



Natural Disasters and the Problem of Evil

Prof Robert (Bob) White

We live in a world where the same natural processes that make it habitable can turn round and bite us, killing thousands or even hundreds of thousands of people. Natural disasters pull us up sharp and make us face head-on the hard questions of life and death. They challenge humankind's hubris that we can control our environment. For theists they raise the hard question of how an all-powerful, all-loving God can allow such things to happen. I shall address the issues of what causes natural disasters, and to what extent they are exacerbated or in many cases even caused by human actions. This leads us on to the question of evil in the world: is the presence of evil an inherent feature of life on earth or can responsibility for it to be laid at the hands of humans?

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