noted that some of the great pine trees must have fire to open their seed cones in order to reproduce. To us a forest fire may be a bad thing destroying houses and property but to the pine tree it is part of a necessary cycle. We cannot change this cycle and sometime we may be adversely effected by it. Because of natural cycles we might have a flooded yard or house or maybe we will not have any water at all. We suf-

fer these things because we live in a natural realm.

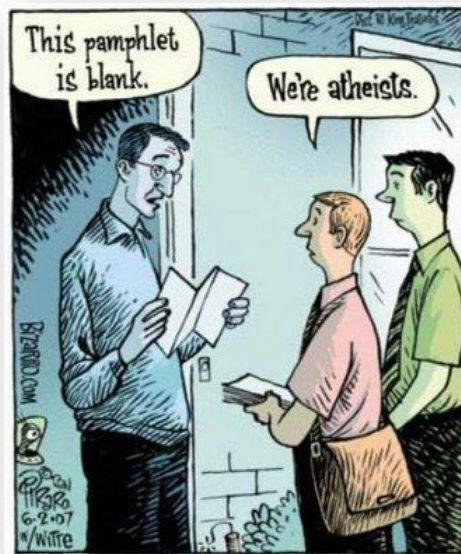
There will always be times of high water and low water as long as we live in this natural material realm. No storm purposely chases you. God does not send lightning down from heaven to zap sinners.

Much Of Our Suffering Is From Our Mortal Bodies.

It has been a long time standard of super heroes to be immortal—bullet proof—able to withstand any punishment. Why do we like to depict our fictional heroes that way? We, who are stuck in reality, are not immortal or bullet proof. We all must face the fact that by God's design our flesh is not designed to function forever (Genesis 3:19; [Psalms 139:14](#)). Hebrews 9:27 is a statement of our reality: It is appointed unto men once to die. There is a time to be born and a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:20). Consider this picture in words ([Ecclesiastes 12:1-7](#)): Vs. 1 Difficult days are coming when it will be hard to move about and we will not feel well. Vs. 2 The fall and winter of life (No more spring chicken) will meet all of us who live to see those years. Vs. 3 even our dependable tools like our hands, arms, and legs will become weakened over time. The teeth become few, eyes fail. Vs. 4 Struggle to keep lips shut to retain food. Sleep is even a chore, rise early, ears fail. Vs. 5 Fear of moving around, and heights, hair become white, small things become burdens. Physical desires, even eating fails. Vs.6 the silver cord represents our spine and nerves. The golden bowl represents our brain. Pitcher and wheel: blood and heart all fail— man's life ends. (Based loosely on Adam Clarke's Commentary). When our bodies are no longer fit to house our soul we will depart. We are just not meant to live forever. This life is temporary (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

CONCLUSION:

We need to understand that sickness, disease and death happen. These bad things happen through poor choices, or natural cycles or just because we are mortal. We have spoken about physical ailments but before we end this lesson I need to mention spiritual ailment. The greatest disease facing mankind is inflicted on our immortal soul by our mortal choice to sin. Sin separates us from God and results in a life without Him here and separation from Him in eternity to come. Are you willing to settle for that? The opportunity is yours right now to cleanse your soul. Please take the time to examine the passages and obey God's plan today.



Bearing Sins

By Doy Moyer

I was reading in Matthew and this caught my attention and my mind began to chase the rabbit down the hole. Maybe others have made this point:

"That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases"" ([Matthew 8:16-17](#)).

This quote from [Isaiah 53:4](#) is interesting because we normally think of this in the context of Jesus bearing our sins. Many assume that Jesus' "bearing" sins involves taking upon Himself all the guilt that belongs to us, and consequently all the punishment we deserve. However, Matthew 8 shows that Jesus' bearing of illness and diseases did not involve His becoming sick with those same diseases. Rather, it involved Him healing the sick of those diseases. He took hold of the illness, not to become sick Himself, but to cure it.

Matthew quoted from Isaiah 53, and perhaps this informs us of something important. Jesus bore our sins in His body ([1 Peter 2:24](#); [Hebrews 9:28-10:10](#)). Does that mean He became sick with sin? It did not mean that in Matthew's use of it, so I see no need to force that meaning into the text.

Jesus' bearing of our sins, then, does not mean that He became guilty of our sins. Rather, it means that He heals us of our sins. He took hold of our sins in such a way as to forgive them. Doing so did cause Him great anguish, as Isaiah 53 shows, because He became a sacrifice for sin. He did indeed suffer in order to free us from eternal suffering. He died so that we don't need to suffer eternal death. Even so, His bearing of our sins does not mean He became guilty of those sins; it rather refers to His ability to take our illness and heal us. Why else would Matthew quote this passage in a context of Jesus healing diseases? Jesus did not have to become sick Himself to bear their illnesses. He need not become guilty of our sins to bear our sins. He need only heal us through forgiveness, and doing that required a perfect sacrifice.

