

Study Guide: Where Was God?

This study guide is designed for families and Bible study groups to explore the themes of divine protection, preparation, sacrificial love, and God's justice during times of crisis, as presented in Alan Drake's article *"Where Was God?"*

Part 1: Group Discussion Questions

These thought-provoking questions are organized by theme to help guide your family or group through a deep study of the text.

Theme 1: Demonstrating God's Love vs. Intellectual Arguments

- **Discussion Question:** The author states that he has "little patience" for intellectual arguments regarding the existence of God, believing instead that God's existence should be demonstrated through His power and love.
 - How does seeing God's love demonstrated in tangible, real-world actions impact faith differently than participating in abstract or intellectual debates?
 - In what ways can believers demonstrate God's love and power during times of community crisis?

Theme 2: Sacrificial Love and Comfort Out of Loss

- **Discussion Question:** Consider the story of Kayla Carmona and her father during the Joplin, Missouri tornado.
 - Kayla's father used his own body to shield his family and others for an hour under fallen rubble, dying only after ensuring everyone was rescued and telling his daughter he loved her. What does his ultimate sacrifice teach us about Christlike love and endurance?
 - How did Kayla's personal experience with tragedy equip her to comfort and build strong bonds with the citizens of Moore, Oklahoma? How can our own past trials prepare us to help others?

Theme 3: Protection and Divine Intervention in the Storm

- **Discussion Question:** Reflecting on the Dallas tornadoes of December 26, 2015, the author notes that while surrounding apartments were destroyed, his nephew's second-floor apartment was entirely untouched—down to the

patio furniture on the balcony. At the same time, eleven people tragically lost their lives, mostly in vehicles.

- How should believers process instances of miraculous physical protection alongside real loss and tragedy in a fallen world?
- What evidence of God's care and mercy does the author highlight even when surveying widespread destruction?

Theme 4: Spiritual "Wake-Up Calls" and Proactive Preparation

- **Discussion Question:** The author describes a dream from September 14, 2014, involving the song "*Wake Up Little Susie*" by the Everly Brothers, which prompted him to meet with church leaders and align with disaster response organizations months before the storm hit.
 - Why is it important to pay attention to divine "wake-up calls" or warnings to prepare for changing circumstances?
 - The author compares his preparation to Pharaoh's response to warning dreams in Genesis 41. How does proactive preparation position individuals and churches to take on leadership roles and serve on the "front lines" when a crisis occurs?

Theme 5: Recompense, Justice, and the Story of Job

- **Discussion Question:** In his October 9 newsletter quote, the author addresses why a loving God allows evil and tragedy into the lives of His children, pointing to the concept of divine *recompense*.
 - According to the source, why is an understanding of God's *justice* necessary to reconcile how a good God can allow temporary suffering?
 - How does the story of Job—who received twice as much as he lost—offer hope to those who have suffered unjust losses?

Part 2: Comprehension Quiz

Test your knowledge of the events, figures, and concepts detailed in the text.

Multiple Choice

1. What was the magnitude of the tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma on May 20, 2013? a) EF3 b) EF4 c) EF5 d) EF2
2. How many children were killed in the two elementary schools struck by the Moore, Oklahoma tornado? a) 24 b) 7 c) 14 d) 11
3. What was written on the old 45 single record in the author's dream on September 14, 2014? a) "Help Is On the Way" b) "Wake Up Little Susie" c) "Stories of Hope" d) "Adventures with God"
4. Where were most of the eleven people who died during the December 26 Dallas tornadoes located when the storm hit? a) In elementary schools b) In apartment complexes c) In vehicles on the road d) Inside church buildings
5. Which biblical leader is cited as an example of preparing in advance for a crisis based on warning dreams? a) Job b) Joseph c) Pharaoh d) Moses

Short Answer & Fill-in-the-Blank

1. **Fill in the Blank:** Kayla Carmona was a 14-year-old girl from _____ who traveled to Moore, Oklahoma, to comfort storm victims.
2. **Short Answer:** Describe the condition of the author's nephew's apartment when he returned to it two days after the Dallas tornadoes.
3. **Fill in the Blank:** In his October 9 newsletter, the author writes that God allows temporary injustice because He knows it will allow Him, in His justice, to provide _____ that far surpasses what was lost, just as _____ received twice as much as he had before the tragedy.
4. **Short Answer:** What specific instruction did the author receive just after midnight following the Dallas tornadoes, and from which organization did it come?

Part 3: Quiz Answer Key

Question	Correct Answer	Source Reference / Explanation
1	c) EF5	The text specifies an "EF5 tornado touched down that day with winds peaking at over 200 mph."
2	b) 7	The tornado plowed through two elementary schools "where seven children were killed."
3	b) "Wake Up Little Susie"	The author saw a record label reading "Little Susie" and then the full title, "Wake Up Little Susie" by the Everly Brothers.
4	c) In vehicles on the road	The text notes that "most of those who lost their lives were not in those homes. They were in vehicles that were caught on the road when the tornadoes hit."
5	c) Pharaoh	"When Pharaoh responded appropriately to the warning he was given in his dreams in Genesis 41, and began preparing in earnest..."
6	Joplin, Missouri	Kayla Carmona was a 14-year-old girl from Joplin, Missouri, where her family had survived a tornado two years earlier.
7	Untouched / Undamaged	The nephew found his 2nd-floor apartment completely untouched; even the patio furniture on his balcony had not moved a single inch, despite neighboring apartments being destroyed.
8	Recompense; Job	"...allow Him, in His justice, to repay us [make recompense available] in ways that far surpass what we had before! Job received twice as much as he had before..."

9	Instructions on when/where to report from the Dallas Office of Emergency Management	Just after midnight, the author received email messages from the Dallas Office of Emergency Management giving clear instructions on when and where to report to help those affected.
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Part 4: Glossary

- **Dallas Tornadoes (December 26, 2015):** A storm system occurring the night after Christmas in which at least nine tornadoes touched down around Dallas, Texas, causing widespread destruction, destroying hundreds of homes, and resulting in 11 deaths.
- **EF5 Tornado:** The highest rating on the Enhanced Fujita scale for tornadoes, characterized by winds peaking at over 200 mph. Referenced in connection to both the Moore, Oklahoma and Joplin, Missouri disasters.
- **Genesis 41 (Pharaoh's Example):** A biblical reference to Pharaoh taking appropriate action and preparing his nation in earnest after receiving prophetic warning dreams about an upcoming crisis, positioning his country in a unique global leadership role.
- **Job:** A biblical figure cited in the text who suffered immense, tragic loss and destruction allowed by God, but who ultimately received divine recompense amounting to double what he had before the tragedy.
- **Kayla Carmona:** A 14-year-old girl from Joplin, Missouri, whose father died shielding his family in a leveled church. She later traveled to Moore, Oklahoma, to offer comfort to tornado survivors and eventually moved there.
- **Moore, Oklahoma Tornado (May 20, 2013):** A devastating EF5 tornado that remained on the ground for 39 minutes, destroying 1,100 homes and two elementary schools, injuring over 200 people, and causing 24 fatalities.
- **Recompense:** Repayment, compensation, or restitution made for loss, damage, or suffering. In the text, it refers to God's ultimate justice in restoring far more than what was temporarily lost during unjust suffering or tragedy.
- **"Wake Up Little Susie" Dream:** A prophetic dream experienced by Alan Drake on September 14, 2014, involving an Everly Brothers song title and a

crying church member. It served as a spiritual warning to prepare church leaders and members for coming crises.

- Where Was God? Stories of Hope After the Storm:* A documentary film focusing on the personal stories of survivors of the May 20, 2013 tornado in Moore, Oklahoma, illustrating how God demonstrates His love in tangible ways during tragic events.