

“SHALL WE NOT ACCEPT ADVERSITY?”

Job 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION

- A. In the wake of catastrophe, mankind demands an answer: If God is so good, why does such great evil abound on earth?
 - 1. Hear this question almost, if not every major disaster
 - 2. However, it doesn't take the deaths of thousands for this question to be ask. Many face personal tragedy and ask questions like:
 - a. "If God loves me, why did my spouse divorce me?"
 - b. "If God is so good, why am I suffering from cancer?"
 - c. "If God exists, why did He let my brother die in a car wreck?"
- B. So, let's take a look at this question and see if we can find a Biblical answer to this question in its many forms.

DISCUSSION:

I. BLESSINGS ARE UNDESERVED

- A. Think about sin's recompense
 - 1. Sin is universally practiced Eccl 7:20; 1Jhn 1:8,10; Rom 3:23
 - 2. Death is punishment for sin Gen 2:17; 3:19
 - a. All make same choice & same outcome Rom 5:12; 6:23
 - b. Sin is repaid on individual basis Ezek 18:20
 - c. The progression of sin ultimately ends in death Jas 1:15
 - d. The death of which we speak is a second death Rev 21:8
- B. Now think about God's kindness
 - 1. Despite the punishment we've earned, (Rom 6:23) God is willing to bless us with the gift of salvation anyway
 - 2. Reason earth not yet destroyed is God's longsuffering 2Pet 3:9
It does not please God to punish Ezek 33:11
 - 3. He provides all we need in life Jas 1:17 All we enjoy in life is proof of God's existence & goodness Acts 14:17; Matt 5:45
 - 4. Considering what He has provided, we must learn to be satisfied 1Tim 6:6-8
- C. If God has bestowed upon us far greater blessings than we could possibly deserve, is it not greedy to complain about adversity?
 - 1. Paul set a fine example, knowing contentment both in prosperity and in abundance Phil 4:11,12
 - 2. Examples from the Old Testament teach that we ought not complain 1Cor 10:5-11; Job 2:9-10

II. THE CAUSE OF ADVERSITY

- A. Not Necessarily Punitive. Although God's blessing are never earned, adversity is not necessarily the result of sin.
 - 1. Jesus corrected ones who blamed disability on sin Jhn 9:1-3
 - 2. Tragedy and iniquity often have nothing to do with one another Lk 13:1-5
 - 3. Job is introduced as an upright man, before suffering. In fact, it was his blamelessness that prompted his adversity Job 1:1-21

- B. Consequence Of Sin
 - 1. We reap what we sow Gal 6:7-8 Sexual promiscuity leads to venereal disease, abortion & fatherless children - Drunkenness causes car wrecks and other violence.
 - 2. Those who are punished for sin have no basis for complaining about the penalty 1Pet 4:15,16
 - 3. Some suffer the effects of others' sin Ex 34:7
- C. Satan's Work
 - 1. Satan's mission is to overthrow faith and he will try to accomplish that goal by any means Job 1:6-12; 2:1-8
 - 2. He afflicts health sometimes Lk 13:10-17
- D. Persecution For Righteousness' Sake
 - 1. Men have always suffered for serving God Matt 5:10-12
 - 2. The godly should expect persecution 2Tim 3:12
 - 3. Tribulation of this sort is a kind of fellowship with Christ 1Pet 4:12-19

III. THE VALUE OF ADVERSITY

- A. Test Of Faith
 - 1. Job suffered for this very explicit purpose Job 1:8-12
 - 2. For those who remain faithful, outcome of trials is verification that their faith is genuine 1Pet 1:6-9
- B. Character Development
 - 1. Virtue developed & shown by tribulation Rom 5:3-4
 - 2. Suffering qualifies us to comfort others who suffer 2Cor 1:3-6
 - 3. Our infirmities keep us humble 2Cor 12:7-10 (thorn in flesh)
- C. Preparation For Eternity
 - 1. The promise of life awaits those who endure Jas 1:12
 - 2. With eye on eternity, afflictions seem light 2Cor 4:16-5:1; connect with 2Cor 11:24-25
 - 3. We must suffer if we expect to receive glory Rom 8:18

CONCLUSION

- A. Psalm 73 "A Psalm of Asaph:" and it is likely that this Asaph was the composer of it; that he lived under the Babylonish captivity; and that he published this Psalm to console the Israelites under bondage, who were greatly tried to find themselves in such outward distress and misery, while a people much more wicked and corrupt than they, were in great prosperity, and held them in bondage. (From Adam Clark)
- B. Revelation 21:1-5 The whole of chapter 21, and the first five verses of chapter 22, relate to scenes beyond the judgment, and are descriptive of the happy and triumphant state of the redeemed church, when all its conflicts shall have ceased, and all its enemies shall have been destroyed. That happy state is depicted under the image of a beautiful city, of which Jerusalem was the emblem, and it was disclosed to John by a vision of that city--the New Jerusalem--descending from heaven. (From Barnes Notes)