

Teen Talk

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Where is God in Coronavirus?

The truth is that without prophecy we don't know if an event is God interrupting the natural order of events or just the way events play out according to nature. We don't have to know though. Our response to good events should always be to offer thanks to God, for even if God didn't interrupt the natural order of the world for our benefit, we did benefit, and for that we owe gratitude.

The same is true of tragedy. We don't know if our sins caused the spread of Corona. We do know that if we merited God's providence, we'd be saved from the effects of disease. It is also true that there is always room for improvement. Whether or not Corona is a Divine punishment, our response must be the same, repentance and self-improvement.

The Rambam wrote of those who ignore disastrous world events and chalk them up instead to "just the way of the world." He called it cruel, writing, "But if they do not [do teshuva, repent], but rather say, "What has happened to us is the way of the world, and this trouble is merely happenstance" - it is surely

the way of cruelty, and it causes them to stick to their bad deeds. And the trouble will add other troubles. About this is it written in the Torah, "but walk arbitrarily with Me. Then I will (also) walk arbitrarily with you in fury." That is to say, "When I will bring upon you troubles - if you will say that it is arbitrary, I will increase the fury of this arbitrariness."

We don't know if God is specifically causing Corona, but we can bring God into our Corona discussions, and we should. We should take all the precautions that our health care providers are instructing, but we must also pray and repent. We should discuss God's role with our families. We should encourage (in a positive, pleasant manner) that they repent as well. Each of us should choose one area of improvement and take it on. Today. In this way, we can hope to merit God's help in stopping the spread of this disease.