

Reply ID: 3cfg

Dear buhogrunon,

Tuesday  
February 26, 2013

First of all, thank you for taking the time, not only to read my article, but also for posting a reply. You posed some interesting questions, and made some interesting points, which I'd like to respond to. As I do so, please keep in mind that I'm only human, and don't **know** the answers. I also don't have any formal education or training in religion. These are just personal opinions, devised after spending time reflecting upon the issues.

In your response, you stated that "[i]n regard to God not intervening in tragic incidences, what about cases where intervening would not interfere with free will? For example, natural disasters? They and their consequences are not the result of human action, yet every year they continue to wipe out thousands of innocent people - why allow this to happen?"

This is a difficult question to answer, mainly because it's true that a natural disaster hurts and even kills so many. However, isn't it also true that a natural disaster provides people with an opportunity to exercise their free will, showing the world the best of what humanity has to offer? We can all sit here and talk about what we'd do in a given situation, how we'd respond, etc., but until that moment arrives, we simply can't say with absolute certainty one way or the other. For those people who have lived through such an incident, they've come away with something, regardless of how they chose to respond. For the unsung hero, (s)he's chosen to exercise their free will in a manner that was helpful to their neighbor, not only allowing their light to shine during the process, but setting an example for others to follow. Their leading by example no doubt created a ripple effect, spreading outwards and impacting people on the other side of the world, not just today, but years from now. For those who responded less favorably, they too learned something from their actions. In addition to demonstrating their true colors to the rest of the world, you can rest assured that they're going to have to live with their response for the rest of their lives. At some point in time, if they have a conscience, their actions will haunt them, until they finally get the courage up to make amends for what they've done.

While I won't dispute that there are advantages to God preventing natural disasters before they happen, at the same time, what would such intervention mean? And more importantly, where would it stop? Today, it's preventing natural disasters, tomorrow, it's cancer, the flu, tuberculosis, warts, and finally, a skinned knee. Instead, I say that, while it's true that there's tragedy in a natural disaster, it's also an opportunity for us to show Him our worthiness. After all, anyone can do the right thing when there's no pressure, but it's only when our back's against the wall that we find out our true measure of worth. In fact, didn't the Bible use Job to illustrate this very point?

As far as Angels intervening, I've often wondered about that myself, and I've come up with a number of potential explanations. First, a lot of people underestimate the power of the human mind. With that said, there's a very real possibility that the power was within us all along, and that the circumstances simply allowed us to tap into it. Take the legends of a grandmother lifting a car off her grandchild. Was this Divine Intervention? Or did she simply tap into hidden reserves? What about the person who quits an addiction, like heroin, cold turkey? Again, was this Divine Intervention? Or did he tap into some sort of hidden power that he had all along?

As far as it being "grossly unfair" for an Angel to help one and not the other, this assumes that the Angel(s) in question had both the knowledge of everyone's problems and the power to help everyone at once. I tend to think that if such power exists, then only God Himself has it, not some Angel roaming the Earth. Therefore, if an did indeed step in to help, it would have been offered with limited knowledge and power, in the "heat of the moment," as it were.

Of course, one assumes that the Angel in question was one of God's, and not Satan's. If it were one of Satan's, then you have to ask yourself *why* the Angel stepped in to help. Was it out of an attempt to make amends and regain Grace with God? Or was it for a devious purpose? For example, saving a man yesterday who would go on to father tomorrow's Hitler?

Another point to take into consideration is exactly what free will consists of. Having this power doesn't mean the ability to exercise it when things are going good, but also when the proverbial crap hits the fan. That's when our decisions bear the most weight, showing the world the true worth of the character buried deep within.

Again, I truly enjoyed reading your response, and the questions and comments contained within. There's nothing I like more than an intellectual conversation or even a debate, so please feel free to continue posting your replies, or you can write to me directly.

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