“Your Answer on Generational Curses Really Helped with our Bipolar Daughter”

Actually, this is a thank-you email.

Our (adopted) daughter is only five years old, and has very obvious childhood-onset bipolar. Unfortunately, this is a new diagnosis among children, and many people refuse to believe that such young, innocent children’s lives could be affected by mental illness. Believe me, there is nobody who would want to believe that more than the children or the parents of the children who are suffering with these illnesses. But, unfortunately, they do exist. In fact, there is now PROOF that a dog that can sense-out a seizure just before it happens can also sense-out a bipolar episode. This is probably do to the nature of bipolar, as they now believe bipolar is a form of epilepsy.

Recently a Christian teacher asked me, “Could this be a generational curse? After all, God doesn’t want any of His children to suffer. We will definitely be praying for your daughter.” This got me thinking, and I ended up at your website reading the article “Could My Children’s Autism be the Result of a Generational Curse?” Boy, was I thankful to learn about what a generational curse really amounts to. Our daughter is on medication, and even that BARELY works.

Going to your website not only taught me about generational curses (enough to where now I can go back and speak with the woman more informatively!), but it also reminded me that this is NOT my fault. I tend to try to lay blame somewhere, and the best person to blame is myself. I can second-guess everything I’ve done “wrong,” imagined and perceived, and say that is why she is suffering. And believe me, she IS suffering, and

doesn’t mind saying so! For several months, we lied to her and told her bipolar simply means you are very smart. I got tired of lying to her. Today I finally agreed with her, and said, You’re right. It IS a bad thing, but you can learn to live with it. Either you can defeat it, or it can defeat you. If you want to NOT let it get the best of you, you have to work very hard at it, especially when you’re older.

But we’ll get through it together.

It’s so hard, I just can’t begin to tell you what it is like to deal with a mental illness, especially in such a young child. We love her with all our heart and might. She has shown us how to love unconditionally. Sometimes, though, it takes everything inside us to stay strong.

Thank you for explaining about generational curses, and the fact that sometimes an illness is an illness, not necessarily a sin.

Dear _____,

BLESS YOUR HEART!!!! I am so sorry to hear about this trial your family is going through, and will be for a very, very long time. Our pastor’s young son was also diagnosed with BPD when he was even younger than your daughter. It makes for a living hell some days, doesn’t it?

I am delighted that you were able to find this article and that it encouraged you. How unfortunate that the teacher has such a profound misunderstanding of God and the role of suffering in our lives. What do people do with verses such as 1 Peter 4:19, which talks about those who “suffer according to God’s will”? I guess they skip over them.

Recently, I had the privilege of chatting with the pastor of Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth; you may remember that this was the church where a gunman murdered a number of students and staff at a “See You At The Pole” rally a few

years ago. Dr. Al Meredith, who obviously knows something about suffering, suggested to me a wonderful book called *Don't Waste Your Sorrows* by Paul Billheimer, which I am in the process of reading right now. It's excellent, and I recommend it to you in view of the suffering you are experiencing.

I would also like to suggest that you pass on the blessing to your daughter that you received in owning the truth that her CPD is not your fault; she is not too young for you to bless her with the truth that it is not HER fault, either. Often when children experience suffering of various types, they personalize it and believe that they did something to cause it. The fact that it's illogical doesn't stop them! The message of "It's not your fault" is a type of revelation; children usually cannot know or figure out this truth without someone else telling them. You just might relieve her of a terrible burden she could be carrying needlessly by sharing this wonderful freeing news with her.

I pray you and your family will know God's comfort and peace as you live out this challenge to His glory and your benefit.

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Posted 2004

"Could My Children's Autism be the Result of a

Generational Curse?”

I understand that it says in the Bible that the children may be cursed for generations because of their fathers’ sins. I have two children with autism and a cousin that has a child with autism as well. Could this be a curse since both of our parents are sisters? There has been talk that in our family that relatives from two and three generations back married cousins. Isn’t that a sin?

I believe the concept of generational curses is best understood as the natural consequence of ingrained behavioral patterns that are passed down from one generation to the next. I yelled at my kids when they were small because my mom yelled at us. My brother is a (recovered) alcoholic because he saw our dad drink a lot every night he was home, and he internalized that behavior for himself. The guy down the street mistreats his wife because he saw his father continually do it to his mother. (And societally speaking, there can be generational “curses” when those in one generation make decisions which have effects for generations to come, such as the abortion decision. Our society continues to pay for that errant decision in more ways than the 30 million+ abortions since Roe v. Wade. The value of young innocent life continues to decline.)

We can’t change what we don’t acknowledge, so these behavior patterns (or curses) continue to play themselves out in the lives of those who don’t confront them and decide to stop them. But we CAN change what we DO acknowledge, particularly when we invite the Lord to release His power into an area we want to change.

But what you’re asking about is something different. Marrying cousins isn’t a sin biblically. The laws in place against marrying close relatives such as siblings are there to protect children from experiencing the fallout of recessive genes

being expressed; however, the Journal of Genetic Counseling recently released a report that the risk of serious genetic disorders among children of first cousins is much smaller than originally thought (http://depts.washington.edu/mednews/vol6/no15/cousins.html).

Since there is talk in your family of cousins marrying several generations ago, and non-family genes were subsequently introduced through marriage to non-cousins which would strengthen the genetic mixture, I would think that while there is a chance that the autism in your family is connected to the cousin marriage, there's probably more of a chance that it isn't. More to the point, I don't think this is a generational curse since the marrying cousins didn't break any of God's laws.

I am so sorry that you are having to deal with autism. That is a difficult burden to bear. Please don't carry an unnecessary burden of thinking you are dealing with the consequences of someone else's sin, when you're probably not.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

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