

Aim: Jobs story can encourage us when bad things happen**Refer:** The Great Controversy chapter 20-24, Job

Last week we learned about how William Miller discovered the meaning of Daniel's prophecy of the 2300 days. William Miller was not the only one to see the meaning in the prophecies of Daniel at this time. Dr Joseph Wolff was born in Germany to Jewish parents and as a child he became curious about who Jesus was. At eleven he left home to gain an education, staying with relatives; but because of his interest in Christianity he was soon forced to leave. A Catholic instructor led him to accept the Catholic faith and a few years later he went to study in Rome to become a missionary, but he ran into trouble when he spoke out against the abuses of the Church and was forced to leave. He made his way to England and joined the English Church. From his continued study of the Bible he concluded that the coming of the Lord was very near just as William Miller had so he became a missionary travelling to many places including in Africa, Egypt, Asia, Palestine, Syria, Persia and India. At times he suffered hardships including starvation, robbery and slavery, and three times he was condemned to death.

In Bokhara Dr Wolff met the Arabs of Yeomen who had a book telling for the second coming of the Messiah and predicting great events for 1840!

Some time before this, Manuel Diaz Lacunza, a Spanish Jesuit had found the prophecies of Daniel in his study of the scriptures and written his findings under the name or "Rabbi Ben-Ezra". In 1825 his book found its way to London and was translated into English.

In Germany, Johann Albrecht Bengel a minister of the Lutheran Church had become interested in the study of the second coming of Christ while he was preparing a sermon on Revelation 21, as a result he spent time studying the prophecies relating to the second coming including those of Daniel. He, like William Miller and Dr Wolff, also concluded that the second coming was close.

Francois Samuel Robert Louis Gaussen of Geneva, became interested in the prophecies of Daniel after realising how accurately they have been fulfilled in history. Like others who studied during this time, he also concluded that Christ was soon to return. Seeking to break the popular view that the prophecies of Daniel could not be understood, Gaussen began by teaching the children. Interest quickly grew but then he was removed from his position for "teaching from the Bible."

When William Miller started preaching, people from many different churches received the good news. At first the various ministers were glad because it brought revival to their churches but after a while most ministers decided to forbid it and members were told not to attend meetings or talk of it. Soon those who had accepted the message of the Christ's were forced to leave their former churches.

When the spring of 1844 passed and Jesus did not appear, the believers turned again to their Bibles and noticed for the first time that many of the verses which spoke of the prophecy for the end time also spoke of a time of waiting including Habakkuk 2:2-3, Ezekiel 12:21-28 and the parable of the 10 virgins in Matthew 25.

At the same time some people claimed to have new truths from the Holy Spirit, truths that superseded the Bible. William Miller had no patience for these fanatics and replied "By their fruits we will know them..." yet they caused strife and troubles for which the believers in general were blamed.

Further study of the Bible showed that in the prophecies concerning the first coming of Jesus, not only was the year fulfilled but also the time of the year and so they realised the 2300 year prophecy which matched the Old Testament Sanctuary services of the Day of Atonement, would actually finish in the autumn instead of the spring. Suddenly the revival began with a new force and the fanatics disappeared. Yet the Day of Atonement came and went and Jesus did not return.

At this point many who had based their belief on the opinions of others gave up; others felt they couldn't endure the embarrassment. Many had left their farms or jobs to concentrate on spreading the good news – who needed money or food when they would soon be in heaven? In their disappointment they turned again to the Bible and believing the Bible must be true, either the date or the event must be wrong.

The answer was finally found in Hebrew 8 and 9, where Paul talks about Jesus our High Priest and the Heavenly Sanctuary. They realised that the 2300-year prophecy referred to the Sanctuary in Heaven. On the Day of Atonement in 1844, Jesus our High Priest entered the Most Holy Place in Heaven. This was the start of the cleansing of the Heavenly Sanctuary. This is also the first of three angel's messages in Revelation 14:7 NIV "Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgement has come. Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water."

This was the start of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Seventh-day, because we are called to worship the Creator on His Sabbath (Revelation 14:7 & Exodus 20:4) and Adventist because of the hope of Christ's soon return.

Have you ever had a boil?

Even one boil is extremely painful, and Job had them all over his body.

Job chapters 1 and 2 is the story of the disaster coming, and chapter 42 tells how God restored his health, family and wealth. The chapters in between are the conversations that occurred between Job, his friends, and God.

Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu, take turns telling Job that the bad things that have happened to him show that either he, or his children have done some great sin. Over and over, they tell him this is a fact of life. They suggest the various ways Job might have sinned.

Job on the other hand, keeps saying that although his life is now one of misery and it would have been better if he had never been born, he is innocent and being punished for no reason.

The conversation between Job and his friends goes back and forth, and back and forth until finally Job's friends tell him he is arrogant and foolish for thinking to question God.

Then God finally answered Job. God asked Job where he was when the things of the world were created, or if he understood how God controlled the things of nature or whether he could do it himself. God spoke of many of the animals He had made - each one unique and special, including two that we do not see today in chapter 40 and 41 - probably what we would call dinosaurs! Job could not argue with God and agreed that God could do anything.

The God said He was angry with Job's friends - they had not spoken truly. God blessed Job again and in the second half of his life he became even richer than before and had another ten children; he lived another 140 years.

Sometimes bad things happen as a direct result of someone's bad choices. Can you think of an example?

There are other times when bad things happen because of another person's bad choices. Can you think of an example?

But there are many times when there is no reason for the bad things to happen.

Discuss: What can we learn from the story of Job that can help us, when bad things?

Here are some ideas:

- Although bad things are sometimes the result of our choices, often they are not. Satan and sin cause bad things to happen.
- Satan couldn't do anything unless God gave him permission. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 (temptation will not be more than we can bear, with God's help)
- God loves us even when bad things happen.
- Patience
- God was not angry at the things Job said - we can take our questions and our anger to God.
- We might never know why things happen, but God knows.
- Job went through a terrible time, but his story has been helpful to so many people since then. What happens to us can be a witness to others.
- God was angry with Job's friends who spent their time accusing Job rather than comforting him. Only God knows a person's heart, or a person's secrets.