

Title: “WHY HATH THE LORD DONE THUS?**”**

Text: I Kings 9:8

Scripture Reading: *Psalm 107*

Subject: *Understanding Tragedies*

Date: Sunday Morning – July 25, 1993

Tape #

Introduction:

When the Lord God brought the nation of Israel and the city of Israel and the city of Jerusalem into utter desolation and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, both the Jews and all those who saw what had been done cried out with astonishment – “**Why Hath The Lord Done Thus?**” Because they did not understand the works of God, because they did not understand the ways of God in providence, they were astonished. As they beheld the ruined city, the demolished temple, and the slaughtered multitude, all they could do was cry out in astonishment – “Why? **Why hath the Lord done thus?**” That is the common response of the human heart to tragedy.

On October 19, 1856 there was a young preacher in London, England, a young preacher who was being mightily used of God. In order to accommodate the crowds who came to hear him preach the gospel, his congregation rented the Surrey Music Hall for their Sunday evening services. On the evening of October 19, more than ten thousand people crammed into the huge auditorium to hear the twenty-one year old C.H. Spurgeon preach the gospel of Christ. Another ten thousand or more stood around the building, jamming the doorways and windows. But Spurgeon had his enemies. Many despised that man who preached, without apology, the glorious doctrine of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ. Some of those who despised the message of free grace salvation hatched a plan to disrupt the service that evening. After the singing, the

Scripture reading, and the prayers were ended, just as Spurgeon stood to preach, the friends cried, “Fire! Fire! The galleries are falling!” Of course, there was a wild stampede. As the confused crowd rushed for the doors, many were seriously injured and two were trampled to death. Needless to say, Spurgeon was devastated. He blamed himself for the injuries and deaths. He thought he could never preach again. All over London, in the newspapers, in the streets of the city, and in the church, the cry went up – “Why? **Why hath the Lord done thus?**”

Late Thursday night another tragic event occurred involving one of the families of our congregation, thus involving us. David Byrd was driving home around the Nicholasville by-pass when a drunk man staggered directly into the path of his car. There was nothing David could do. He hit the man and killed him. David was devastated! Jim called me about three o’clock in the morning and asked me to talk to him. David was, as any of us would, blaming himself – “If only I had done this! – If I had not don that! If I had just learned CPR!” he was asking himself – “Why? Why did this have to happen? Jim, Nancy, and Susannah were asking the same thing – “Why? When I hung up the phone this text came immediately to my mind. Astonished, I asked myself – “**Why hath the Lord done thus?**” Why has this happened to this family? Have they not had enough pain and confusion? Have they not been through enough? “**Why hath the Lord done thus?**”

That is the title of my message this morning. That is the question I want to answer for you from the Word of God. “**Why hath the Lord done thus?**”

Proposition: My purpose in preaching this message is very simple – **I want to help you to understand and learn from the providence of God, particularly in tragic, painful, disturbing events.**

Divisions:

1. **Who Caused This To Happen?**
2. **Why Did The Lord Our God Bring This Thing To Pass?**
3. **How Shall We Respond To This Tragedy?**
4. **What Will The Result of This Thing Be?**

I. **Who Caused This To Happen?**

Whenever something like this happens, the first question that arises in the minds of many is – “Who did this? Who caused this? Who is to blame?”

- Infidels blame things like this on “Bad Luck” – “Blind Fate” – or “Misfortune.”
- Religious people blame bad things in life on the devil.
- Self-righteous, hard-headed moralists and religionists blame this man’s death on himself “He got what he deserved. He was asking for it. A man who lives like that is bound to die like that!” Their accusations are right; but **their attitude** is wrong!
- David blames himself.

The fact is, that man was taken out of this world suddenly, without warning, by the hand of our God. He did not die by accident, but on purpose. He did not die by the unfeeling stroke of blind fate, but by the gracious and just hand of our all-wise God.

A. I know that this man’s death was an act of God because – **Nothing Comes To Pass In This World Except That Which Our God Brings To Pass** – (Rom. 11:36).

“All things are of God” (II Cor. 5:18). There are no exceptions. The Lord our God, our heavenly Father rules all things in total sovereignty. He has his way in all things, absolutely! We worship a God who is in total control of all things at all times – (Amos 3:6; Isa. 14:24, 26, 27; 45:5-7; 46:9-13).

1. Job knew this (Job 1:20-22; 2:9-10) – “*The hand of God hath touched me*” (Job 19:21).
2. David knew it – “*The Lord hath said unto him, curse David*” (II Sam. 16:10).
3. Jeremiah understood this – (Lam. 3:1-18).

Illustration: *The one thing that gave Spurgeon comfort and strength after the catastrophe at the music hall was the exaltation and sovereign dominion of Christ.*

No matter what your trial is, the cause of your trial, the cause of your trouble is the hand of God. It matters not whether you are a believer or an unbeliever – all the affairs of your life are ordained and governed by God, absolutely.

- He created the Red Sea to try the faith of his people.
- He parted the Red Sea to save his people.
- He caused the Red Sea to flood again to destroy Pharaoh and the armies of Egypt.

For the unbeliever, that is a terrifying fact. For the believer it is a matter of indescribable comfort.

B. The Span of Your Life, The Time of Your Death, and The Instrument by Which You Shall be Slain was Fixed by God Long Before You Were Born – (Heb. 9:27).

- “*The Days of my appointed time will I wait*” (Job 14:14).
- “*God is of one mind, and who can turn him? What his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me*” (Job 23:13-14).

It is the Lord God alone who kills and he alone gives life. If you do not think that the life and death of all men, adults and children, is determined by God, why to you pray and

cry out to God when death approaches? If God is not in control, why pray?

God takes men and women, boys and girls, even babies and old men out of this world at the time he has appointed – when you and I have served the purpose for which God created us we will die and meet God in judgment. This is the hand of God. There may be many secondary causes, but the original, primary cause of this man’s death, like everyone else’s, was the will and purpose of God.

So this first question is easy for any believer to answer – **Who caused this to happen?** Our God did it. We who know God know that! But the second question is more difficult.

II. Why Did The Lord Our God Bring This Thing To Pass?

Why did this thing have to happen **to David?** Why did it have to involve **this family?** Why has this tragedy involve **our friends** and our church? My response to that is – **Why not them? Why not us?** Are we better than others? Do we deserve better treatment than others? You know better! **Anything** you and I experience in this world of evil, heartache, and affliction is infinitely less than we deserve! No matter how severe the trial is that we are called to endure, you can be sure of this one thing – So long as we are in this world, “*The Lord hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*” (Ps. 103:10). If he had, we would be in hell! **Still, the question remains – Why did the Lord do this?** I have preached the Scriptures and found five answers to this question – “**Why hath the Lord done thus?**”

A. **The first answer is found in Galatians 6:7** – “*Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*”

I realize that in this passage Paul is talking about the use of our possessions for the support of the gospel. However, the law that is here laid down is a fact that cannot be denied – We do reap what we sow. Unless God intervenes, we will all reap what we sow. Be warned!

1. This man died as he died because he lived as he did. Beware of rioting, drunkenness, and frivolity – (Pro. 20:1; 23:29-32).
2. You who have been raised in the house of God are doubly responsible (Pro. 29:1).

B. *Secondly*, I have no doubt that God did this thing **To Show Forth His Glorious Sovereignty** (Rom. 9:11-23).

1. Some are saved from a life of drunkenness and debauchery – (I Cor. 6:9-11) – Some are damned by it!
2. Some are saved from a life of self-righteousness and moral uprightness – Some are damned by it!
3. God alone makes the difference (I Cor. 4:7).

C. *Thirdly*, The Lord has done this thing **For The Eternal, Spiritual Good of Chosen Sinners** (Rom. 8:28).

This apparently tragic event will bring forth good to all God's elect. I cannot tell you all the good it will do; but by this thing God will do good in and to Zion. He will bring forth eternal, spiritual good for his chosen.

1. Maybe, as a result of this man's death, some will be made to seek the Lord.
2. This is for us all a means of much spiritual instruction.

3. It gives us opportunity once more to show forth the love and grace we have for one another by the gift of God upon us.

D. The Lord God has brought this thing to pass **For The Glory of His Own Great Name** (Isa. 63:14).

I am once more reminded that the Lord our God is both “a Just God and a Savior.”

1. The cross of Christ reveals that!
 2. Providence reveals it too!
- Justices kills one man in a drunken stupor.
 - Mercy preserves another! Me!

E. *Fifthly*, the Lord has done this **To Warn Us All That Time Is Short.**

1. Everything here is temporary – Vanity!
2. We must soon die.
3. Soon you and I will meet God in judgment!
4. We will all spend eternity somewhere – Heaven? Hell?
5. Trust the Lord Jesus Christ now.

III. **How Shall We Respond To This Tragedy?**

I hope that every heart here knows something of the weight and burden of this thing. Members of this body are hurting. Members of our family are in trouble. That means I am hurting. I am in trouble – Pray for, care for, and strengthen your friends. **What I have to say now** I am saying particularly to Jim, Nancy, David, and Susannah. Yet, I say it to you all. There is something for us to do when God brings us into trouble – (Lam. 3:1-26). When all else is gone, we can hope in the Lord.

A. **This Is Our Hope!**

1. The Lord’s Mercy!
2. His Compassion – His Co-Passion!

3. The Lord's Faithfulness!
4. Our Interest in Him – "*The Lord is my Portion.*"
5. The Lord's Goodness!

B. **This Is What We Must Do!**

We must look to the Lord and hope in him, because **he alone can help**, and **there is nothing else we can do**. We must hope in him, because **this is the response of the believing heart** to trouble. This is what the believer is inclined to do by the grace of God when trouble comes.

1. Seek Him!
2. Hope in Him!
3. **Quietly wait** for His Salvation – It will come!

God help us to learn these things and lay them to heart. Sooner or later we will need them, Whatever your trouble is, when you ask – "**Why hath the Lord done thus,**" you can **be assured that...**

- The Lord did it!
- He did it for the good of his elect and the glory of his name!
- Our only Hope is the Lord God, our Savior!

IV. **What Will The Result of This Thing Be?**

- A. **The result will be exactly as God has purposed.**
- B. **God's people will be profited by it.**
- C. **Our God's name will be exalted and praised even by this** – (Rev. 4-5).

Application: That man who was ushered into eternity late Thursday night has learned many things too late that I hope you will learn today:

1. The Preciousness of Christ's Blood!
2. The Freeness of God's Salvation!
3. The Blessedness of Faith in Christ!
4. The Value of The Gospel!

5. The Terror of God's Justice and Wrath!