

GOD'S JUDGEMENT IN LIFE

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'THE CHRISTIAN FAITH'

Earlier this week a woman acquaintance of a friend of mine became sick and she was sure it was a judgement of God, so my friend asked me whether all the misfortunes of life which a person may experience are to be viewed as the judgements of God. Since we are speaking about God, we of course must get the answer to this question from His word, for only God is able to tell us about His own mind and actions with any accuracy. The Bible makes it clear that our world suffers all sorts of evils because our human race has turned its back on the true God. In the way we construct our life we do not imitate God's kindness or unselfishness but rather are self seeking and we exploit each other. The sufferings of life which we all experience are the result of the way humanity conducts itself and are simply the foretaste of the general judgement which will overtake our world and all of us, in due course. As St. Paul says 'God is not mocked', 'whatever humanity sows it reaps', and so we may conclude that the general troubles and tragedies of life are simply a result of the godlessness of all of us. We cannot say that any particular tragedy which enters our life is God's direct judgement on us, for it is the result of sinfulness of humanity at large. Yet each of us as individuals certainly deserve God's judgement, so we cannot say we do not deserve it even though we need not see it as a direct judgement on our own specific actions. When Jesus' disciples asked him about a beggar who was sitting on the footpath and who had been born blind, whether the man had sinned or whether it was his parents, the Lord replied 'Neither'. So we conclude that not every misfortune is the direct judgement of God on our lives.

On the other hand very often the events which enter our life are God's judgement on us, intended to bring us to our senses and so to save us in the end. Paul told his friends at Corinth that as a result of their self-centredness, taking no care for each other even in the Lord's Supper, many of their number were sick and some had even died, but he added, that if they corrected themselves they would not need God's judgement and correction. So the Bible teaches that not every tragedy is a direct judgement on us by God, though we cannot say that we don't deserve it. However, sometimes God does judge us in this way; and so whatever tragedy or untoward incident enters our life we should ask ourselves what is its meaning for us. God has allowed it to happen, for every event is under His control and nothing enters our lives apart from His wise will. There is no such thing as luck and as Peter says 'we ought to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God so that in due course He will exalt us'. He can only bless the humble and the events of life may be used by us as stepping stones back to Him. If we love Him we know that every event which enters our lives, however tragic it may seem in itself, is for our blessing, for as the Bible says 'all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose'. He never allows us to be tempted or tested beyond our capacity to overcome and to come out on the victorious side. God is a good God, concerned with our welfare but we as a race, and as individuals, have involved ourselves in a world of sin, and we all suffer as a consequence and sometimes God allows these sufferings to be direct judgements on us to bring us back to Him. But at all times He is willing to suffer with us, for the Son of God gave Himself for us. He was overwhelmed by the world's sin

and suffering and was victorious in it on the cross. He will be with us in our suffering if we turn to Him.

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