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“Why do bad things happen?”

#1 Reason — Because of Satan (i.e., introduced sin into the world - Genesis 3)

A Case Study: The Story of Joseph

2nd reason why bad things happen — because of me.

Genesis 37:2-8 (NLT) “This is the account of Jacob and his family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father’s flocks. He worked for his half brothers, the sons of his father’s wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things his brothers were doing. 3 Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe. 4 But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn’t say a kind word to him. 5 One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. 6 ‘Listen to this dream,’ he said. 7 ‘We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!’ 8 His brothers responded, ‘So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?’ And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.”

- Matthew 7:3-4 (NLT) “And why worry about a speck in your friend’s eye when you have a log in your own? 4 How can you think of saying to your friend, ‘Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,’ when you can’t see past the log in your own eye?”

“Dear sir, regarding your article, ‘What is wrong with the world?’ I am. Yours truly, **G.K. Chesterton**”

Question — Where might your own pride, self-centeredness, immaturity, naivety, or short-sightedness be contributing to the brokenness you’re experiencing?

3rd reason why bad things happen — because of the world.

Genesis 39:6-12 (NLT) “... Joseph was a very handsome and well-built young man, 7 and Potiphar’s wife soon began to look at him lustfully. “Come and sleep with me,” she demanded. 8 But Joseph refused. “Look,” he told her, “my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. 9 No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God.” 10 She kept putting pressure on Joseph day after day, but he refused to sleep with her, and he kept out of her way as much as possible. 11 One day, however, no one else was around when he went in to do his work. 12 She came and grabbed him by his cloak, demanding, ‘Come on, sleep with me!’ Joseph tore himself away, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran from the house.

Genesis 39: 19-20 (NASB) “Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, ‘This is what your slave did to me,’ his anger burned. 20 So Joseph’s master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail.”

- 1 John 2:16-17 (NASB) “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”

Question — Joseph did the right thing and suffered anyway. How have you suffered due to the brokenness of our world?

What makes bad worse? Forgetting God.

Genesis 40:14-15, 23 (NLT) “And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. 15 For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I’m here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it.”

23 “Pharaoh’s chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought.”

- The cupbearer experienced God's grace through Joseph, then moved on with his life. The Bible repeatedly warns against **forgetfulness**, (not memory loss) but a failure to live in light of God's proven faithfulness. Biblical remembering isn't info recall, it's allowing God's faithfulness to shape present trust in situations.

Question – What has God done in your life that He never wants you to forget?

The Real Question: What is God doing while bad things are happening?

Genesis 45:4-8 (ESV) “So Joseph said to his brothers, ‘Come near to me, please.’ And they came near. And he said, ‘I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8 So it was not you who sent me here, but God.’”

Answer – He is at work using* all things for our good. (*Romans 8:28 - *requires our participation to see the benefits*)

Answer – God was still with Joseph in the losses – family, freedom, reputation, years in prison

- Genesis 39:2 (NLT) “The LORD was with Joseph [*as he served as a slave*].”
- Genesis 39:21 (NLT) “But the LORD was with Joseph in the prison and showed him his faithful love. And the LORD made Joseph a favorite with the prison warden.”
- Matthew 28:20 (NLT) “... And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Question – How does believing that God hasn't abandoned you—and is using even this for your good—change the way you view the hard things in your life?

“I am awed by what suffering can produce. You and I are nothing without the cross. I agonize and cry when the cross is working within me, but when it is over I look back in admiration for what God has accomplished. Of course I am then ashamed that I bore it so poorly. I have learned so much from my foolish reactions. You yourself must endure the painful process of change. There is much more at work here than your instant maturity. God wants to build a relationship with you that is based on faith and trust and not on glamorous miracles. God uses the disappointments, disillusionments, and failures of your life to take your trust away from yourself and help you put your trust in Him.” — **Francois Fenelon**



Men's Activities



Women's Activities



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