

The Christian Response to Natural Disasters

October 14th & 15th, 2017

Matthew 24:3-14

Jesus told His followers that persecution and natural disasters would increase prior to His second coming. He also said that the Good News of the Kingdom would be proclaimed throughout the whole world and then the end would come!

Three common responses by Christians to Natural Disasters

1. Christians want to protect God's reputation

- ❖ God is good and He would not cause pain and suffering on innocent people.
- ❖ God does not cause the disaster but He is with us in it.
- ❖ God is love and unexplainable natural disasters are outside of His loving character.
 - ◆ However, these responses present God as weak and finite, unable to help divert the devastating consequences of nature!
 - Psalm 104:1-4

2. Some Christians blame the Devil for all disasters

- ❖ Satan is the god of this world.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."
- ❖ Satan has power over the whole world.

1 John 5:19 "We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."
- ❖ Satan caused fire and wind to destroy Job's property and kill Job's children!
 - Job 1:6-19
 - ◆ However, God gave permission for Satan to do these disasters and limited what he could do!
 - Job 1:12
 - ◆ Job's response to these losses...
 - Job 1:21-22; 2:10

3. God is Sovereign over all the earth and controls all of nature!

Psalm 115:3 "Our God is in the heavens; He does all that He pleases."

Ephesians 1:11 "In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,"

- ◆ God uses nature to fulfill His purposes!
 - Psalm 135:1-7
- ❖ Elijah prayed that it would not rain
 - 1 Kings 17-18

- ❖ Jesus calmed the waves and the sea
 - Mark 4:35-41
- ❖ God's ways and purposes are impossible to understand
 - Isaiah 55:6-9

God's Word gives three reasons for natural disasters

- Job 37:1-13
1. God's Correction
 - ❖ Korah's Rebellion
 - Numbers 16:31-35
 - ❖ David's Pride

2 Samuel 24:15 "So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men."
 - ❖ Jonah's Resistance to God's Command

Jonah 1:4 "But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship threatened to break up."
 - ❖ Egypt's Worship of False Gods

Exodus 7:5 "The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them."
 2. God's Establishment of His Land
 - ❖ Joshua defeats the Kings of the Amorites
 - Joshua 10:11-13
 - ❖ Jehoshaphat and Elisha defeat Moab
 - 2 Kings 3:14-24
 - ❖ Elijah defeats the prophets on Mt. Carmel
 - 1 Kings 18:37-39
 3. God's Love Demonstrated...
 - ... Through saving Noah and his family

Hebrews 11:7 "By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."
 - ... Toward the Philippian Jailor
 - Acts 16:30-34
 - God's love and compassion toward the wicked

Ezekiel 18:23 "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?"

 - Matthew 9:35-38
 - ... Through Jesus' death on the cross!
 - Matthew 27:45-54

Isaiah 45:5-8

*I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God;
I equip you, though you do not know me, that people may know,
from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me;*

I am the Lord, and there is no other.

I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity;

I am the Lord, who does all these things.

“Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness;

let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit;

let the earth cause them both to sprout;

I the Lord have created it.”

**Christians anchor our faith not in what God does,
but in who He is!**