

FOR THE GOOD OF THE HOUSEHOLD

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WHY, GOD?

Prior to December 26, few people in the United States ever heard the word “tsunami.” I dare say that there has not been a day since when something about the tsunami has not been seen on television, not heard on the radio, or not read in a newspaper.

That one strange and unfamiliar word has come to represent one of the worst disasters to have occurred on the face of the earth during our time. 200,000 people may have died and millions of others affected, due to a 750 by 60 mile section of the earth’s crust on the ocean floor being pushed up almost 20 feet. This resulted in a surge of seawater, traveling at the speed of a jet plane, to hit as many as 12 Asian countries. What followed was the obliteration of both villages and resorts, affecting both the poor and the rich, touching the lives of citizens from many countries.

It all began with a massive earthquake under the Indian Ocean with 23,000 times the energy of the bomb that we humans dropped on Hiroshima. Such a fact prompted Steve Chapman in the Chicago Tribune to say that nature is more of a merciless killer than most blood-thirsty tyrants. And, James Carroll in The Boston Globe is reported as posing the following question: “If Earth itself is the enemy of humanity, where is the friend?”

We should not wonder, then, that people are asking: “Why, God?” “Why did you do this to us, God?” “What did we do to upset You?” After all, God is supposed to be our friend.

Actually, it is about time that the question has been asked. All too often and too long have we attempted to provide answers to questions for which we have no answers. It is time that we stop acting like God and acknowledge that there are forces and powers beyond us.

Within that context, we need to recognize that a Supreme Power (Who has to love his own creation) would not deliberately cause pain to occur. While a Supreme Being has the power to stop any action, which otherwise occurs in the natural sequence of events, it is not normative for God to do so. Nevertheless, that same God has given human beings the ability to protect themselves, if they would only use the faculties with which they have been endowed.

Certainly, human beings did not cause the tsunami, which is actually beyond any human capability. And, God would not intentionally devise a way of visiting hurt upon humanity, the apex of a creation prompted by love. However, God does not write in single words or sentences but in whole chapters and even volumes, thus allowing events to affect the lives of individuals for the good of whole communities.

Perhaps unprecedented in our time, nations from around the globe are aiding the nations affected by the tsunami, and, in cooperation with each other. Yet, every day, human beings endure unspeakable suffering in various parts of the world and the rest of humanity stands by seemingly idle. Disease, genocide, famine and even war do not appear to get our attention. We could have control over these if we worked at it. But, an event in the face of which we are powerless moves us into action. How paradoxical that is!

While God is not to be blamed for the aftermath of the tsunami, humanity could be, - as it is being awakened once again to the God-given dignity that it possesses all along.