

How Should We Think Biblically About “Natural Disasters”?

By Pastor Phil Layton (www.goldcountrybaptist.org)

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1. Think Compassion

- Weep over man’s suffering in the world (Eccl 3:4, 7; Rom 12:15)
- Weep over man’s *sin* and impact on the world (Gen 3, 6-8; Rom 8:22)
- Don’t just cry, cry out to God for His mercy and compassion
 - i. Pray for those who have lost (Lk 7:11-14a; Jn 11:33-42,)
 - ii. Pray compassionately for those who *are* lost (Rom 9:2, 10:1)
 - iii. Pray for how God might have you minister (Lk 6:36, 10:33-37)
 - iv. Pray especially for gospel-driven ministry (Mt 9:35-38, Eph 6:19)

2. Think Control

- God is sovereign
 - i. Over Satan and his evil angels (Mk 1:27; Lk 22:31-32; Job 1-2)
 - ii. Over tragedy /calamity (Job 1:16, 18-22, 2:9-10, 42:11; Jas 5:13)
 - iii. Over earthquakes (Job 9:6; Ps 104:32, 60:2; Isa 13:13, 29:6)
 - iv. Over waves and winds (Ps 89:9, 145:18; Isa 51:15; Lk 8:25)
 - v. Over the day we die (Ps 139:16; Mt 6:27; Heb. 9:27; Mt 10:28-31)
 - vi. There are things God does or decrees that He does not enjoy but are a part of His purposes (Lam 3:33, Eze 18:23, 32, Mt 23:37-38)
- God has His purposes for all He allows or causes
 - i. We’re not to presume to know why or demand God tell us (Dan 4:35, Rom 9:19-23) but to trust Him (Ps 46:1-3; 10; Gen 18:25b)
 - ii. His purposes usually aren’t revealed (Dt 29:29; Rom 11:33-34)
 - iii. His purposes don’t revolve around us, but are much bigger than us and are for His glory (Rev 11:13, 14:19 compare v. 6, Jn 9:1-3)
 - iv. His purposes are good for those who love Him (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28; Gen 50:20; Ps 119:67-68, 71, 75; Isa 57:1-2; Lam 3:25-40)

Remember He not only sets the limits for the waves (Job 38:8-11) but for the waves of temptation and trial in your life (1 Cor 10:13, 2 Cor 12:9-10)

3. Think Coming Judgment

- These are previews of far worse still to come (Mt 24:7-8; Rev 16:17-21)
- We all deserve judgment, it’s what’s “fair” (Rom 1:32, 2:2, 5, 3:19, 5:12)
- The hard question is not why do sinners die but why does God let us live?
- God has used natural disasters to judge the ungodly and nations like ours (Jer 51:42, 24; Eze 26:3-4, 19, 6; Nahum 1:8) and will again (Rev 6-18)
- God’s judgments before the final one include mercy (Hab 3:2, Jas 5:7-11)

4. Think Christ and His Gospel Purposes

- Where was God when _____ died? The same place when His Son died
- His Son came to tell us “repent or you likewise will perish” (Lk 13:1-9)
- Take refuge in the Lord alone (2 Sam 22:8a, 2-7, 31, 47)