

Fighting Against God

I'm pretty sure someone is going to be offended by this. Sorry if it's you. This is my belief.

In the Bible we read of many times where a nation goes against God in some way, either Israel itself is disobedient or a surrounding nation goes against God's people, or captures the Ark, or takes prisoners. Usually God's response is to plunge the offending nation into some kind of "natural" disaster. Famines, drought, outbreaks of disease, or even being invaded themselves by some other nation.

And usually he wasn't doing that as a way of punishing them, so much as it was a way of disciplining them so they would return to following him, or turn to him and realise he is the one true God and the gods they worship are just worthless idols.

So, when I see modern nations suffering from famine, drought, disease, war, poverty... I wonder, "is this God's discipline on that country? Is God trying to get their attention?"

If it is, then we need to be very careful what we do about it. If we just try to overcome their suffering by sending food or money or doctors... then aren't we fighting against God?

If God is trying to get their attention, then we can help, not by sending aid, but by sending missionaries. By telling them, "Hey, God is trying to get your attention. Turn to him and your problem will go away."

Now, James, (chapter 2), says that we shouldn't just wish suffering people well, but we should also provide for them. (Although he is talking about brothers and sisters). But I would agree, that if I come to someone who is hungry because God is disciplining their nation with a famine and say, "Go in peace, God loves you", it will be better received if I give them a bowl of rice as well. So I would support missionaries who are taking the word of God to the nation and trying to get them to turn to God, who also provide physical assistance. Even in my country, the Salvation Army are well known for caring for the poor, but they are also well known as representing Yeshua. It's not just a handout.

I also support missionaries and organisations who preach Yeshua and also help children. Whatever the nations sin, it wasn't the current children who committed it. They are the nations opportunity to do better in the next generation. So again, I see these groups, (like Compassion), who are preaching the gospel and helping children as working with God, not fighting against him.

There are many passages in the Bible where God encourages us, (in fact commands us), to give to the poor. But did he mean the poor everywhere or just the poor Jews/Christians?

In the first century there was a famine in Jerusalem, and Paulus asked Christians to gather money as an offering for them. But again this was an offering to Christians who were suffering. Not for the whole nation. I think that anytime we are giving just to provide physical needs, then it must be used only for our brothers and sisters.

So, this is how I see it. God wants us to provide for the physical needs of other Christians who are in these nations where God is trying to get everyone's attention. And to alleviate physical suffering as a supporting "evidence" that our gospel is true. But I honestly believe that if we just try to alleviate the physical problem of the nation without making it clear that they need to repent, then we are fighting against God.