JEWISH THOUGHT: Yesha’ayahu vs The Lord of the Rings

Last week (see **this**) we began to explore the complex question: “Why bad things happen to good people?” We explained that according to our tradition, Moshe Rabbenu was the only human being who had access to God while he was conscious and awake. This state of mind provided him with an opportunity to ask God a question. (Ex.33:18) “Show me how do You administrate Your Justice”. Moshe Rabbenu, like probably many other intelligent believers, had a difficult time coping with seeing righteous men suffer. If God is All Good and Almighty, then a good man should not be suffering. Unless, 1. God is not righteous or 2. There is another god behind tragedies. (□”□).

This matter, theodicy, is the main origin of many (probably most) pagan cults and beliefs. People in antiquity -heathens- believed that the gods struggled among themselves and when the evil gods (=gods of darkness) prevailed, bad things happened to good people (a modern version of this idea could be found in the famous “The Lord of the Rings”). Even those who denied the existence of multiple gods believed that *at least* two god must exist (Manichaeism,etc.”shete reshuyot”). One from whom all good and blessings comes from, and the other god who is the source of all tragedies.

Jewish Monotheism implies, among other things, the belief that although its understanding escapes our mental capacities, all things are under the control of One God.

No one expressed this belief better than the prophet Yesha’ayahu. At a time in which the whole world believed in a constant struggle between the forces of evil/darkness against the forces of light/goodness, he proclaimed (Is. 45:7 *yotzer or ubore hoshekh…*): This is what HaShem says: “I form the light and I create darkness, I bring prosperity and I create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things”.

Although we don’t understand why bad things happen to good people, we acknowledge, to begin with, that there is no an alternative power to HaShem. Nor gods, wizards or idols to appease… HaShem is in total control and He is the only One we need to address.

Talks of renewing the peace process???

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How will hostile Muslim societies guarantee peace to Jewish Israel?