

## CHAPTER 4: SATAN'S Strategies to KEEP SAINTS IN A State of SADNESS, DOUBTING, QUESTIONING & Discomfort

Have you ever been angry with God? If so, why?

**DEVICE 3:** Satan discourages believers by causing them to believe that when bad stuff happens to them it's because God doesn't love them.

[Deuteronomy 8:5 - Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. (ESV); Hebrews 12:5-6 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." (ESV)]  
(Psalm 77:7 - "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable?, 31:1 - In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me!; 73:2 - But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped., 23 - Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.)

**Remedy 1** - Sometimes what we want or seek isn't in our spiritual and eternal best interest. Examples: Abraham, Jacob, David, Job, Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah, and Paul. They received things from God that they didn't want. Sometimes the best medicine tastes bad. Surgery too can be painful during recovery, but healing comes later.

**Remedy 2** - Sometimes God's hand works against what a believer desires, but God still loves the believer. God loved Ephraim but his hand was against him (Jer 31:18-20 - I have heard Ephraim grieving, 'You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the Lord my God. For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.' Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the Lord.). On the other hand, God's hand was with Saul, Haman, Asshur, and Jehu temporarily, but then his heart was later against them (Eccles. 9:1,2 - But all this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God. Whether it is love or hate, man does not know; both are before him. It is the same for all, since the same event happens to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil, to the clean and the unclean, to him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As the good one is, so is the sinner, and he who swears is as he who shuns an oath.)

[1 Samuel 15:10-11-- The word of the Lord came to Samuel: "I regret that I have made **Saul** king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." And Samuel was angry, and he cried to the Lord all night.; Esther 6:13 - And **Haman** told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of the Jewish people, you will not overcome him but will surely fall before him."; Numbers 24:22-24 -- Nevertheless, Kain shall be burned when **Asshur** takes you away captive." And he took up his discourse and said, "Alas, who shall live when God does this? But ships shall come from Kittim and shall afflict **Asshur** and Eber; and he too shall come to utter destruction."; 2 Kings 10:30-31 -- And the Lord said to **Jehu**, "Because you have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." But **Jehu** was not careful to walk in the law of the Lord, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he made Israel to sin.; Hosea 1:4-5 -- And the Lord said to him, "Call his name Jezreel, for in just a little while I will punish the house of **Jehu** for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. And on that day I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel." (all from ESV) ]

God's heart was very much with Job, but He allowed much to come against Job (Job 1, 2, 41, 42 - you'll have to read these chapters).

**Remedy 3** - Whenever God opposes your desires, it is for a noble and good purpose. Joseph was sold into slavery to save his extended family (Gen 37:7 - Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."). David was destined to be king, but he endured much trouble and death before he was made king.

**Remedy 4** - Everything God does on our behalf brings us closer and closer to our heavenly inheritance. Each of David's trials brought him closer to the throne. Daniel's tribulations always resulted in improving his position in enemy territory. So, whenever you experience a setback, recognize that it will be used by God to lift you out of earthly things and raise you up to heavenly things. Noah's trials produced his deliverance. The stones flung at Stephen knocked him closer to Christ, who is the chief cornerstone.

### Questions

1. *Sometimes God does things, or allows things, that cause people to suffer. How can that possibly be a good thing?*
2. *What could we say to ourselves when it seems like everything is going against us?*
3. *Some of the big names in the Bible must have felt like God was hurting them - Abraham, Jacob, David, Job, Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah, and Paul. Were they wrong if they thought that?*