WHEN BAD THINGS COME TO GOOD PEOPLE

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever”. - Psalm 73:26

“The Naughty Elepaio” is one of many traditional Hawaiian stories retold for today’s children. In this tale, Kanaka (Man) had come down the mountain with a full water gourd. It was a hot and rough trail to the spring and back. Under a shade, Kanaka stopped to rest and fell asleep. Soon, a small, curious bird called, the ‘Elepaio (Monarch Flycatcher), appears and pecks a tiny hole in Kanaka’s water gourd, releasing the water. The ‘Elepaio watched the water trickle through the hole, then, flew back to the tree. When Kanaka awakes and picks up his gourd, he noticed how light it felt. When he looked on the ground, he saw a wet spot where the gourd had been placed. He then, noticed the hole and became angry. When Kanaka looked up and saw the ‘Elepaio, He was provoked to throw a pebble at the naughty bird. The angry bird flew about the forest trying to get sympathy from the other birds, like the ‘Io (Hawk), Pueo (Owl), ‘I‘iwi (Honey Creeper) and ‘Amakihi (Honey Creeper). To his disappointment, no one comes to ‘Elepaio’s aid because of his wrongdoing to Kanaka. In the end, the ‘Elepaio learns that when you do bad things to others, bad things come back to you.

Sound familiar? You’re minding your own business living life, then, all of a sudden, bad things come your way? When that happens, what perceptions do you have of God? Why does God allow good things to happen to bad people and bad things to happen to good people? The latter being a “mind-blowing” injustice that we witness every day. Some people will always try to pin the blame on God for all the bad things that come, but, I’d like to let somebody know that the blame should go to the people who are doing those bad things, like the Naughty ‘Elepaio. Here’s something we all need to understand: Though God is good, bad things are still going to happen. Why? Because we live in a world “contaminated” by sin (Eph. 2:1-3).

Let me introduce you to a man named, Asaph. In Psalms 73, Asaph is a leader of one of the temple choirs. He wasn’t wealthy, but, he dedicated his life to serving God. When trouble came his way, Asaph questioned God. You see, when Asaph looked around, he saw all the evil people living by their own rules, enjoying their prosperity and wealth; enjoying their pleasures and living “large”; piling on riches upon riches and living by worldly standards. He wondered why these people didn’t have the same kind of problems he had. How often have you felt the same way like Asaph? How many times have you questioned God? Perhaps, the Master had pulled the “wrong” number in heaven! Asaph was a dedicated servant of God, but, his focus was on the prosperity of the “wicked” and “ungodly”. If we bring it up to 21st century times, Asaph saw that they drove
new cars, wore designer clothing, took fabulous trips, lived in “sprawling” mansions, yet, he kept struggling with his bills. If you’re like Asaph, there’s good news! You see, in Romans 8:28, Scripture says that God’s goodness doesn’t only show up to prevent your problems, but, He shows up when they do. That means that the goodness of God will remove those negative things and work all things for His glory and our benefit.

Some of you may have been walking with God for quite some time, but, when trouble comes, you say to God: “I don’t understand, why me?” When you get to this point in life, I hope that you will be enlightened to the fact that you have one very important thing that they don’t have----A SAVIOR. You see, when Asaph realizes that he had been deceived by his own flesh, his thoughts return to his intimacy with God and the joyful fulfillment through the Spirit that brings contentment in His Master. We may not have everything we want on earth, but, we have received the greatest gift of eternity through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Don’t worry about the good things that happen to bad people. Only be focused on God, our Provider, as He supplies truth, contentment, spiritual riches and eternal joy (By the way, remember that God’s goodness is available to all people - Matt. 5:45). You don’t have to be a Christian to get God’s “rain”. God is good to all in some ways, but, He’s good to some in all ways). However, God has provided every believer with the ability to enjoy His goodness in ways that the world can never appreciate. Why is this so important for us to remember? Because God has given us His revelation, His Holy Spirit to guide us, and a divine perspective on life that opens our eyes to see and enjoy His goodness.

If you aren’t living for God’s joy, then, nothing will fill you. Marriage won’t help, money won’t help, even, having “stuff” won’t do it. You may already have these things and more, but, you won’t have joy. But, when you focus on the kind of joy only God can provide, it won’t matter whether you have a mate or not; whether you have a job or not; whether you have money or not; or whether your circumstances are good or not. God’s joy will consume every situation because He loves you. Instead of saying, “God you know me. So, what’s up with this?” you should say, “God, I don’t understand why I’m going through this, but, I do know that you love me, so, I’m just going keep glorifying you in all that I do.” I’ve come to tell somebody TO GET GOD-FOCUSED, NOT SELF-FOCUSED, AND STAY IN THAT MINDSET! He is able to meet all of your needs (2 Cor. 9:8). Like Asaph, we need to “keep on, keeping on” because God is able to take care of those bills. He’s able to pay off those credit cards. He’s able to handle that mortgage
note. He’s able to take care of every financial situation. God may allow you to have some difficulty, but, He never lets go of your hand. He may let you trip, but, He’ll never let you fall. That’s why, if you submit to God and His will, He will handle your problems! Don’t let anyone tell you that God’s goodness has to mean bad things shouldn’t happen. God is good because He takes the bad things that happen to us and brings eternal good out of them.

WHEN TROUBLE COMES “PECKING” YOUR WAY UNEXPECTEDLY, DON’T QUESTION GOD, FOCUS ON HIM, STAY IN THE MINDSET OF CHRIST AND ENJOY HIS GOODNESS.

Me Ke Aloha O Ke Akua,

Kahu
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