

-- A Reality Checklist to the World --

CATASTROPHE: THE BIGGER PICTURE

Invoking God's Name and Asking 'Why Would He Allow This to Happen?'

Replayed video clips reveal first reactions, *"Oh my God!" "My God!" "The world is coming to an end!"* And for tens of thousands it did come to an immediate and permanent earthly end – in one moment of time. For millions of others it was just the beginning of their desperate and agonizing fight for survival – just to stay alive.

On January 12, 2010 the magnitude 7.0 earthquake which struck Haiti just outside its capital city of Port-au-Prince was devastating and immense – in lives lost, property destroyed, and families displaced. First reports slowly filtered out into rest of the world: *"Untold numbers have died." "Unknown magnitude of destruction." "Uncontrolled chaos and screams of shock and suffering in the streets and in the rubble."*

Soon we were hearing their heartbreaking cries. *"We've lost everything!" "We don't have anything!" "We need everything!" "Where is the help?" "We need help!"* And from a young adult Haitian man in agonizing pain, *"God, why do you allow this on me? Why? Why? Why? Why?"* A woman cries over her baby's body, *"God no! God no! I'm lost!"*

As many in Haiti and around the world invoke the Name of God in shock and horror they also begin to ask,

- "Why would an all powerful and loving God allow His creation to experience so much death and suffering?"
- "If God is in 'control' of everything then why would He allow this deadly catastrophe or *any* earthly disaster?"
- "Why would I want to know God better or make him known better, that is, if He cannot prevent such anguish?"
- "If God withholds His love from us then why should we want to share His 'gospel truth' with anyone?"

The world responds impressively with rescue, relief, recovery, and rebuilding efforts. Many individuals, groups, organizations, and countries send humanitarian aid and assistance – rescue and recovery teams, medical care and water, food and clothing, bedding and shelter. As President Obama stated, *"This time of suffering demands a time of compassion. We stand united as a people and with the world to help in this time of crisis."* Former President George H.W. Bush added, *"Our hearts are broken to see the death, destruction, and suffering of the people of Haiti."* Former President Bill Clinton elaborated, *"Tragedies can bring out the best of the human spirit. While the earthquake destroyed a lot, it didn't destroy their spirit. They can escape their history and build a better tomorrow. We will help."* Clinton and Bush were tasked to raise and manage recovery funds. (www.ClintonBushHaitiFund.org)

As the people of Haiti begin to raise their human spirits in hope to say, *"Little by little we will arrive again"*, more skeptical questions about God's compassion, or lack thereof, grow widely and do not get answered in any meaningful or understandable way for most people. Yet, this **Reality Checklist of questions** might begin to help:

1. __Y __N Isn't it true that we all tend to reject God's authority in favor of maintaining our own individual autonomy?
2. __Y __N Isn't it true that we tend to question God's motives when things appear to thwart our self-serving desires?
3. __Y __N Is it possible to understand God's motives and purpose if we continue to reject His Word as Truth?
4. __Y __N Is it possible to understand God's motives and purpose if we don't strive to truly understand His Word?
5. __Y __N Can the Truth make us free – free from guilt due to our sin – if we continue to make a case against Truth?
6. __Y __N Can we gain true peace, purpose, and fulfillment if we continue to reject the very Truth which can free us?
7. __Y __N Can we truly help others gain lasting peace, purpose, and fulfillment if we first don't truly gain it ourselves?
8. __Y __N Isn't it true that lasting hope cannot be gained from man alone, but only from the One who made it all?
9. __Y __N Can we gain true peace and freedom if we don't first *admit* that we are the greatest obstacle to Truth?
10. __Y __N Should we expect consequences for our unbridled behavior and blatant rejection of God's Truth?

There will be much said and done about Haiti's earthquake of January 2010, and there will be many questions left unanswered, even as many say they are determined to understand. But how many actually will... *understand?*

Finally, we ask, *'What were God's motives and purpose in the Global Catastrophic Flood just 4300 years ago?'*

You can try to better sort it all out by checking our Reality Check Series (Agenda Check, Reality Check, Worldview Check, Values Check, Attitude Check, Wisdom Check) on our website at www.BiggerPicture.org then go deeper into self evaluation by clicking on any of the "What Are You Hooked On?" icons. And you may contact our staff with any comments or inquiries there, as well. Eternal regards from the Staff of the Bigger Picture Foundation. #