

Why?

Ponder: Why do bad things happen to good people?

Scripture: "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (Job 1:8, NKJV).

Lately our small congregation has experienced a veritable flood of injuries, sickness, disease, and other serious and painful health conditions. One of our elders commented that he has never before seen anything like it! In my totally biased opinion, the ones who have these issues are good and decent folks. Why, then, does God allow such pain and suffering to afflict people who are striving to serve Him faithfully?

I've stopped even trying to answer that question. Previously I tried to give reasons why God allows suffering even by "good" people. But for several decades I've been perfectly content to say, "I don't know." I have no right presume why God allows specific people to undergo specific trials. James wrote that enduring trials (the testing of our faith) produces patience (Jas. 1:3). Does that completely explain why every trial comes upon every person? Not likely.

Surely Job is the quintessential example of bad things happening to a good person. Who among us would dare to say we are blameless and upright, fearing God and shunning evil? Yet who among us has suffered to the degree Job did? In the second chapter of Job the patriarch asked seven times, "Why?" His three friends thought they knew. Job is suffering because he has sinned! They accused him of awful crimes. Oh, how wrong they were!

God never explained why He allowed Satan to afflict Job so severely. In the final analysis, Job trusted God and accepted the fact that God knew what He was doing.

One of our songs affirms, "We'll understand it all by and by." I'm not convinced that we will, or that we'll even want to. "Then I shall know fully just as I am also known" (1 Cor. 13:12) has been misapplied to mean that in Heaven we'll understand why God allowed our suffering; but that isn't at all what Paul was writing about.

Frankly, God doesn't owe us an explanation now or later. Our duty is to trust Him even in difficult times. That's what Job did. May God help us to do the same.

Hymn: "In The Hour Of Trial"

Prayer: Father, we look forward to the day when there will be no more pain or tears. Until then, help us to trust You no matter what. In Jesus' name, Amen.