

Are Earthquakes Natural Disasters or the Result of Judgment for Sin?

by Jack Hayford

Earthquakes are a result of sin, but believers can find hope and redemption in Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Genesis 1:31, Genesis 7:11, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 24:4, Luke 13:1, John 3:16, Romans 8:20, Romans 8:26, 1 Peter 3:15, Revelation 21:1

Topics: "Natural Disasters", "Spiritual Redemption"

Description

Jack Hayford preaches on the three assignments every believer has: to show forth good works (Matthew 5:16), shine forth a clear witness (1 Peter 3:15), and sustain a life of effective, spiritually impacting prayer (Romans 8:26-28). He discusses the spiritual roots of earthquakes, the impact of sin on creation, and the need for settled, focused believers amid crisis. Hayford emphasizes that all brokenness, including natural disasters, is a result of sin and separation from God, but believers can find hope and redemption in Jesus Christ.

Transcript

There are three assignments every believer has: (1) to show forth good works (Matt. 5:16);

(2) to shine forth a clear witness (1 Peter 3:15); and (3) to sustain a life of effective, spiritually impacting prayer (Romans 8:26-28). In the aftermath of any earthquake, each of us need to

have our souls settled. While everything else is shaking, certain verities sustain those who

know God and His Word. And only as those truths are settled in the mind can the soul (mind/emotions/will) manage to function with wisdom, peace, and a holy resolve. It's unto that goal--settled, focused believers, effective amid crisis--that I offer this today.

The direct answer to the double question in the title is "Yes." "Yes," earthquakes are natural, and "Yes," earthquakes are the result of sin--that is, they are essentially spiritual at their root reason for happening. Let me give a brief summary, necessarily incomplete in elaboration to fit this space, but still basic to set clear thinkers on line.

First: God created this world as "very good" (Genesis 1:31), and specific mention is made that all the land/water was "in one place" at creation (Genesis 1:9). What God revealed in this regard in His Word,

1400 B.C. as Moses wrote Genesis under the Holy Spirit's inspiration, science confirmed less than 40 years ago when geophysical studies verified that Earth's land mass was originally one--a place science has named "Pangea" ("all the earth").

Second: Mankind was assigned the rule, oversight, and development of Earth under God; a situation which was damaged and drastically changed in every respect with allowance of sin to enter through human disobedience. This altered everything: (1) man's relationship with God and rulership over creation was broken; (2) life, health, and the biological order were negatively impacted; and (3) the whole planet came under the curse of brokenness and disintegration (Rom. 8:20-22).

Third: The eventual dividing of the earth, with sliding tectonic plates and the resultant quakes caused by this broken eggshell of a planet we living on, was as direct a result of the fall of man as were our sins that separated us from God. The Bible reveals the earth's condition was originally different and became divided (Gen. 10:25), and that the setting of the tectonic plates in motion, occurred at the time of the Flood (Gen. 7:11; 2 Pet. 3:5-6).

Fourth: Remembering that the Bible is not given to us to be a textbook of science, but a guidebook unto salvation and spiritual recovery, we don't expect details on these matters, but there is revelation. The fact is this: All brokenness is the result of sin. Whether it is man's broken relationship with God or a brokenness in nature (which brings natural disasters as well as all else that poisons our planet)--all is the bitter fruit of sin.

Fifth: All aspects of the curse then are the result of man's fall and not the design of God's original creative order. God cannot be blamed for what mankind has allowed to invade an originally perfect order. The whole spectrum of fallenness/brokenness is due to the wholesale impact of sin, separating this planet and its inhabitants from the Creator. However, when harmful things happen, they are judgements, indeed. That is, they are a part of the bitter fruit of sin in its general impact on the race--not selectively administered by God as vendettas, but as part of sin's tragic impact on what God made. (Lk. 13:1-5)

Sixth: "Is God judging the place where the earthquake took place?" The answer is possibly. Many years ago, the City of Los Angeles, specifically Northridge and surrounding areas, experienced a large earthquake. Given the sequence of things which have come upon this City in recent years, we would be foolish to overlook an apparent fact, the concentration of sin, human arrogance, and calculated evil which is too welcomed and propagated from this City may well have come to its hour of accounting. How should a believer respond? (1) Like Jonah learned, don't run from the City but rush to it; a larger deserved judgment can be reversed (note God's mercy on the humble, needy, and helpless of a city, Jonah 4:11). (2) As Jeremiah said to sensitive believers "seek the peace of the City..pray for it...(and) you will find peace" (Jer. 29:7).

Seventh: All natural and social disaster (for that matter--any human sinning) should still be an occasion for repentance, prayer, and a call to return to God. At the same time, all such occasions should call for praise to God for His mercies (1 Lam. 3:22). It isn't superstition that notes manifest evidences of protection, prevention, and divine presence during disasters.

Eighth: The only antidote to all human need is the redemption that has been provided us in Jesus Christ, the Son of God (John 3:16). He sent His Son to save and forgive us, first--restoring relationship with Him. Thus, the serpent's original goal--the destruction of the race--has been frustrated (Rom. 6:23).

Ninth: There is no promise that anyone shall find perfection of the recovery of all sin has lost as long as we are in this world. But we are promised Christ's presence and comfort all our lives (John 16:33; Matt. 28:18-20; Psalm 23 and 91; Jn. 10:10; I Tim. 6:17).

Tenth: The only time complete recovery will be realized on this broken planet will be when it is completely renewed by the Creator (Rev. 21:1-8).

In the meantime, let us observe the first three duties we as His redeemed are assigned (see opening paragraphs). And let us remember that every earthquake fulfills a prophecy that brings us one step closer to our dear Savior's return. Let this promise bring hope (Matt. 24:4-14; 32-44; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; I John 3:1-2).

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