

Bad Luck?

"The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord"
Proverbs 16:33 (NIV)

There are a number of expressions in modern language that we need to think about for a moment. Someone will look at the sad circumstances of another and say, "Bad luck." Or they might say, "What are the chances of that happening?" Or they might say, "That is your fate."

What do these words, "luck, fate, chance" really mean? They are so commonly used by people. Are these words proper terms to describe what happens in life? Are there such things as luck, fate, and chance?

The Bible speaks loud and clear on this matter and gives us a resounding, "No!" There are no such things as luck, fate and chance. When something unexpected comes into your life you are not to think that some impersonal force caused this to happen. Over and over in Scripture we hear the theme that God is in charge of His world and orders its events.

Listen to just a few verses to get the message from God's Word. "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps" Proverbs 16:9 (NIV). "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21 (NIV). Two remarkable Psalms are 104 and 105. In Psalm 104 the writer speaks about how God rules in creation and causes the seasons and earthquakes, produces food for everything, causes the sun to rise and depart, and so on. Then the Psalm ends with a burst of praise to the God who orders all things.

Psalm 105 speaks of how God orders the affairs of people's lives. God makes His covenant with His people happen. All the promises and blessings are sure to appear. God caused Joseph, as recorded in the book of Genesis, to fall into dire circumstances and then God raised him to the pinnacle of prosperity as ruler of Egypt. God caused the plagues to happen in Egypt in order to have His people released from slavery. This Psalm tells us as it concludes that God interferes in the lives of His people in order that they might praise Him and walk in His way.

So the Creator God is not someone who just got the universe going and then left it to continue on its own. God is involved daily in the things of this world and our lives. Even such a "chance" thing as rolling dice is a detail God determines. God decides what comes up. Is this really true? Well, Jesus used a different way of saying it when He said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father." Matthew 10:29 (NIV). So God orders everything that happens.

Now this truth cuts both ways. When we suffer we do not wish to think that God has arranged the difficult thing. Why would a loving God allow suffering in our lives? Yet Job said 2:10 "Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" (NIV) A little later in Job 6:4 "God's terrors are marshalled against me." (NIV). Yet, Job has grace to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him." 13:15

(NIV)

The point is, though the child of God may have many sorrows, the thing to do with your troubles is bring them to God. If God is always there, then we can be assured He is with us as we deal with the problem and either resolve it or else take it on as a part of our lives. The great apostle Paul had his "thorn in the flesh" 2 Corinthians 12:7 He does not name the difficulty but tells us that he had three special prayer sessions asking God to get rid of it. God did not help Paul get rid of the problem but instead gave him grace to accept it.

Just so, in the life of the Christian, some difficulties will not be removed by prayer. However, the good news is that God does promise grace to live with the problem. Possibly today you need to come to God and seek the grace He has promised to give. Remind the Lord that Paul was given grace and you wish similar treatment.

On the other hand you may not be certain that you are a child of God. This matter needs attention more than deliverance from tragedy in life. You need to go to God and ask for forgiveness for Jesus' sake. Do not stop asking for forgiveness until God assures you your prayer has been heard. Come to Him, and come today.

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