Why Do These Things Happen
To God’s People?
by Derek Prince

— Study Note Outline —

TH1

Three Tape Series
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The Sin Of Independence
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I. Warning: Often We Do Not Understand
See Rom. 11:33b; Prov. 3:5; James 1:2–4
A. Reason no. 1: Man’s root problem: The flesh—its basic desire to be independent of God
B. Analyze the fall (Gen. 3:1–7)
   1. Satan’s objective: To discredit God’s Word
   2. His method
      a. Question
      b. Deny
   3. Eve’s response:
      a. Doubt
      b. Disbelieve
      c. Disobey
   4. The motivation Satan used:
      a. Distrust God’s goodness
      b. Be like God—but independent
      c. Trust senses above God’s Word, i.e. Eve saw . . . (Gen. 3:6) (This is born into all succeeding generations)
   5. Remedy to reverse the process:
      a. Trust God’s goodness
      b. Acknowledge dependence
      c. Trust God’s Word above the senses

II. Focus On Issue Of Independence
Two ways God brings us into dependence:
A. Waiting
   1. Abraham—25 years for Isaac
   2. Moses—40 years in the desert
      a. Moses learned humility (meekness) (Num. 12:3)—Therefore God could trust him with authority
      b. God acts on behalf of those who wait for Him (Is. 64:4)
      c. To serve—to wait (1 Thess. 1:9–10)
B. Desperation
   1. Israel—between Pharaoh and Red Sea—cried out (Ex. 14:9–10)
   2. God waits to hear our cry (Is. 30:18–19; Ps. 50:15).
      The desire to be independent of God is a terrible sin. Ultimately all those who persist in independence will be banished forever from God’s presence.

C. Prayer: to desire:
   1. Not to be esteemed
   2. Not to be secure
   3. Not to be in control

D. Pattern of Jesus (John 5:19, 30)

Job And His Accusing Friends

I. Key Verse: Job 42:7–8
   Job was right, his friends wrong.

II. What Is Revealed About Satan
   A. Satan takes his place among God’s angels (1:6; 2:1 [compare 2 Cor. 11:14])
   B. God took the initiative and pointed Job out (1:8)
   C. In relation to God’s people, Satan can only go as far as God permits—no long conversations (1:12; 2:6)
   D. Sometimes the issue is not resisting Satan, but asking: What is God trying to teach me?
   E. Within God’s limits, Satan has some power:
      1. Over human agents (1:14–15, 17)
      2. Over the elements (1:16, 19)
      3. To inflict sickness (2:7)
   F. Satan impugns the character of God’s servants (1:9–11; 2:4–5 [compare Rev. 12:10])

III. Main Points Of Job’s Friends
   A. You have sinned—that is why all this has happened—more and more intense accusations (22:5–11)
   B. God never lets the wicked prosper (4:7–9)
   C. If you would acknowledge and repent, everything would go right with you (8:3–7)
   D. A “prosperity gospel” (5:17–26)
   E. A fearful catalog of terrors that await the wicked (20:20–29).
   F. Eliphaz reveals the source of his doctrine: a terrifying spirit (a “religious” spirit?) (4:12–16)
   G. The doctrine: presumption for a man to hope to be righteous before God—Bildad likewise (25:1–6) [God’s final answer in Romans]

IV. Job’s Response
   A. Reverent submission (1:20–22; 2:9–10)
   B. Lament—curses his day (3:1–26)
   C. Desires to die (10:18–21)
   D. Affirms his righteousness (13:15; 27:3–6)
   E. Complains that God has been unjust (27:2–4; 2:3)
   F. Longs for a mediator (9:32–35)
G. Views God as vindictive and unconcerned (9:14–20, 30–31)
H. God uses him for target practice (7:20)
I. God watches man with a magnifying glass (7:17–18)
J. No justice on earth (9:24)
K. Flashes of prophetic revelation (19:25–27)
L. His friends have failed him (6:14–17; 16:2–5)
M. Rejects “prosperity gospel” as unrealistic:
   1. Many examples of innocent suffering (21:23–25; 24:1–12)
   2. Many examples of wicked who prosper (12:6; 21:7–15 [compare Ps. 73:3–9, 16–20])
N. Recalls his former prosperity and glory (29:1–25)
O. Now despised and mistreated in his own community (30:1–15)
P. Eleven sins he never committed (31:1–40):
   1. Lusting after a young woman (31:1–4)
   2. Falsehood and deceitful actions (31:5–8)
   3. Adultery (31:9–12)
   4. Oppression of his employees (31:13–15)
   5. Withholding mercy from the poor, widows and orphans—on the contrary, he has always cared for them (31:16–23)
   6. Trusting in his wealth (31:24–25)
   7. Idolatry—of sun or moon (31:26–28)
   8. Rejoicing over his enemy’s misfortune (31:29–30)
   9. Failure to show hospitality to strangers (31:31–32)
   10. Failure to acknowledge sin through fear of man (31:33–34) [Oh! That I could plead my case directly with God! (31:35–37)]
   11. Injustice towards those who cultivated his land (31:38–40)

V. Biblical Picture Of “Prosperity”
   A. Joshua — Joshua 1:8
   B. Paul — Romans 1:10 (3 John 2) Acts 27:1–28:10
   C. Biblical prosperity = successfully accomplishing the task committed to us by God

God Challenges Job
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I. In The Universe
   A. God describes how he runs the universe
      Challenges Job: Do you want to take over the job? (Job 38–40)
   B. Some areas that God deals with (38:4–41:34)
      1. Creation of the earth (38:4–7)
      2. Control of the sea (38:8–11)
      3. Sunrise and sunlight (esp. in relation to the wicked) (38:12–15)
      4. Dimensions of the earth—the nether world (38:16–18)
      5. Light and darkness (38:19–21)
      6. The elements: sun, rain, frost and cold (38:22–30)
      7. Constellations and heavenly bodies (38:31–33)
      8. Rain and snow [wisdom in the heart] (38:34–38)
      9. Living creatures (Job 38:39–39:30)
a. Lions, ravens, mountain goats, deer, wild donkeys, onager, wild ox, ostrich, stork, horse, hawk, eagle

b. Job: “I give up” (40:1–5)

c. God: Can you take over dealing with the wicked? (40:6–14) Or powerful creatures, such as:

d. Behemoth (? Elephant) (40:15–24)

e. Leviathan (? Dragon) (41:1–34)

A type of Satan (v. 34 [compare Eph. 2:1–2])

C. God is not remote and indifferent—continuously intimately concerned with His creation and all His creatures

1. Example of the sparrow (Matt. 10:29; Luke 12:6)
2. Contrary to Deism

D. Job abases himself (42:1–6)

1. Horizontally: he was truly righteous (1:8; 2:3; 42:7–9)
2. Vertically: vile, unworthy (42:2–6)

E. After Job encountered God, he had no more questions—perhaps this will be your answer also!

F. God deals with the friends (42:8–9)

G. Job prays for his friends—and is himself restored (42:10)

H. God returns double to Job—except his children (compare 1:5)

II. Comments Of James

A. Patterns of prophets (James 5:10)

1. Suffering and endurance
2. Compare Matt. 5:11–12; Heb. 11:37–38)
3. How about today’s prophets?

B. Two main lessons from Job (James 5:11)

1. Job’s perseverance
2. God’s end

III. Practical Lessons For Us

A. We can never understand all God’s dealings (Rom. 11:33; Prov. 3:6)

B. God never surrenders His sovereignty—never subjects Himself to a set of religious rules

C. God deals with us all as individuals

D. Foolish to compare ourselves with others (2 Cor. 10:12)

E. A special unique purpose for each life (John 21:21–22)

F. God is relentless in pursuing His purpose, e.g. sacrificed Job’s livestock and children

G. God’s priorities are different from ours

1. Spiritual over physical
2. Eternal over temporal

H. God is proud of His righteous servants (1:8; 2:3)

I. Our high destiny (Eph. 1:12; 2:7)

J. Interpreting Scripture (2 Pet. 1:20)

1. Scripture = piano
2. Holy Spirit = pianist

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