

Does God Direct the Weather?

From: **In Defense of My Father:**

Toward a Better Understanding of the Sovereignty of God

Taken from Chapter 5: Principles of God's Sovereign Kingdom
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Nature in Motion

Throughout history, primitive peoples have attributed astrological, geological, and weather events to their gods being pleased or angry with them. Although this thinking is based on pagan practices, there are sovereign events such as these recorded in the Bible in which God orchestrated nature to further His plan for His people, such as the Flood, the parting of the Red Sea, and the day “the sun stood still.” However, modern-day Christians have become entirely too superstitious when it comes to these events, attaching meaning that is unlikely to exist or attributing every nod of nature as the voice of God.

For example, a tornado devastates an entire town's infrastructure, and you will hear people say such things such as, “God is trying to get our attention,” or “I must have survived for a reason. God must have something for me to do.” The truth is that God sent His Son to die for us to get our attention. He already has a plan for our lives and communicates that to our hearts apart from any weather event. He leads us by His Spirit, not circumstances.

Nature is constantly in motion, and there are certain observable facts that teach us how the earth behaves. The earth rotates once every day. It goes around the sun in a prescribed route once every year. Each planet has its own course without crashing into another. When the moon is between the Earth and the sun, we have a solar eclipse, and when the Earth is between the sun and the moon, we have a lunar eclipse. Comets come within our view, and while we know a star was used by God to point to the location of the birth of Christ, most of the events that happen around us are simple, predictable features of nature that God set in motion.

Genesis 1:14-16

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; ¹⁵ and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. ¹⁶ Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.

He made the stars also. What a modest statement considering that in our galaxy alone it is estimated that there are 100,000,000,000 (100 billion) stars.

While God is capable of causing lightning to strike in a specific location and instances of this are recorded in Scripture (Ex. 9:23-24, Job 36:30-33), He does not sit in heaven telling each lightning bolt where to go. Lightning occurs for predictable reasons that have to do with the weather conditions. If you stand in an open field in the middle of a lightning storm, there is a high probability that you will be struck—not by God—but because that’s how lightning works.

Pressure builds up in a volcano, and it eventually erupts. The Earth’s surface is constantly moving, and when enough pressure builds up between its tectonic plates, mighty earthquakes will take place. When this happens on the ocean floor, tsunamis can form, sending powerful waves of devastation to the shores. Lightning is a completely natural occurrence. Tornadoes also follow a very specific sequence before they form. Hurricanes naturally form and gain strength as they travel over warm seas.

Even knowing that these natural events happen, people still build homes in the path of a volcano or on the edge of an unstable cliff. When warned that a Category 5 hurricane is headed their way, instead of evacuating, people often decide to remain in its path hoping for “the best.”

“When thunder roars, go indoors,” we are warned, but how many people have died or been injured because they didn’t heed this warning? People drive on icy roads, climb unstable cliffs, and engage in dangerous activities and “sports.” When the natural consequence occurs, some people are surprised that God didn’t protect them.

If you drive without a seatbelt, you are not only ignoring the law in many places but also the fact that if the car is going 65 mph, so is your body. If the car must suddenly stop, your body does not. It continues to move at 65 mph and will be thrown through the window. If you are attached to the car that is stopping and restrained by the seatbelt, you have a better chance of survival. Yet, people still drive without their seatbelts. They get drunk and drive thinking they can handle it, and the result is often a senseless tragedy. These events have nothing to do with God “teaching us a lesson.”

Still, even Christians continue attributing events in nature and unwise choices of human beings to God instead of recognizing that planet Earth has observable and predictable events which we are wise to avoid.