

Question: Why does God do some things the way he does? I wish I could understand.

In the face of life's turmoil, our most common question becomes "Why"? We follow up by asking, "Lord, why is this happening to me." We cry, "Will you help me to understand? Maybe then I can handle life better." Just as Job when faced with loss of family, property and health cried, "Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you?" (Job 7:20) and "Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy?" (Job 13:24). Sixteen times he asked God why these things had happened. But God never answered his "why" questions. Instead, God asked Job a series of questions. These questions caused Job to reflect on God's goodness and care for his creation, leading him to trust the Lord even when he did not understand everything.

While we may long for our Lord to reveal more to us than he does, we need to remember that because he is God he has no obligation to explain anything he does. The prophet Isaiah commented: "O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8). At another time he said: "Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker . . . Does the clay say to the potter, 'What are you making?'" (Isaiah 45:9). Our relationship with God is based on faith and not sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). Faith would be eliminated if God were to explain everything. We must learn to trust him instead of our own understanding.

Furthermore, we would not be able to understand everything that God does and why he does it. The Lord himself said: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). To enable us to understand his ways, the Lord would need to help us grasp his purposes and patterns which unite events past, present and future into a perfect whole. Imagining putting together a trillion piece jigsaw puzzle, might begin to give us an idea of what God is doing and has done.

I doubt that we would be satisfied even if God tried to answer all of our questions. Like children who repeatedly ask "why" to every answer their parents give, we would continue to have questions. There is no answer that can bring satisfaction apart from faith in the gracious care of our almighty God and his son, Jesus

Christ our Savior. I'm not suggesting that we must blindly trust in the presence and love of God. We have been provided sufficient information for us to know that God exists and that he is good and dependable. Each one of us must weigh the evidence and decide whether or not we are ready to trust him. We must either trust in a God who is all-knowing, all-powerful and present everywhere or else we will end up trusting in a world that functions by blind fate and random molecules wandering around in space. Which makes sense to you? Jesus told doubting Thomas: "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29).

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