

jenaministries – Part 1 – Bible Study Worksheet

D) Hard Times - Worksheet

Read: Part 1 #7) Peace and Joy in Hard Times
Part 1 #10) Are You Angry at God?
Part 1 #15) Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen?

1. Think back at your hardest time of struggle. Where was Jesus during this difficult time?

2. During this hard time, did you see Jesus helping you? Did anything happen that seemed impossible?

3. During this hard time, did you experience peace and/or joy from God? What was that like?

7. Peace and Joy in Hard Times.

Can you really have peace and joy during those heart-breaking difficult times?

Let's look at some scripture:

John 16:33 (Jesus said) "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion but of peace.

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.

God does not say that if we follow and serve Him, we will not have trouble. He actually says we WILL have trouble, but in the midst of that trouble we find peace and joy in Him.

Yes, it does give us peace to know that we are not alone, and God is on our side, but the peace and joy goes further than that. In my experience, it was in my hardest moments that I received my greatest victories and testimonies. We tend to reach out to Jesus more during those hard times, which in return allows Him to move more in our lives and hearts.

It's during those extremely difficult times that we can sense the Lord sitting right next to us and/or weeping with us. Jesus actually comes into the situation and goes through it with us, giving us peace and joy in Him.

The Lord can also use symbols in a very personal way. Someone once told me that squirrels were a symbol of the Lord being with her. During her hardest times, squirrels would stop at the side of the road and stand up on two feet and watch her drive by (something that rarely happens), and she would be filled with peace and joy.

During my most difficult time, I had a very realistic dream of being in a tiny shack in the middle of a corn field, with a large window that had no glass. A crow came and landed on the windowsill and started squawking. I was so happy to see the crow and started talking to it. I was filled with nothing but pure joy and peace. That feeling of pure joy and peace lingered for a minute or so after I woke up. I have not experienced that kind of peace or joy before or ever since. I truly needed that at that time, and it got me through it. Now when I see crows or ravens, I am reminded of that wonderful feeling of pure peace and joy.

The beautiful thing about peace and joy from the Lord, is how He personalizes it. It's just for you and your spirit. It does surpass all understanding. Even we ourselves don't understand how we are feeling joy and peace in this troubling world. It's a spiritual thing, not of this world, and very mysterious.

If you do not feel His peace or joy, be assured it is for you too. It will come. The more we reach out to Jesus, the more peace and joy will come in. And it is beautiful.

10. Are You Angry at God?

Is it ok to tell God how angry you are at Him? Yes, absolutely. The Lord wants us to tell Him everything we feel. He is a big god. He can take anything you have to dish out. He doesn't punish people that express how they feel about Him, even if it's really bad.

Being angry is not a sin. Even God expresses being angry and the bible speaks of God's wrath. Jesus got so angry, that in a rage, he turned tables and benches over. The Lord does not want us to hold anger in. He tells us to try and take care of the anger issue before the end of the day. He wants us to get it out so we can get past it.

Hosea 5:10 Judah's leaders are like those who move boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on them like a flood of water.

Mark 11:15-17 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it a den of robbers."

Ephesians 4:26-27 In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

When I was first saved, I was so angry with God. My prayers were raising my fist at God and telling Him how angry I was that He let me go through all that. I even called Him a liar. He says He loves us in the Bible, but surely, He didn't love or protect me.

When I was 12 years old, I learned that anger was really effective. People just don't want other people being angry with them. Anger helped me to get some ugliness out of my life and anger became my most effective tool to get what I wanted. By the time I came to know the Lord, anger was a lifestyle; my best friend; my comrade in arms. I did not want to let it go. The Lord had a lot of work to do on me.

God was so patient with me. He never got angry and never punished me for all the horrible things I said to Him. He just patiently mended my heart, and taught me what love is. It took years to get where I am now. My anger has been replaced. Now Jesus is my lifestyle, my best friend, and my comrade in arms.

James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

So go ahead, tell God exactly how you feel about Him. Let Him work on you.

jenaministries – Part 1

15. Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen to Us?

Is one bad thing after another happening to you? Do you feel like you just can't get a break? Do you pray and pray about it and not get any relief, actually it just gets worse? Why is Life so Hard? Why isn't God making it better?

I've heard people say "It's just that old devil" or "I'm under attack from the enemy". I can't say that is never true, but in my experience, I believe that hasn't been the case.

Let's consider [Isaiah 45:7](#). Here is that scripture in four different versions (or translations):

NLT (New Living Translation) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I create the light and make the darkness. I send good times and bad times. I, the Lord, am the one who does these things.

NIV (New International Version) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things.

KJV (King James Version) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

NCV (New Century Version) [Isaiah 45:7](#) I made the light and the darkness. I bring peace, and I cause troubles. I, the Lord, do all these things.

God not only allows these bad things to happen to you, but actually brings or causes them? I thought He loves us. If He loves us, why would He bring bad things that make us suffer?

There was a time in my life when this was happening to me ferociously. I tried to live life right. Worked hard on being a good wife, mother, & employee. Never been arrested and never had addictions to drugs or alcohol. I had very high moral values and wanted to make everyone happy.

But everything went very bad. It came from all different directions. I was bombarded with one horrible calamity after another. It felt like there was no hope. I thought I was going to die, for this horrible life was going to kill me. I couldn't eat or sleep, and the bad things just kept on coming with no breaks. I was physically sick all the time, and caught every little bug going around. My back was constantly going out and was in horrible pain. I thought I and my kids were going to lose our house and be homeless for the financial problems were intense too. Like all that wasn't bad enough, the media coverage of my horrible situation made it so much worse. Everyone knew the tragedy I was facing, and so many people in my life turned on me. I didn't want to get out of bed and face another horrific day. It was me against the world and I had to face all this alone.

Why would God let all this happen to me? Only God can answer that question, but I can tell you that I became totally dependent on Him. Since I wasn't sleeping much anyway, I would often times actually pray (and cry) all night. I couldn't count on any people. This brought me to a place of only relying on and calling out to God. I drew closer and closer to the Lord. My life was desperately dependent on God to save me.

It made me pretty angry when I read [Isaiah: 45:7](#). I was in a moment of despair. I felt betrayed and was so very angry at God.

The Lord put up with all my complaining and was with me through every step. That was the time when I heard His voice and experienced miracles. Almost all of the testimonies I have in my writings are from that extremely difficult time. Now that life is normal, I'm not hearing God's voice or seeing miracles like I did. I'm hoping that's because I'm not in despair or making as many bad decisions, and I'm following God, and my salvation is clear.

Looking back, I can see how hard Jesus was working with me, being so patient. He put up with all my complaining and anger. Had he just got me out of that mess quickly, I may not have learned how faithful and loving He is. And I may not have decided to follow and serve Him – or been saved. I wish it could have been easier, but I understand He does what He has to do to get us to a certain place spiritually.

So, is one bad thing after the other happening to you? Do you see no end? Instead of looking at your Earthly life, try looking at your spiritual life. Is God trying to do something with you? Is He trying to teach you something? Is He trying to get your attention? Bring you to your knees? To realize He is the only one you can truly rely on and save you?

There are spiritual reasons why the Lord causes bad things to happen to us. God is much more concerned about your spiritual wellbeing than He is about your worldly wellbeing. He will do whatever it takes to strengthen your spirit and write your name in the book of life. He brings bad things into our lives because He loves us and because He is faithful. So depend on Him to get you through. Let Him do His work on you. You will get through this.