

*Why Do Bad
Things Happen?*

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GORDON
SMITH



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In this life, we may at some point have to face the harsh reality of a friend's or family member's death being thrust upon us, by a car crash, a serious illness or a life taken by another. It's at these moments that we are unable to cope or understand why.

I believe that in this book, Gordon Smith has in his own unique way found a means to give the insight and clarity that could provide assistance to those faced with the untimely departure of loved ones.

Mica Paris

*To my father,
who died earlier this year.*

*Come back,
otherwise my mother will
have the last word!*

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Introduction

'Why Do Bad Things Happen?'

A few years ago in Glasgow, some friends sent a lady to me for a reading at the Berkeley Street Spiritualist Church. As usual, they didn't give me any clues about whom she wanted to hear from in spirit. When she came into the small back room at the church my first impression was of someone who had given up caring about the little details of everyday life – something bigger had come along and wrung that out of her. She was a good-looking older woman, but somehow she seemed limp – her hands fell in her lap as though she was barely aware of them and her hair had been well cut but I don't think she'd bothered styling it. Her face was strangely gaunt compared to her body, with eyes like black circles. When you see someone who's so clearly in pain, you just want to reach out and

give them a hug, but as a medium you have to remember that that's not what they've come for – they want to hear from their loved ones, not you.

I explained to her that I wanted her just to listen to any evidence I was able to pass on to her from spirit and to let me know if it was right by giving me a nod or saying she accepted it. I knew that if the person she was reaching out to had a message it would come through, but I also wanted to give her proof that it was genuine, to set her mind at rest so she could get the most from this contact with the other side.

Straightaway I began to sense the familiar energy around me that always means there's a spirit trying to come through, so I sent out my first question: 'Who's there?' In return I got the impression of a child, a little girl who can't have been much more than three years old.

When I told the woman in front of me, her shoulders tensed and she nodded. I knew this must be her granddaughter.

'I know I have a little brother and I come to see him,' the little girl said to me. 'Tell Mummy I'm there.'

This was hard for the grandmother to take. She was listening so intensely that without realizing it she was pulling her chair closer to me, wanting to be nearer to the little girl. The child told us that she was with her great-grandfather, and the woman protested, 'He died ages ago. How can he be with her?' but then her face changed

and I sensed her relax a bit before she frowned again. I think she understood that it *was* her granddaughter, but now I could see that she was trying to work out how to prove this to another person – presumably the little girl's mother. She wanted more assurances. I was recording the sitting and promised her she'd have the tape to play back and she said, 'Yeah, yeah,' but she was pushing me for more. Sceptics say that the grieving are gullible, but nothing could be further from the truth – they want concrete evidence, not straws to grasp at.

The initial high that I'd got from making the connection to spirit turned darker and I knew that I was about to get a sensation of what had happened to the child. It only lasted a split second. Sitting in my chair in the tiny room I suddenly felt as though I was free-falling through the air, plunging down, and then it was over and I was still in the chair.

'I want Mummy to dream without seeing me falling,' the girl went on. 'I want to be with her and I can't when she sees that.'

When she heard that, her grandmother nodded and wept, and I wondered if I should have been seeing the little girl's mummy too – it sounded as though she was the one who needed real healing from spirit.

I got a sense of worry from the little girl, but only because she clearly knew her mother was suffering and she was trying to get through to her and let her know that she was in a good safe place now.

I hoped the grandmother was getting some comfort from the evidence I was able to give her. When the communication ended, I let her tell me the story.

Her daughter and granddaughter had lived on the third floor of a tenement building on the outskirts of Glasgow and the conditions were pretty poor. The mother was putting aside as much money as she could so that they could move to a better flat, but she was also phoning and writing to the council to try and get them to do some repairs on the building. She was particularly bothered by the windows, which she thought were unsafe. Two years of letters and calls were getting her nowhere and she had a looming sense that there was something wrong about living in that flat with her little girl. Each time she was let down by the council the dread got worse.

She would go out early in the mornings to work as a cleaner and a neighbour would pop round and mind the toddler. One day, two years before the reading, as she was coming home she felt that feeling of dread kick in again and anxiety mounting inside her. As she turned up the path in front of the building, she looked up to see her little girl kneeling on the window sill, banging her hands on the glass, happy to see her, and as she watched, the window flipped open and the child flew out.

She saw her daughter fall and die.

I cannot begin to quantify the horror that that mother must have felt in that instant, or every minute of every day after that when she saw the child fall and die again and

again. The grandmother had come to see me because she had been watching her daughter disintegrate. Although she'd been pregnant at the time, she'd split up with her boyfriend and spent lots of the compensation money on building a shrine to her little girl in the cemetery. She was terrified to sleep because she kept having a dream in which she felt her daughter coming closer to her and then the image of the accident played in her head again and she lost the presence of the child. The grandmother felt as though she had lost not just her grandchild but also her daughter, that she was slipping out of reach.

The neighbour who'd been looking after the child was devastated too – how could she have known that the girl would be able to climb up on a bed and then onto the high sill? A pall hung over the entire estate as the neighbours added their grief to the mother's and held their own children closer, thinking what if it had happened to them?

When you look at the way that the consequences of a single action spread out and taint so many lives, you find yourself demanding to know why. Why that child? Why that mother? Why did *anyone* have to go through that? Why do things like that happen every day, all over the world, and how do the people left behind have the strength to pick themselves up and carry on living? Why do bad things happen?

You might throw your hands up and say it's just destiny, but it's more complex than that and it takes a bigger

explanation to understand how that terrible accident came about and how, incredible though it might seem, it could be possible for those left behind to find solace.

Many world religions have their own interpretations of destiny, karma, fate, kismet – call it what you will – and I'm not pretending that I'm going to offer up a definitive theological explanation here, or even explain how it works in Buddhism or Hinduism, or predict the future. I'm not a guru. I can only tell you what I know. But I can draw on my experiences as a medium travelling the world and meeting thousands of people who have gone through terrible ordeals and on what I've learned from spirit to try and show you what's helped me and others to live their lives and grow spiritually, whatever life throws at them.