

Audio Transcript of Sermon
February 1, 2025
When Tragedies Come

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. This year has gotten off to a fast start with stories of tragedy. Whether acts of crime and terrorism, natural disasters, weather phenomena, or breakdowns in technology that leads to loss of life, there have been multiple events around the world which have led to loss of life with tremendous pain and suffering for those who have been impacted by these events. For those who see these events from afar and for those who survive, it's normal to try and make sense out of what happened.

With the process of trying to sort out what happened where prevention could stop a repeat of a tragedy, some seek to understand how to prevent a recurrence. For instance, whenever there is a plane crash, there is an investigation to understand what happened so that the cause of that plane crash is less likely to be repeated. When crime and terrorism are the cause, law enforcement and national security seek to understand how to prevent a recurrence. Many of the weather tools we take for granted today were designed as responses to tragedies caused by weather. Tornado warnings are frequently given by weather radar signatures and hurricanes can be seen days before landfall giving valuable time for preparation. When technology breaks down and causes harm government regulations seek to prevent future harm.

Along with trying to understand what happened and how to prevent future occurrences, it's normal to try and understand if and how any persons are at fault. Some connect tragedy with sin and while sin left unchecked will eventually lead to a personal spiritual tragedy, the big tragedies we see impacting people are not necessarily a judgment against those who have suffered in these tragedies. Jesus used tragedies of His lifetime to talk about tragedies and death. He mentioned a persecution by Pilate of certain Galileans who were sacrificed as part of a religious ritual and mentioned those who died when a tower of Siloam fell and killed them. Jesus pointed out that those who died were not any worse of a sinner than any other person, and explained that without repentance, all will suffer the personal spiritual tragedy of death. Luke thirteen verse one.

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Luke 13:1-5

- 1. There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.**
- 2. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?**
- 3. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**
- 4. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?**
- 5. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

Sometimes, when people see others down and out on their luck or having difficulty through the circumstances of life, some can be quick to connect what is happening to sin, never considering that what is happening could be used by God to lead that person to repentance. Take for example a man who was blind since birth that Jesus and his disciples came across. The disciples immediately thought that either this man or the man's parents had sinned, and that blindness was the result. Jesus explained that neither was the case but through this condition the works of God would be made manifest. John nine verse one.

John 9:1-41

- 1. And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.**
- 2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?**
- 3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.**
- 4. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.**
- 5. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**
- 6. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,**
- 7. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent. He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.**

The man who had been blind since birth could now see and that caused all who had known him to question what they were seeing. They asked him how he could now see, and he told them how Jesus had made clay and anointed his eyes before his sight was restored. The people brought him to the Pharisees and when the

Pharisees saw what had happened, they began to question and ultimately concluded that Jesus could not be of God because this miracle of healing had occurred on the Sabbath. Verse eight.

8. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9. Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

10. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11. He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17. They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

What happened must have caused a minor uproar because the events led some to question if this man had actually been blind. They thought he must have been scamming and only pretending to be blind to get money from people, and the crowd confronted his parents who confirmed he had indeed been born blind. As the crowd questioned and debated among themselves and wanted to know more, all the man could tell them was that before he was blind and now, he could see. What he said didn't make sense to them and instead of seeing a miracle, they cast the man out. Verse eighteen.

18. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19. And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20. His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21. But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24. Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27. He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

28. Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

30. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31. Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

32. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

After the man was cast out, Jesus found him, and the man understood and accepted that Jesus was the Son of God. It was then that Jesus told him that He was sent by God so that those who spiritually didn't see would see and that those who spiritually saw would go spiritually blind. Verse thirty-five.

35. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

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- 36. He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?**
- 37. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.**
- 38. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.**
- 39. And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.**
- 40. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?**
- 41. Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.**

Whenever we see a tragedy unfold before us, we could be quick to ascribe sin as the cause much like the disciples thought that sin caused the man's blindness. During these tragedies we need to remember that these challenging situations could bring to light the works of God. Whether we see sin or bringing to light the works of God is going to be based on how we think, but as the people of God if all we see in these tragedies is sin, God cannot use us to bring to light the works of God.

Ecclesiastes tells us that we should not look at the events of life as solely the result of sin, because the very same event can come to both whether a person is a sinner or righteous. Take the recent fires in southern California, for example. I'm sure there were some who lost their homes who God would look at as sinners, and I'm also sure that there were also some who lost their homes who God would look at as righteous. In some neighborhoods everyone suffered destruction of their homes. In other neighborhoods a few homes were spared here and there. A few were spared because of design to withstand a fire and a few others survived without explanation, but by and far, the destruction of the fire impacted just about everyone. Even those whose homes survived will now live in a neighborhood that has been decimated. When bad things happen on earth, bad things happen without regard to the person and how and when somebody is impacted often comes down to luck, what Ecclesiastes calls time and chance. Ecclesiastes nine verse one.

Ecclesiastes 9:1-12

- 1. For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.**
- 2. All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.**
- 3. This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.**
- 4. For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.**
- 5. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.**
- 6. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.**
- 7. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.**
- 8. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.**
- 9. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.**
- 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.**
- 11. I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.**
- 12. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.**

As we move closer to the end of time Jesus foretold of ever-increasing challenging times on earth. Those ever-increasing challenging times will be so bad that unless God cuts the time short everyone would die, but God cuts the time short for the

sake of His elect. Jesus speaks of the beginning of sorrows and ever-increasing times of sorrow. Matthew twenty-four verse three.

Matthew 24:3-31

3. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8. All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Jesus then adds that those who are faithful will be hated by most people. Some will be killed, and others will be betrayed, but during this future time of sorrow, the people of faith will endure challenging times because of their faith. Verse nine.

9. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Jesus clearly showed that the times of trouble will increase to the point where mankind could bring a mass extinction event on itself, but God will intervene to prevent this. Verse fifteen.

15. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand:

16. Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

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17. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house:

18. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

21. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Jesus then taught that many would use these times of trouble to try and deceive the masses and will be so convincing that one would think they would be able to deceive the very elect of God. Jesus then provides imagery of His return to earth and shows how His return to earth will be easy to see as the sun during the day. There will be no secret return of Jesus Christ. Verse twenty-three.

23. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25. Behold, I have told you before.

26. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The troubles that people face can always be the result of sin and bad decisions and often troubles are simply time and chance happening in a bad way for a person. Recently, near my house there was a horrific auto accident involving multiple vehicles. I don't think that auto accident happened because the involved drivers were worse sinners than other drivers. Time and chance and bad decisions were at the root of that accident. How we look at tragedies that impact others and us is a bigger measure of who we are. When bad things happen to us it isn't fun at all, but what we experience can help us to develop patience, if we allow it. The experience of having bad things happen to us won't be a happy memory, but that experience of the bad thing can lead us to have hope for the Kingdom of God, if we allow it. What we cannot do is allow bitterness to take over our hearts when bad things happen to us. Romans five verse one

Romans 5:1-5

1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4. And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

What we experience is no different than what many others have experienced before us. When we see tragedy befall another person it would be wrong for us to sit in judgment of them and to decide that what happened to them was because they were a worse sinner than others. The smart thing we can do for us when we see tragedy befall another person is to see if there is anything we can do for ourselves to minimize the same thing happening to us. We can either look at a bad thing happening to another person as a reason to judge them or we can look at that bad thing as a bad thing for them and as a bad thing we would not want to have happen for us, knowing that we all have bad things happen to us in life. Beyond all of that, as we are able, we can also help those who are experiencing a tragedy. First Corinthians ten verse one.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

- 1. Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;**
- 2. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;**
- 3. And did all eat the same spiritual meat;**
- 4. And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.**
- 5. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.**
- 6. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.**
- 7. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.**
- 8. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.**
- 9. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.**
- 10. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.**
- 11. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.**
- 12. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.**
- 13. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.**

When we are burdened with challenges, Satan will seek opportunity through those challenges to destroy us. We often read the verses from the first letter of Peter that describes Satan walking about seeking whom he may devour, and yet that verse is adjacent to a verse about casting our cares on God. When we do not cast our cares on God, we could give an opening to Satan as he seeks our destruction. First Peter five verse six.

1 Peter 5:6-11

- 6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:**
- 7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**

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- 8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:**
- 9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**
- 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.**
- 11. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

In the challenges of life we face, God comforts us so that we can comfort others who are in any trouble. If in the challenges of life, we accept comfort from God but do nothing to comfort others who are in any trouble we are not completely fulfilling the reason behind why comfort was first given to us. What is different for us is we are already part of the household of faith and those whom we might comfort may not be, but the comfort we provide might be used by God to introduce them to the faith. Second Corinthians one verse three.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

- 3. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;**
- 4. Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**
- 5. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.**
- 6. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.**
- 7. And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.**

There are so many bad things in this world and so many things that could become bad very quickly. Paul encouraged the Philippians to not think of the bad things and those things which could potentially become bad, but to think on those things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of a good report, having virtue and worthy of praise. Philippians four verse eight.

Philippians 4:8-9

8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

In living our lives of faith, we are to act with kindness and to treat others as if they held a special and protective place in our heart. We don't hold grudges, and we forgive. We don't forget about what is wrong in this world or what has brought us harm, but these things are not our focus. Ephesians four verse thirty-one.

Ephesians 4:31-32

31. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Death comes to those of the faith as much as death comes to those who are not of the faith. Sometimes when God allows a righteous person to die, it is to spare them from the evil to come. Isaiah fifty-seven verse one.

Isaiah 57:1-2

1. The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.

2. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.

When we are suffering, when challenging times have come upon us, when we fear for our lives, it's normal to wonder where God is. David wondered why it seemed like God was so far removed from the troubles he faced. He wondered why the wicked were allowed to persecute and seemingly prevail against the poor. David also knew that God would listen to the humble and to bring justice to those who lacked family support, the widows and orphans. Psalm ten verse one.

Psalm 10:1-18

- 1. Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?**
- 2. The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.**
- 3. For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.**
- 4. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.**
- 5. His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.**
- 6. He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.**
- 7. His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.**
- 8. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily set against the poor.**
- 9. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net.**
- 10. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones.**
- 11. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.**
- 12. Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble.**
- 13. Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it.**
- 14. Thou hast seen it; for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; thou art the helper of the fatherless.**
- 15. Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none.**
- 16. The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land.**
- 17. Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:**
- 18. To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.**

David was challenged many times in his life and described his life as walking in the valley of the shadow of death. Walking in the valley of the shadow of death David feared no evil because he knew God was with him. During times when we feel challenged by life, we need to remember that God is also with the household of faith today. Psalm twenty-three verse one.

Psalm 23:1-6

- 1. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**
- 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**
- 3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**
- 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**
- 5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.**
- 6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

As members of the household of faith we should not think that we will have an easier life than others who are not yet called at this time. David tells us that many are the afflictions of the righteous and that God will deliver us from these afflictions. Psalm thirty-four verse fifteen.

Psalm 34:15-22

- 15. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.**
- 16. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.**
- 17. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.**
- 18. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.**
- 19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.**
- 20. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.**
- 21. Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.**

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22. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate.

The sufferings we face in our life today are much less by comparison to the glory that God will share with us in His Kingdom to come. Right now, we will experience times of trouble along with times of no trouble and what we experience today is allowed by God to have us focus on the Kingdom of God to come. We continue to wait patiently for that Kingdom to come in good times and in bad times. Romans eight verse eighteen.

Romans 8:18-39

18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

24. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

When we feel so down and out by the challenges of life, the Holy Spirit that is within us intercedes for us and we should take comfort knowing that no matter how bad things may seem, all things work together for good to them that love God who are called according to God's purpose. Verse twenty-six.

26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

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27. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

29. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

With the challenges of life that come our way the bottom line is this. If God is for us nobody and nothing can be against us. There is nobody and nothing that can separate us from the love of God. Verse thirty-one.

31. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

34. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36. As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are living in a year that has gotten off to a fast start with stories of tragedy. Whether acts of crime and terrorism, natural disasters, weather phenomena, building fires, or breakdowns in technology that leads to loss of life, already this year there have been multiple events around the world which have led to loss of life with tremendous pain and suffering for those who have been impacted by

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these events. For those of us who have been called who are of the household of faith, it is not our place to judge what has happened but to recall that as we have been comforted by God during our time of trouble, we can use the comfort we have been given to bring comfort to others knowing that nobody and nothing will ever separate us from the love of God.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.