



## AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

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# Questions Kids Ask About Natural Disasters

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**Why did God make the world so dangerous? Look at all the bad storms and stuff.**

Why do you say that God *made* the world dangerous? Just because it's that way today doesn't mean that it was that way when He first made it. The Bible says that after God created the world He "saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31) The Garden of Eden must have been an absolutely beautiful, peaceful, totally safe place.

**Well, then, how did the world become so dangerous?**

The Bible tells us that everything changed when people began to sin. Every aspect of nature was affected. The ground was cursed. Thorns and thistles began to grow for the first time (Genesis 3:18). The weather got nasty. On one occasion fire fell from heaven and the winds became so violent that a family died when their house blew down (Job 1:16,19). Sin poisons everything from our minds to our bodies to our environment.

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**Does God punish people with bad weather when they sin?**

We should never automatically assume that someone has done

something wrong just because they encounter bad weather or hard times (Matthew 5:45, Luke 13:4). But on the other hand, sooner or later, bad things often *do* happen when people sin. If someone drives drunk they may very well wreck their car. And whenever someone's sin results in suffering, *other* people are often also affected.

**Does God cause bad weather?**

What do you mean by *bad* weather? Some very powerful **natural forces** here on earth serve a **useful** purpose, although they can be dangerous. For example, **lightning** produces **ozone** and adds **nitrogen to soil**, which helps plants grow. Forest fires often burn away dead growth and renew the ecology. Even the shifting of earth's tectonic plates can enrich the soil and regulate climate conditions. But they can also cause earthquakes.

Sometimes weather turns violent because people have misused our planet. For instance, when large tropical rain forests are destroyed, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere go up. The earth grows warmer and rainfall decreases. So farmers can't raise as many crops. Then food shortages result. Some people starve. Others die from the heat. Forest fires burn out of control. Ocean temperatures and wind patterns may change, causing more storms to become more violent. Pollution also affects our world. Bad air causes breathing disorders. Toxins in our oceans and streams kill fish and animals. Can you see how our own carelessness and sin, not God, are the real problem?

**But why would God allow tsunamis and earthquakes if He knows that so many people will die from them?**

Tsunamis are usually caused by earthquakes. One huge tsunami occurred in 2004. People were not warned to flee because forecasters were pressured to stay silent. Why? Because some businesses didn't want to risk losing money from tourists who they figured would become scared and leave. So they kept quiet. Over 227,800 people died.

Many people who have died in earthquakes were living in poorly-constructed homes. Why? Because the builders ignored construction codes in order to make more money for themselves. Once again, you can see how bad things are often the result of human sin and greed. We can't really blame *God* for those things, can we?

**But how can it be fair for God to allow animals to suffer and die in big tsunamis?**

Did you know that very few wild animals died in the 2004 tsunami? Many birds and animals raced away from the ocean in the minutes before the tsunami hit. Animals often seem to know when bad weather is on the way. Maybe they are more tuned to nature and God than people who try to run from God when they sin, and thus miss His guidance. Genesis 3:8ff

**How does God feel when people lose their homes and lives due to bad weather?**

He must feel compassion (James 5:11, Lamentation 3:32). One day He will come back to earth to set everything right (Revelation 21:1-7). Until then, He controls and works even "natural disasters" for His good purposes.



**More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith**