

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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Where is The God of Love in The Tragedies of Life?

Introduction

In every situation of tragedy the same questions arise. I suspect every person has asked them, some from puzzlement and some by arrogant individuals who either deny the existence of God or, sit in judgment on Him. "Why did God let this happen?" or "If He is a God of love then either he is impotent, or does not care".

Tragedies happen, such as:

- a) On Friday, November 8th 2013, one of the worst typhoons in history swept in devastating destruction across the Philippines. In those few hours at least 3,633 people were killed as of 16th November 2013. They were ordinary people like each of us, fathers, mothers, grandparents, and children whose lives abruptly ended in that catastrophe. The question: "Since God can control the weather, could He not have caused the typhoon to just stay over the water?"
- b) On Friday, December 14th 2012, teachers and support staff had just started the day. Little children had filed into their classes, innocent little faces without a care in the world. Suddenly, shots rang out and in a matter of minutes, amid the terror and chaos, six adults and twenty children died. The question: "Where is the God of love?"
- c) In the USA there have been forty mass killings since Columbine in 1999. "Why did God allow this to happen?"
- d) I have a friend whose only son was about to help his father-in-law just before Christmas. Suddenly he took a headache, and such was its severity he had to be taken to hospital. There he died a few hours later. The question: "Why did God let it happen?"

The reality is, no finite mind can fully know, or much less understand, why God allows such things? However, from the scriptures and life I learn several reasons why disasters and tragedies happen.

Possible Reasons

1) To warn before it is too late to make amends.

- a) The Lord spoke of two tragedies when "innocent" people died. While He did not give the reason why God permitted them to happen, He did give a warning (Lk. 13:1-5). He spoke of the time when Pilate slaughtered people from Galilee when they were offering sacrifices. What were they doing wrong? The Lord answers, it

was not because they were more grievous sinners than others, BUT, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish”. Again when the tower of Siloam fell and eighteen people were killed, was it because they were the worst sinners of Jerusalem? The answer was “No, then He gave a warning: “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Lk. 13:3, 5). Tragedies were permitted to have man stop and consider. These events are like an orange traffic light which warns: “Prepare to Stop”.

- b) Another “orange light” was when Paul and Silas, who were missionaries, were taken and beaten. That night there was an earthquake which resulted in the jailers question: “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30). The man saw the reality that God was much bigger than he was, and the earthquake was a warning from God. He repented and got saved. He heeded the “orange light”, warning voice.

2) Because of human corruption and greed.

- a) At times the disaster is the result of human greed and indifference to human life. On the 24th November 2012 there was a fire in a garment factory in Bangladesh. One hundred and twelve people were killed. This was not a natural disaster but the result of man, as an animal, not caring about others, and despite warnings of the danger, sent people into the building. When the fire started there was little or no escape. Human greed was the cause here.

3) The result of not caring for the body and making unwise decisions.

- a) Very often diseases are the result of individual choice. For instance, my grandpa was a heavy smoker for all his adult life and he developed lung cancer. An individual who is a heavy drinker may well develop liver problems, or poor nutrition will result in bad health. These are the result of our own personal doings, in defiance of the laws of intelligence. It is not surprising today that a disease like AIDS is rampant, and the cause of this can be attributed to failure in making wise choices and living in sexual perversity and promiscuity.

4) It is God letting man have his own way and reaping the consequences.

- a) At times it is God withdrawing His hand and giving humanity what they want, freedom from God. In the early 1950’s two individuals were to the forefront in the USA. One was anti-God, Madelyn Murray O’Hare, and the other a preacher of Jesus Christ, Billy Graham. One was bringing before the nation the cross of Christ and the repeated statement, “The Bible says”. The other was doing all she could to have prayer stopped in the schools. A decision was made by the supreme court of the USA. Prayer was stopped and the nation began a downward trend. Today places like Britain and America, which have known the blessing of God, have rejected God’s principles of living, and the result is open wickedness, and atheism is glorified. God has been cast out and paganism has been given an open door. If man does not want God, then he must be prepared to suffer the consequences of the God He angers. God warned man that by rejecting Him He would give them up (Rom. 1:24, 26), and over to a reprobate mind (Rom. 1:28). With that distorted mindset, there is no moral absolute and the human heart runs rampant in perversity and violence. Yes, He does let nature flow freely in whirlwinds and droughts, yet there is mercy. Could not the storm in the Philippines just as easily have happened to the eastern seaboard of the USA, or the western side of Canada? Could God not permit a major earthquake anywhere in the UK? One lesson for us to realize is that if we do not repent, the withholding hand of God could be removed from our lives and nations. We cannot blatantly defy God with ourselves determining what is acceptable and what is not, and not suffer the consequences. At times tragedies are the result of rejecting God.

Arguments

1) What about innocent little children?

- a) I hear the sneering judgmental question: “But what of the little children who were killed?” What hypocrisy. Since 1973 to 2012 inclusive, according to the Guttmacher Institute 55,808,387 babies were killed! That works out to one baby being killed every 22 seconds, and there is no protests, and nobody asked: “What about all the little babies”. If we count the lives of little innocent babies as worthless pieces of flesh, do we honestly think the God who gives life will permit us to slaughter that which is made in His likeness and not give retribution. Man gets the due reward of his deeds. Let’s ask another question: “Why does God not stop all the murderers of the babies, or stop the law being passed which permits such?” The answer is, if man does not like to retain God in their minds, he gives them up and over, and man without God becomes like an animal, and in time and eternity will reap the results of their doings.

2) Where is the God of love?

- a) Where is the God of love? I look at Calvary, at the greatest act of rebellion and injustice the world has ever and will ever see. God was silent and did not interfere. I wonder how we would react if some malicious individuals took one of our sons and spat on him, whipped him, then nailed him without anesthetic to a cross, and mocked him? Would we stand by or seek to stop it? Christ was the only good man who ever lived, and God His Father did not intervene. Did he not have cause to ask: "Where is the love?" The answer is, God was working to a much bigger perspective than ours. Calvary let man see how undeserving He was of any mercy from God. It let man see how total was his enmity against God. This was man taking the Son of God and hating him with all the venom they could muster, and yet God did nothing.
- b) There was an incident when the Lord was here and His friend died. Although He was only a few miles away, He did not come when hearing Lazarus was sick, and did not even go to the funeral! Mary and Martha must have asked: "Where's the love?" They soon would get the answer, and in it they would see the greatness of Christ and God. When someone asks: "Why did God not stop such and such a thing from happening?", or "Where is the God of love?", I only know that there is much in this life I do not understand. This I do know, God loves all humanity and is constantly seeking to turn man from his evil ways. If man stubbornly refuses to obey God, as Adam did, are there not consequences in this life for disobedience? How can there be any accusing finger pointed at God and dare to insolently question him? The better questions would be: "What are we doing that could bring the judgment of God upon us?", for since "Righteousness exalteth a nation" (Prov. 14:34), then the fall of it is nothing other than the discipline of God.

Where Can There Be Any Comfort In Such Tragedies?

Where can I find any comfort in the little children who have died in such situations, or are aborted? I find several scriptures which help me make a decision.

The Lord said:

- a) "Suffer little children to come unto me" (Lk. 18:16) and "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matt. 18:14). When David's little baby died he said: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12:23). The rhetorical question is asked: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Since the Lord said that people must hear and understand to be converted (Matt. 13:15; Acts 28:27), a child or individual who cannot understand the gospel will be in heaven. Surely the God of love, who calls the children to Him on earth will not reject them eternally, because they did not hear and understand. I also say adults for I put children in the same category of those individuals who have mental deficiency so that even the simplest things are beyond them. Would it be right for God to punish such for not accepting His Son? That would be a travesty of justice.
- b) "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right" (Gen. 18:25)
 - i) Who is man that he should judge and question the Almighty? Job had dreadful afflictions, multiple deaths of his children, loss of property, and then he began judging God. Eventually God decided to silence Job's judging by questioning him so that he might learn how insignificant he was. They were questions any judge of God could be asked:
 1. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding." (Job 38:4)
 2. "Who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together." (Job 38:6-7)
 3. "Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place." (Job 38:12)
 4. "Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?" (Job 38:16)
 5. "Where is the way where light dwelleth?" (Job 38:19)
 6. "By what way is the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?" (Job 38:24)
 7. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" (Job 38:31)
 8. "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" (Job 38:35)
 9. "Hast thou given the horse strength?" (Job 39:19)
 10. "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it." (Job 40:2)
 - ii) Job was silenced and so will each who question the ways of God. To that end as Job said, and all those who judge God will ultimately say: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (Job 40:4). However, God was not finished, and like an interrogator keeps questioning Job with a major question:

1. “Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?” (Job 40:8)

iii) Then Job speaks again: “I know that Thou canst do every thing . . . I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not . . . I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:2-6). Job had learnt that wise is the individual who, instead of questioning the permissive or performing activities of God, he ought to bow to the Sovereign One and acknowledge his own ignorance.

Conclusion

Instead of asking why God allowed such, I have never heard anyone vent their anger at Satan, after all, it was he who began all this mess. Not contented with bringing himself under the condemnation and judgment of God, he had others join him, then coming to earth he conned man into eating the fruit with promises of liberation from God. When man sinned, everything in a perfect creation was affected, not only man, but natural creation and animal life. When disasters happen it is the result of sin in the world, the result of rejection of God. Why should man stand in judgment on God or question His not stopping things? Drought, earthquakes, eruptions, tornados, and hurricanes are the result of man’s sin. The savagery of animals and of humanity, and his love for violence is the result of man’s rejection of God and sin. Man needs to place the blame where it belongs.

Having said that, in this life we will not have all the answers, but when “natural disasters” occur, instead of judging God, it is better to ask:

- a) Have we as individuals and nations offended God, and put Him out of every aspect of life to such an extent that we nationally have gone so far down the line of permissiveness, that it is impossible to pull back the reins of morality and God consciousness?
- b) Or, why has God not let such things happen to us when we have mocked and maligned Him?

The next time when asked, “Why does the God of love let this happen?”, acknowledge there are things we cannot understand because we are finite and limited to time. But, we must ask ourselves, are we doing anything that would incur the same, permitting of God to let disaster fall on our nation? God does not necessarily cause these things but permits them to pull us up, the same as the earthquake in the jail. Rather than question and judge the Almighty I submit it would be fitting to bow and thank Him for His mercies that have spared us.

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