

## WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE? PART 1

Let's say a friend of yours has something tragic happen to them. Their spouse leaves, or they lose a child, or the one making the only income for the family loses their job. You hear what happened and find yourself wondering *why*. They're good people! Why did this happen to them? There can be little doubt that most people have asked this question at one time or another. Sometimes we observe something tragic happen to someone we believe is a good person or tragedy happens to us and we cannot fully comprehend why the seemingly terrible circumstance has entered our world. This creates the "**Why?**" question and will be the subject of this series of articles.



The importance of finding an answer to this question cannot be underestimated. There have been an incalculable number of people from all walks of life – clergy, laity, even non-believers – who have walked away from any desire to know God because of their assessment that whatever evil has befallen someone should not have happened, and God is obviously not worth serving if He

allows such atrocities. Unfortunately, the church has done a terrible job of answering this question and so leaves a person on shaky ground to begin with, his feet not securely planted and prepared for such calamity. It is my prayer that by the time we are finished with this series, this question will not only be answered but your own feet will be set **firmly** in position and your heart and mind will draw closer to the Father.

As many of you know, I am a formulaic person and as a teacher, I look for patterns and formulas in the bible that I can translate into use within the parameters of my own life as well as the lives of others. And just like math equations, if you break the formula or change a variable in the formula, the result will undoubtedly change. So it is with this question. And in order to properly answer it, we must first understand the formula for how God Himself thinks as well as how He views such situations. Once we understand His original intent in allowing such calamities and why He created human beings to begin with, the final result follows the formula without fail, answering this question and so many more. Get the first part of the equation wrong and the entire process fails miserably, leaving us with doubt, pain, more questions, and further distance between us and the Creator.

So before we start unpacking the formula to answer this age-old question, it is first necessary to point out that the question itself is flawed on two points. First, it assumes that what has happened is, in fact, "**bad**" and it assumes that the person is, in fact, "**good**." Both of these assumptions are based on our personal deductions of both the event and the person, which are, in turn, based on our own opinions of what good and bad actually are. *Good* and *bad* are relative terms that mean different things to different people, the definitions based solely on the information one has within his scope of understanding. For instance, when Joseph's brothers first threw him into the well, someone looking at it from Joseph's perspective could easily say that that was "bad." But someone who knows the rest of the story could just as easily say that it was the best thing that ever happened, not only to him but also to the entire nation of Israel. How could the same situation be looked at with such polar opposite lenses? Because one person has more information from which to make a final determination. In short, if one understands the end of every story, he can be in the position to make a proper analysis. What most of us do is pre-judge a situation without knowing the end. We make assumptions, determinations, and judgments based on our own perspective, a perspective that is human, limited, and cannot see an ending that has not yet surfaced. In order for us to **really** answer this question, we must temporarily get rid of our perspective and focus on the Creator's perspective.

## **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

In my opinion, one of the most fundamental principles, if not *the* most fundamental principle, is that the Creator is benevolent and can be nothing *but* benevolent. The entire bible and how we relate to Him is determined by how much we believe that foundational principle. Our worldview is attached to how we view the Creator, so it goes without saying that having the proper view of God is paramount to viewing ourselves and the events that happen in our lives properly. We will come back to this concept in a moment.

Second, it is important to understand that Yahweh is perfect and perfectly whole. There is no shifting shadow or void within His essence. This means that He has no needs. There is nothing

that is wanting inside of Him, and therefore there is nothing we can give Him that He does not already have. I often ask people why God created man to begin with. I receive all kinds of answers: everything from *"God wants us to love Him"* to *"God wanted people to have a relationship with"* to *"It was a cosmic experiment."* Although some of the answers people give are, in fact, true, they're not THE answer. The *real* answer is that God operates within the law of giving and not in the law of receiving like us humans. (You'll grasp this quickly if you've read the *Joseph Formula* series of articles.) Because Yahweh is perfectly whole and not in need of anything, His entire reason for creating humans was to give from His overflowing nature of benevolence into our needy vessels of reception. This goes back to our number one fundamental law of the universe: God can be nothing but benevolent and everything He does fits into the perfect goodness of His character. It's only from our perspective that the things He does or allows are negative. But once we believe with all our hearts that God is good and good all the time, his emotions will be shaped by that fact no matter what happens.

## THE DANGER OF THE QUESTION

Most of the time, when we experience something terrible or hear of a terrible thing happening to someone we believe is a **"good"** person, we ask **"Why?"** or even **"How could God let this happen?"** These questions are almost unequivocally asked in frustration. The reason they're so dangerous and ultimately cause so many people to leave the faith or become distanced from the Creator is because they erode the very foundational principle that we have just discussed, namely that God is always benevolent and cannot give anything to His children that is not from His good nature. The second that we even entertain the question of why **"bad"** things happen to **"good"** people, we are, in fact, doubting the very existence of God. How? Because, at that moment, what we're really saying is, "If God is really a good God, how could He let this happen?" Then, by logical deduction, what we're concluding without realizing it is, "And since I believe that a good God would never let this happen and what has happened is, in my view, evil, He is not a good God and I cannot serve a God that is not good." So the questions create doubt about the most important aspect of the Creator: His goodness.



It's perfectly fine to ask **"Why?"** if we sincerely want to learn more about why the situation happened so we can make necessary corrections through the process. But the moment we enter the **"Why me?"** area, we are in dangerous waters because in the process of questioning the Creator about why He's chosen to allow an event to happen to us, what we're really saying is that we don't deserve whatever is happening to us. This is taking the position that we're innocent and God is therefore unjust for allowing the

circumstance into our lives. If someone is arrested by the police because they're selling drugs, he doesn't ask the officer why. He knows what he did was wrong. But if he's *not* selling drugs, he has every right to ask the officer why he's being arrested because he sincerely doesn't know. We can ask other humans "Why?" all day long. But when it comes to the Creator, we are to always assume that there is good reason for Him allowing trials and take the position that "all things

work together for good for those that are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28) and thank Him for His goodness and the ability to be elevated through this situation.

## DOUBT IS REASONABLE

When we face a situation that *seems* bad it's reasonable to conclude, *"This event is negative and therefore cannot be from God."* The problem is that the God of the Bible does not operate within reason. And if we follow Him we are to "walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us that we should "lean not on [our] own understanding, but in all [our] ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct [our paths]." Yahweh simply doesn't operate based on logic, our finite understanding, our timetables, or our reason. He operates "above reason," in the same area in which we are called to operate, an area called faith. Was it reasonable or logical for God to tell Moses to strike the rock for water, to part the Red Sea, to have the Israelites put blood on their door posts, or to walk around Jericho seven times and just shout? He is not a God that lives in the natural. He lives in the supernatural and His entire motive is to draw us above reason into His realm. What doubt does is force us to stay in the natural, in the realm of reason, and to use our physical senses to try to "understand" or "figure it out." This will leave us frustrated, angry, and distanced from Him.

In the first chapter of his book, James says, *"For he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. Let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways"* (James 1:6-8). Although doubt is reasonable, it is not within the realm of the righteous. And if and when a man *does* doubt, that doubt must be overcome by pleading with the Father to provide divine assistance to help bring him back into the realm of faith, or, at the very least, to help send him the answers that will assist his carnal mind in rising above reason and back into faith where God lives.

*So first things first.* When we encounter something, we perceive as negative in our lives or the lives of others, we must never doubt the fact that for those who have been purchased by the blood of Messiah: 1. Everything that happens to us is from Him (Psalm 37:23), and 2. Everything that is from Him is good (Psalm 73:1). For those who may already be struggling with believing those two foundational principles, let me take the time to explain why they're true. We will do this by introducing the second foundational principle, the "eternal perspective" principle.

## THE ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE

God does *not* live in our realm of time. He exists *outside* of time in the place called "**eternity.**" For the Creator, there is no time and all things in His realm are eternal. In other words, He does not make decisions for "**time**" and our realm. He makes decisions for "**eternal time**" and *His* realm. This is critical to understand because it is very difficult for us to think outside of time, and our time specifically. For instance, using the story of Joseph again, at the end of the story, Joseph understood that it was God who had sent him to Egypt and that it was, in fact, the will of the Creator for him to go through all he had. I'm sure Joseph cried his eyes out in the well and most likely in prison, but in the end, he understood God's perspective. He went from a carnal, time-based viewpoint to an eternal viewpoint. He went from seeing from his set of lenses to seeing through that of Yahweh.



God is not playing for our comfort, security, or even our feelings. Although He cares about each of those, focusing on them is not His ultimate goal. His ultimate goal is to fulfill His reason for creating us in the first place, which is to give of Himself to us until we are fully merged with Him. And the greatest thing He can give us is eternal life and the fullest measure that eternal life has to offer. He's playing for eternity and trying to get his children to be elevated to their full potential because that potential can only be realized in this lifetime. From His vantage point, because He sees all, knows all, and knows every matrix angle there is or ever could be, He causes or allows things to happen for the sole purpose of bringing us to His desired potential. God was not concerned about Joseph's comfort in the well or in prison. He was concerned about getting Joseph to where he needed to be so that all Israel would be saved.

It is this concept when fully understood, that will *destroy* the question in the title of this article to begin with. Once a person understands that he does not see all from God's eternal viewpoint and that God is simply working His plan to get as many people to their full, eternal potential, he stops trying to understand "**Why?**" within the realm of reason and can easily transcend the "Who?" Once he comes to the place where he can bypass the "**Why?**" and get to the "**Who?**" he can answer that question with, "*The who is God. And God is good all the time and is only concerned with being perfectly benevolent to me.*" Once he reaches this point, he has risen above reason and has entered the eternal realm of faith, where the powerful presence of God can actually be felt. Obtaining an eternal perspective will set us up to understand His original intent for allowing "bad" things to happen in the first place, which will be the subject of part 2 of this series. In the meantime, I want to encourage you to read this again and really meditate on the goodness and

eternal perspective of God. When that is fully seeded in your spirit, the rest will be easy to comprehend.

Our only goal in part 1 was to establish that the *foundational rule* of His existence is that He is good all the time and that He operates in eternity. Understanding that His vantage point is radically different from ours due to His having all the knowledge about every situation and scenario is critical to us rising above reason and living by faith. In part 2 we are going to answer the questions many of you might be asking, such as "*How could God be benevolent 100% of the time when He clearly punishes those who disobey Him?*" and "*Are you saying that a child dying is God doing something good?*" We will unpack the rest and explore how to deal with traumatic events so as to fully reach our potential in the elevation of the soul.

Shalom,  
Jim Staley

### **FAQ:**

You say that God doesn't need anything and can only give. Then why did He tell the Israelites to make sacrifices to Him? Doesn't He need us to worship Him?

No...*He needs nothing*...He doesn't even need us to worship Him since this would mean that he is incomplete and in need of something, thus He would not be whole. The Creator was perfectly whole within Himself for an eternity before the universe was created. He **WANTS** us to worship Him because worshiping Him in both spirit and truth allows Him to **GIVE** His presence to us. The only reason He desires us to do anything for Him is so that He can give more of Himself to us. The same motivation existed in the sacrifices He required. Sin separates His people from Himself. So a system was put in place so that His people could draw close to Him so He could be benevolent and give more of Himself in that closeness. Everything He asks us to do is for our benefit, to create a cleaner vessel into which He can pour. His very nature is to give of Himself to His creation and the entire Holy Scriptures are designed to facilitate in us the best possible opportunity to receive all that He desires to give.

Shalom,  
Jim Staley