(Basics) 2. God Makes Evil Work for Good

by Zac Poonen

God uses evil to further His good plans for humanity, and He is almighty and powerful enough to make even evil work for the fulfillment of His purposes.

Duration: 12:28
Scripture: Genesis 50:20, Isaiah 54:17, Romans 8:28, Romans 16:20, 2 Corinthians 12:9, James 4:7, 1 John 3:8
Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Spiritual Redemption"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story of a businessman who drifted away from God as his business prospered. Despite the elders of his church trying to bring him back to faith, he was too occupied with his success. However, when his youngest son fell seriously ill after being bitten by a poisonous snake, the father realized the importance of turning back to God. The preacher emphasizes that Jesus Christ has the power to undo the works of Satan and untie the knots in our lives. He explains that God uses evil and Satan to further His purposes, ultimately bringing people to salvation. The sermon highlights the almighty power of God and how He makes a fool of Satan by using evil to deliver people from his clutches.

Transcript

We want to think as to why, if evil originated with the fall of the head of the angels called Lucifer, why didn't God destroy it immediately? God could have done that if Satan is the cause of all the evil in the world. Why doesn't God destroy Satan? Why doesn't He destroy all the demons so that we would not be harassed by them? Why should people suffer in so many ways? If God does not do that, we can be perfectly sure that He has a very good purpose. There are many things about God that we cannot fully understand.

But God's wisdom is like that of an ocean, and our mind is like a little cup. It can contain just a little bit of the water of the ocean. So we can understand a little bit.

We can't understand it fully, but we can understand a little bit, and with that little bit, with that little intelligence and understanding that God has given us, we can understand a little bit of the reason why God has not destroyed Satan, why God permits life on earth to be so difficult, so insecure, so dangerous, in so many ways. One reason is, if God had made life on earth extremely comfortable and easy, people would not think of eternity. Man was not created only for his short life on earth.

Even if you live a hundred years on this earth, that's a very short period compared to eternity. Plants and animals do not exist eternally, but when God created man, He created man to be a creature of eternity, to live endlessly. His body may perish on earth after he's lived seventy, eighty, a hundred years, but that soul within you is eternal.

It will never, never die. Once you're born, that soul never dies. It exists eternally, and it's important for you to understand that.

And one thing we can be sure, that God, in His infinite wisdom, has permitted life on earth to be difficult, so that people think about Him. Even the problems, the sicknesses, and the trials and difficulties that Satan and evil spirits bring into your life are permitted by a loving God to make you turn to Him. In that way, even those trials and difficulties are an expression of God's love for you.

See, God is so powerful and so almighty that He can make even evil work for the fulfillment of His purposes. We can't understand that. We can think that, well, good is good and evil is evil, and only good things will further God's purposes.

No, God is almighty that He can make evil work to further the purposes of good for us as human beings. Let me give you an example. In fact, this is the whole message of the Bible, how God uses Satan and evil spirits to further His purposes, and that's why He does not destroy them.

And all the evil that's going on in the world, in some wonderful way, we will discover finally that they fulfill God's purposes. God did not create evil, but when the angels and man decided to be evil, God said, okay, He's going to use that to further His purposes. And there we see something of the almighty power of God.

And when we see that ourselves, our own faith is strengthened, and we discover that we're not afraid of evil anymore, because God can make it to work for our good. I heard a story of a businessman once who had been very close to God at one time. But over a period of time, he drifted away from God as his business prospered.

He was going to a Christian church, and the elders in that church tried to speak to him repeatedly to turn him back to faith in God, to surrender his life to Christ again. But he was too occupied with his business. He didn't have time anymore to come for meetings, even on Sundays.

His business was prospering. Then one day, a poisonous snake bit the youngest of his three sons, and the child became seriously sick, and the doctors gave up all hope. Then the father was really worried.

He sent for one of the elders of the church to pray for the child. The elder was a wise man. He came and prayed like this.

He said, Lord, thank you for sending the snake to bite this child, because I tried for six years to get this family to think about you, and I never succeeded. But what I couldn't do in six years, this snake has done in a moment. It's been more successful.

Now that they've learned their lesson, Lord, heal the child and grant that this family will never need any more snakes to remind them of you again. Now, do you think a snake bite is good or evil? I think all of us would say it's evil, definitely. But in this particular family's case, did God use it for good? He certainly did.

That family was drifting away from God and would have destroyed their life in the pursuit of money. But it was through a snake that did something evil, biting one of their sons, that they turned to God. And so their life could be spiritually blessed.

They could live for eternity's values. There is an example of how God uses evil to accomplish good. If there were no snakes in the world, there would be no snake to bite that child, and they'd probably, that whole family would have destroyed themselves eternally.

So we see how God uses an evil thing like a snake. And it's the same with sickness, very often. There are people who don't think about God at all in their life, until one day they're suddenly taken to hospital with a cancer or some other serious sickness.

And all of a sudden, these people who never thought about God for 40 years, suddenly think about God. Now, first of all, we need to establish one thing. Is it a good thing to think about God or not? Certainly.

A man who lives without God in his life, lives without meaning and purpose, he may make a lot of money, but ultimately he will die frustrated. He'll die with emptiness. God has created us in such a way that He is the most important factor in our life.

And if we don't think about Him, we miss the meaning and purpose of life altogether. And so if a man lives 40 years or 50 years without thinking about God, and then he gets a cancer, and he begins to think about God and turn to Him, was that cancer good or bad? Now, if you look at cancer by itself, all of us would say cancer is evil. Sure.

But here are examples of how God has used cancer to make people turn to Him. How is it then? Was that even though the cancer itself was evil, it was used for a good purpose, just like the snake. And one day we will discover when we see the full story of every man's life, when Jesus Christ comes back to this earth, and we stand before Him, and we see all the people who lived on this earth from the very beginning, from the very first man, and we hear their stories, we will see in that day that God used many things to turn people away from a sinful life towards Him.

Incurable diseases, sicknesses, wild animals, snakes, even poverty and suffering, and many other evils were used by God to get people to turn away from their sins towards Him, and thus to find an eternal home in heaven. And so we see through all these examples how God uses these evil things that Satan does to save people from Satan's clutches. Here's a man living for the devil, and living doomed to an eternal destiny in hell, away from God, and Satan's working on him, and then some of the evil things that Satan has put into this world, like sickness, through one of those sicknesses, the man turns to God.

So we see that God uses the very things that Satan brings into the world, evil, to deliver people from Satan's clutches, and to bring them into eternal salvation. There we see the wonderful way in which God works His almighty power. We can also say, thus God makes a fool of Satan again and again.

This is the wonderful message of the Bible. The Bible says that Jesus Christ came to undo the works of Satan in 1 John chapter 3 and verse 8. We can say that we all started off life, to use an illustration, with a ball of string neatly rolled up, but through the years, that string we have tied up into ten thousand or ten million knots. And now as we look at this ball of string, tied into ten thousand or ten million knots, we are frustrated, we are discouraged, we are wondering what we can do.

And then comes to us this wonderful message of the Bible, that Jesus Christ can untie every knot. I don't know how many knots you have got your life tied up into, my friend, but I want to tell you the good news. Every single knot, Jesus can untie.

He can give you back a whole roll of string with your whole life, just as though you were born now. And you can start life all over again. If you turn to Jesus Christ, call upon His name and say, Lord Jesus, You came to destroy the works of the devil.

Destroy those works in my life. Amen.