

What is God Up To?

(A Question About Pain)

I want you to picture the most complicated machine ever built. For my money, it's the space shuttle. The space shuttle has over 2.5 million parts. We could talk about the 230 miles of wiring, 1000+ plumbing valves and connections, and 1,440 circuits, but let's just focus on the number of parts: 2.5 million. Each of those parts had to be designed and assembled. So let's choose one part to focus on, like one of the switches on the flight deck.



A switch seems pretty simple: a small plastic casing holding a toggle switch and metal connectors. That small piece of plastic had to be molded by someone—and the machine he used to mold that plastic had to be designed by someone.

Consequently, the various pieces needed to make the plastic-molding machine had to also be designed and built by someone. And each of the tools needed to build each of the parts of the machine that made the plastic molding machine had to be designed and invented.

Does your head hurt yet? Let's talk about the power needed to run the tools that built the parts of the machine that built the plastic-molding machine that built the switch. To get electricity to the factory requires wires, insulation for those wires, transformers, huge power plants, and a lot of exercise wheels for the thousands of running gerbils creating the power. (Maybe it's coal in your area.)

And someone had to design all those things, which required at the very least a pencil and piece of paper. But even then, someone had to turn wood pulp into paper, and that process requires machines with lots of moving parts which had to be designed and built using other tools and parts which had to be ...

Whew. We can carry this out to the nth degree for the number of people and a countless number of designs, parts, and man hours needed to give us a simple plastic toggle switch. Multiply that by the 2.5 million parts in the space shuttle, and the number of people and designs involved are beyond counting!

The human body is far more complex than a space shuttle, yet it has only one Designer. Furthermore, God did not go to

others for the individual parts of our bodies. He created those parts Himself—down to each of the seven billion billion atoms in each of us.

Shall we talk about the complexity of each of those atoms?

You get my point. God, in His infinite power and wisdom, pulled all this off singlehandedly. We have no problem seeing His incredible wisdom in the created world around us, but His wisdom is harder to see in the way He works in the world around us—and in our own lives. When we suffer, we wonder where God is. We want to know why?

In the Old Testament, Job did the same thing. When God finally answered, hoo boy, did Job get an earful from God. God didn't answer Job directly; instead He asked Job a lot of questions about creation. Job had only one response:

"Surely I spoke about things I did not understand, things too wondrous for me to know" (Job 42:3).

We can't begin to understand the wisdom of God displayed in creation, so what makes us think we would understand the wisdom of God in other areas? God doesn't always work in our lives the way we think He should work, but that does not make God absent or uncaring. Far from it. He is with us and He does care even when we don't understand.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways." This is the Lord's declaration. "For as heaven is higher than earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).

I know God's way of working is different from mine, but if He would just explain what He's doing, I'd be content.

You think so? Over and over again in Scripture, we see that "his understanding is infinite" (Ps. 147:5). It's like a scientist lecturing a three-year-old on why the sun is yellow. The three-year-old may hear the words, but he doesn't understand. In the same way, we can't begin to understand God's ways or God's wisdom. We can go ahead and ask, but let's be satisfied whether we receive an answer or not. In those moments when we don't know what God is up to, let's trust.

- Trust His wisdom.
- Trust His goodness.
- Trust His unseen hand.
- Trust.

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