

The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES
with Pastor Greg Formey



Was God In The Flood?

Genesis 7:17-20

Sunday, October 11, 2015

"¹⁷For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. ¹⁸As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. ¹⁹Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, ²⁰rising more than twenty-two feet above the highest peaks."

This message will explore what the Bible teaches about extreme weather, and how we should live our lives as a result.

WHY NATURAL DISASTERS CONFUSE PEOPLE

So many of us are confused when floods, earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, tsunamis, typhoons, cyclones, mudslides, wildfires, and other natural disasters come sweeping through our land.

These events cause many to question God's goodness. He gets the blame because we they reason that since He is all powerful, He can prevent or stop these disasters. And since He is said to be all loving, He must want to stop them. Then, why does He not do so? Why do people have to suffer as they do?

Ever notice that people don't rejoice much when God generously gives years, decades, or even centuries of peaceful weather, but the moment the "wheels fall off," they call Him everything but a child of God.

GOD AND THE LAWS OF NATURE

God created the whole universe and the laws of nature, according to **Genesis 1:1**. Natural disasters are a result of these laws at work. We called them disasters because they threaten our lives and the things we own.

Hurricanes, typhoons, and tornados are the results of weather patterns colliding. Earthquakes happen when pressure causes underground plates to shift. In the same way, tsunamis are caused by earthquakes in the ocean.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ holds the entire natural system together.

Colossians 1:15-17

¹⁵Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, ¹⁶for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth...Everything was created through him and for him ¹⁷He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

Could God prevent natural disasters? Absolutely! Does God sometimes influence the weather? Yes, as we see in **Deuteronomy 11:17** - "**He will shut up the sky and hold back the rain, and the ground will fail to produce its harvests.**"

James 5:17

¹⁷Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! ¹⁸Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

Numbers 16:30-34 shows us that God sometimes causes natural disasters as a judgment against sin. Not to mention that the book of **Revelation** describes many natural disasters yet to come, declaring that they will be judgments from God. Is every natural disaster a punishment from God? Absolutely not.

MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISASTERS

The fall of the human race into sin affected everything, including the world we inhabit. Everything in creation is subject to frustration and decay.

Romans 8:19-21

¹⁹For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. ²⁰Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, ²¹he creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

Therefore, sin is the ultimate cause of natural disasters just as it is the cause of death, disease, and suffering.

WHAT WE SHOULD KNOW AND WHAT WE CAN DO

Events, such as the one we just experienced, shake our confidence in this life and force us to think about eternal things.

Beyond understanding why natural disasters occur, even beyond figuring out why God allows them to occur, is the question of what we should decide to do to make a difference for God and His kingdom in the midst of it all.

We have the opportunity to learn many things that we could not know as well in times of ease:

- It becomes clear to us that life can be taken away in an instant, so we learn to value it more.
- Another thing we should know during tough times is that **God is good!**
- Natural disasters cause millions of people to reevaluate their priorities in life.
- Christians have the opportunity to serve, counsel, pray, and lead people to faith in our Lord

When all is said and done, God will surely show us that "**God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.**" (Romans 8:28)