

The Tsunami -Why?

A common question raised is: **‘Why did God allow it?’** For some it is an excuse for unbelief, for them to blame God. Some church-leaders (under liberal theology) say that we can’t answer this question, giving the impression that the Bible has nothing to say about it. This makes God look bad and themselves look good, as they express their compassion for the suffering while remaining puzzled at why God allows such things. But rather than being on the defensive, we should use such occasions to glorify God and share the Gospel with those who will listen. The Bible has much to say about suffering and gives us a full and satisfactory explanation of such things.

I. The Bible predicts these things will happen

(as well as much worse to come in the Tribulation).

Jesus said: **“Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom (World-Wars). There will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows (Birth-Pains)”** (Matt 24:7,8).

“And they (Israel) will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations (fulfilled AD 70).

And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the Times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (fulfilled 1967).

Then He describes the Birth-Pains of the Tribulation:

And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken

(the axis of the earth was tipped by the earthquake).
Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (the Second-Coming of Christ).
Now when these things (the Birth-Pains) **begin to happen** (in a pregnancy there are Braxton-Hicks contractions that happen just before the main Birth-Pains),
look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption (the Pre-Tribulational Rapture of the Church) **draws near"** (Luke 21:24-28). The full Birth-Pains belong to the Tribulation, with the Kingdom of God about to be born on earth. But the beginnings of these Pains (similar in nature but not as intense) will happen in the time just before the Tribulation and will continually increase in size and frequency until their climax in the Tribulation. The continuing increase of these pains (e.g. earthquakes) over the last century shows that we are in this time now.

II. These things tell us something terrible has gone wrong.

The purpose of PAIN is to tell us when something is out of order. Without it we live in a dangerous state of deception. Now there is nothing wrong with God (either with His love or power). Therefore there must be something wrong with man, who was given power and authority over the earth (as well as over his own life) by God (Genesis 1:26). Imagine buying a good car and ignoring the maker's instructions in the handbook and driving it on diesel instead of petrol! Then when it goes wrong you complain! When you were given the charge of it, you were free to use it as you wanted and you had the responsibility for what happened to it and it was your fault when it broke down. It was running on the wrong power source. Man and the earth was designed to live on 'God-power', but when man sinned and chose to turn his back on God, he died spiritually (as God warned him) and

was cut off from God life, and he and his domain (the earth) came under the power of the curse (of disruption and death), with satan now the god of this world. The pain of the curse is not God's fault, but the consequence of man's sin. God made the world perfect and gave man free-will (dominion) over his life and the earth. While man ruled it under God, it operated perfectly. But when man sinned, God was cut out and it began to break down (man is not designed to live without God, neither is the earth). The result of sin was the curse under which we still labour.

III. The Curse (the automatic consequence of sin) was announced by God in Genesis 3:14-19.

This curse came in fulfilment of the warning in Genesis 2:17:

“In the day that you eat of it (sin) you shall surely die (literally: ‘dying (spiritually), you will die (physically).”

The CURSE of SIN is DESTRUCTION and DEATH: spiritual death resulting in physical death for man, and disharmony in the creation over which he had been given dominion by God. Blessing is the presence (life) of God - the result of righteousness. The Curse (death) is the absence of God and His blessing - it is the result of sin.

1. Spiritual death was immediately experienced by Adam and was inherited by those born from him.

2. Suffering and disorder in the ANIMAL KINGDOM, for it was under Adam: **“So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life”** (3:14). All animals (especially the snake) came under the curse. This is why nature is ‘red in tooth and

claw.’ This will only reversed when Christ, the Second Adam reigns upon the earth.

3. Spiritual oppression (darkness) and warfare over mankind, for Adam’s sin opened the door for satan’s kingdom to rule over the world (2Cor 4:4), resulting in a continual spiritual conflict between the kingdom of God and satan over all of mankind: **“I will put enmity between you (satan) and the woman (mankind), and between your seed (those in satan) and her Seed (those in Christ)”** (v15a).

4. BIRTH-PAINS for women: **“To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children”**(v16a).

This is an example of the physical pains and problems that result from man’s sin. This reveals that all ‘Birth-Pains’ (of which pregnancy pains are but a type), originate from man sin (they are not from God, but come from the absence of God). This confirms that the end-time birth-pains upon the earth are part of the curse caused by man’s sin.

5. STRIFE among men and women, especially in marriage, generally resulting in male domination.

“Your desire (to control) shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you” (v16b).

6. The EARTH, which was put under Adam, was also cursed, so that now constant hard-work and sweat is required to produce results, resulting in a constant fight against poverty and lack (like swimming upstream): **“To Adam He said, “Because you have sinned: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of**

your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground” (v17-19a). This proves man’s sin brought the curse upon the earth, hence earthquakes!

7. Sickness and Physical Death: “for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (v19b). Without Christ, the process of spiritual and physical death would end in eternal death.

But at the same time as God announced the CURSE,
He also promised to send the MESSIAH who would bring
SALVATION from sin, satan and the curse:

“He (the Seed of the woman) shall bruise your head, and you (satan) shall bruise His heel” (v15b). The key to the work of the Messiah is that He comes to reverse the curse, destroying the power of satan whose darkness was now dominating the world. Satan had released the poison of sin into the human race, and this was the root cause of all the curse. So the Messiah must first deal with sin, by receiving it into Himself (Messiah’s heel will receive the bite of the serpent) and at the same time He will destroy satan’s power over man (satan’s head is crushed by Messiah’s heel).

Notice how Messiah’s heel and satan’s head are involved in both aspects showing the same event from both viewpoints. Thus Messiah will receive man’s sin and suffer his curse, and in so doing will deliver man from it (satan’s dominion). Jesus, the Virgin-Born Seed of the Woman, fulfilled this prophecy in His death and resurrection. The final crushing of satan is at His Return.

Thus we know from the Bible that:

(1) God created man and nature perfect (He called it ‘very good’).

(2) The present sufferings and curse (birth-pains) of this present world are not God's will or design or fault, but they are the result of man's sin. God gave man free-will and dominion over the earth, and man chose to reject God and His life, and so man and nature came under the curse (death). The presence of pain proves man's sinfulness against God and how terrible it must be (the consequences reveal the cause). The curse upon the earth began with Adam's sin, but is growing as man and sin increases upon the earth. Thus as sin comes to climax in the end-times, so too the 'birth-pains' (such as earthquakes) are increasing in frequency and magnitude until they will reach their climax in the Tribulation.

(3) Given that man brought the curse upon the earth, why did God allow it? Couldn't He use His Power to stop it? When Adam sinned, God had two choices: JUDGEMENT or MERCY upon mankind. He could have demonstrated His Power and intervened in Judgement by ending sin, satan and curse, then and there, by throwing Adam, Eve, satan and nature into His dustbin (the Lake of Fire) and that would be the end of mankind! The only alternative was to respond in Mercy and give man a time of grace, in which He would provide an opportunity for salvation. Meanwhile, by allowing man to continue, He would have to respect his free-will and the choice and consequences (curse) he chose. God chose Mercy, allowing man to live on, subjecting man's world to the curse of his own choosing.

(4) God showed His love for man by announcing the Coming of the Messiah, who would suffer for sin and reverse the curse, bringing salvation. In the fullness of time God sent Jesus Christ to bear our sin and curse on the Cross and then rise again. Now if you receive Him, He delivers you from

the power of sin and curse and gives you eternal life and glory. This is how to go from the Psunami to the Gospel.

Natural disasters are called 'acts of God' by insurance companies, and often God gets the blame for surely if He really was All-Loving, He would not allow such things to happen, unless of course He is not All-Powerful after all. This thinking is based on ignorance of the Bible.

The fallacy here is the assumption that God is the only factor in the equation. We know from the Bible that God created man and nature perfect. God gave man free-will and dominion over the earth, but man chose to reject God and His life, and so man and nature came under the curse (death). Thus the present sufferings and curse (birth-pains) of this present world are not God's will or design or fault, but they are the result of man's sin (see Genesis 3). They are our fault! The presence of such pain and death proves man's terrible sinfulness against God (the consequences reveal the cause).

These pains are neither a denial of His Love nor of His Power, but rather they reveal His Mercy.

When Adam sinned, the Holy God had but two choices:

(1) Demonstrate His Power by intervening in JUDGEMENT and stopping sin, satan and curse, resulting in the destruction of mankind!

or (2) Moving in MERCY, allowing mankind and nature to continue to exist in their fallen (cursed) state until He could provide salvation. God chose to allow man to live on, requiring Him to temporarily subjecting man's world to the curse. Thus God is All-Powerful but out of Mercy, He chose to restrain (control) His Power, giving man a time of grace, in which God would provide a Saviour and give an opportunity for each man to repent and receive salvation.

This is called the Longsuffering of God:

“Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?” (Romans 2:4).

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (to powerfully intervene in judgement), as some count slackness but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2Peter3:9).

Out of LOVE for us, He restrained His POWER - for when He exerts His Power over sin and the curse, by necessity it must be in judgement upon sin and all sinners (the cause of the curse), removing their last chance of salvation. But one day soon, God (through His Messiah - Jesus Christ) will close this present time of grace, for at the Second-Coming of Jesus Christ, He will demonstrate His Power over sin, satan and the curse, and judge this evil world and establish His Kingdom, and under the righteous dominion (reign) of the God-Man Jesus Christ, the perfect harmony of nature will be restored. Firstly however, the Messiah had to come to suffer and purchase our salvation from sin and the curse.

Thus, instead of immediately destroying man, in mercy God chose to allow sinful man to continue, which meant that He had to subject man and nature to the curse (the consequences of his choice), while putting into action a plan of salvation that would ultimately lead to the restoration of both man and nature through Christ, bringing man into an eternal glory far greater than the present suffering: **“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the Creation was subjected to futility (the curse), not willingly,**

but because of Him (God) who subjected it in hope (of delivering it from the curse and restoring it to its original blessing); **because the Creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with BIRTH PAINS together until now**” (Romans 8:18-22).

Thus at the same time as He announced the curse upon sin, God promised the Coming of the Messiah who had to suffer for sin and reverse the curse, bringing salvation for man (Genesis 3:15). Then in the fullness of time God proved His love for man by sending His own Son to bear our sin and curse on the Cross, thus obtaining forgiveness for us. He came to rescue us from this world that is heading for judgement. Now if you receive Christ as your Saviour and Lord, He will deliver you from the power of sin, satan and curse and give you eternal life and glory. God understands and is compassionate to those who suffer, because He has entered into this suffering world in the Person of Jesus Christ, and has suffered more than any man. Jesus proved He was the true Messiah by producing the ‘Signs of the Messiah’. The Scriptures predicted that in His Ministry, the Messiah would work many miracles of healing and dominion over nature, thus showing His power to reverse the curse. Thus the Messiah would first work miracles on an individual level, as signs of what He would later do world-wide, when He comes again to judge the earth and claim full dominion over it. Thus Jesus proved His Messiahship by His miracles, and ultimately by His resurrection from the dead after 3 days.

Meanwhile, having purchased our salvation, He is waiting for as many people as possible to receive Him and be saved, before He returns in power, glory and judgement. Presently,

His power to move against evil is limited by (1) His mercy toward man and (2) His respect for our free-will.

(1) Why does God not just deal with sin, judge it and make the world perfect again? He would have to deal with the root cause (sin in the human-heart). That would mean eternal judgement for every man, who has not received salvation. One day soon, He will do exactly that, but then it will be too late. The only way to stop the curse means ending sinful man's dominion (through judgement), and the establishment of the universal dominion (reign) of the righteous Man - Jesus Christ.

(2) Why doesn't God just keep intervening to cancel the consequences of man's sin? Every time someone tries to hurt another, shouldn't God stop it, even preventing all death? This would violate man's free-will, and it is impossible for God to do this (who would have to go back on His Word). God made man in His image, giving him honour and a high calling, enduing him with great free-will. It is what makes us who we are and if God removed it we would be lesser creatures. Free-will is double-edged - it means the right to choose and the responsibility to face the consequences. If there were no consequences to our choices man's free-will would be an illusion and he would stay as a child and never learn or grow into what He is meant to be. Thus, if mankind generally or a man individually closes the door on God, then he will have to eat the consequences. Moreover the Birth-Pains are constant reminders to us of the reality of sin and coming judgement, and our need of salvation.

However the curse upon the earth is being greatly restrained by God's Spirit, working through the free-will of believers (the 'salt of the earth' - Matthew 5:13, the Restrainer of

2Thessalonians 2:6-8). Otherwise (without God's grace), things would be much worse. The world will see what it would be like with God's hand of restraint on the curse fully removed, because that is exactly what will happen in the Tribulation, after the Church (the Restrainer) is removed by the Rapture. The curse will then be allowed to come to its fullness, resulting in intense birth-pains upon the earth, far greater than now. The curse upon the earth began with Adam's sin, but is growing as man's population and sin increases upon the earth. Thus as sin is coming to its climax in the end-times, so likewise the 'birth-pains' (including earthquakes) are increasing in frequency and magnitude until they reach their climax in the Tribulation. Thus, the curse is not just due to Adam's sin, but is aggravated by each man's sin.

Isaiah 24 describes the Tribulation, the time of the full birth-pains which reach their climax just before the Coming of Christ (v21-23): **“The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore (because of world-wide sin) the curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate” (v5,6). **“The foundations of the earth are shaken. The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut (in the wind); its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again”** (v18-20). Here we see there will be massive earthquakes that will even cause the axis of the earth to totter, making the heavens to shake, as seen from the earth. There is only so much sin the earth can labour under! Things have come to this kind of climax once**

before. Jesus said that the end-times would be like the days of Noah. For in Noah's time, both man and sin increased greatly (Genesis 6:1,5,11,12) leading to world-wide disorders of nature during the Flood (7:11). But before God moved to judge (v7,13), He provided a way of salvation for believers (v8,14-21), saving as many as He could. God's removal of the believers (in the Ark) was a judgement, releasing the curse (birth-pains) as well as God's direct judgements. Likewise, when the Church is raptured (in Christ), the Tribulation Birth-Pains (as well as direct judgements from Heaven) will be released upon the earth. As with a woman's Birth-Pains, they will get worse until the birth (of God's Kingdom on earth at the Second-Coming).

The Tsunami and other terrible things that happen on earth are 'Birth-Pains', reminding us of two things:

1. 'Birth-Pains' tell us that man is a sinner needing salvation. They are the result of sin that entered this world through man (Gen3). They are man's fault. They reveal the horror of man's rebellion against His Creator, and that this has fearful consequences that will only get worse. All men are under a death sentence, for death is the result of sin. Whenever God calls 'time up' on a man or on this world, He would be Just. The truth is that whatever length of life we live, it is all the Mercy of God, for every breath we have is from Him. Birth-pains are not directly from God. They are terrible, but they are a wake-up call telling us that this life is a limited time of mercy and grace before judgement falls - which will be far worse. God is giving every man a chance to repent and be saved. We don't know how long we have, so let us make sure we are right with God and that we make the best of the time He gives us (see Luke 13:1-5).

2. **'Birth-Pains'** also tell us that a **Baby is on its way.**

They will come to a climax in the Tribulation and then Jesus will return and judge all mankind, cleansing the earth and setting up His Kingdom with nature fully restored.

Thus, God's Kingdom will be born on the earth—a new beginning, called **'the Regeneration'** (Matthew 19:28) and **'the Restoration of all things'** (Acts 3:21).

When unexpected disasters happen, it is natural for people to ask WHY? However, it is the height of ignorance to blame God, as if it was His fault. Man is actually eating the fruit (curse) of His own sin, as we have previously explained.

This is like a criminal, suffering in jail, blaming the authorities for the mess he is in. Bad things happen to us, not necessarily because of a particular sin we have committed, but often just because we live in a fallen world. However, no one is an innocent victim, for **all have sinned** (Romans 3:23) and **the wages** (just payment or recompense) **of sin is death** (Romans 6:23) in all its forms (spiritual, physical and eternal). The only truly innocent man is Jesus. Everyone else in Adam deserves death and it is only by God's mercy that we are alive and have a chance of salvation. Is it just when someone dies suddenly, without living a full life? Well, if justice is what you want, then the whole human race would already be in the Lake of Fire!

The truth is that despite the present suffering, God in His love, has done His very best for us:

1. God allowed mankind to continue to exist with free-will (rather than pass final judgement upon us), even though we had rebelled against God, giving us a time of grace in which we could be saved. It is only by God's mercy that we are alive and have a chance of turning to God (and

receiving salvation), but meanwhile we have to live with the consequences of our sin (both individually and as a race).

2. Moreover, He sent His Saviour, Jesus Christ, to taste the full suffering, curse and death of mankind, in order to redeem us from its power. So God is not a detached, uncaring spectator of our suffering and pain, but has entered this world to bear our sins and sorrows and purchase our eternal salvation. But for it to be effective, we must believe (receive) what He has done for us. Then instead of eternal death (curse), we will have eternal life. The present momentary sufferings will soon pass away and become nothing compared to the eternal (forever) glory yet to be revealed in us. **“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God”** (John 3:14-18).

3. God gives each man (as well as mankind as a whole) a time of grace in which to repent and turn to Him. For a man this ends at death, for mankind - at the Second Coming of Christ. Some may have longer than others, but whatever time we have it is only by God's mercy. Why doesn't God just put an end to all evil? One day soon, He will show His power and bring a full end to sin, suffering and the curse, and establish His Kingdom of righteousness and peace. But when this day comes, it will necessarily be a day of

judgement upon all who have rejected Christ and His salvation, and are thus in a state of sin. Then the time of grace (of opportunity for man to receive salvation) will come to an end. Be glad (if you are not right with God) that God has not stepped in yet to put things right, because He will judge and throw all sinners who reject Him (including you) into His bin (furnace)! To go your own way in life and ignore Christ in unbelief is to reject God and is the essence of sin: **“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way”** (Isaiah 53:6).

For those who are ‘God negative’ (they don’t want to know Him or submit to Him and depend upon Him), disasters provide them an excuse (justification) to reject God. Those who are ‘God positive’, will be shaken to look for answers to the deeper issues of existence. They will receive a wake-up call that this life is fleeting, that they cannot trust in this world, and that they must prepare for eternity. When a man wants to know the ultimate truth and seeks for God, then God will reveal Himself to him and be found by him: **“You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord”** (Jeremiah 29:13,14). He will realise that there is a God, but that he is a sinner cut off from God’s life, and that the evil in this world is the result of man’s rejection of God. Through the Gospel, he will hear of God’s ‘grace-salvation’ through His Son, Jesus Christ. He will believe and be restored (reunited) to God, receiving forgiveness, and a new-birth into eternal life. Thus he will find God and come to know (have a personal relationship with) Him, through Christ.

When the world questions God in times of great suffering, we should use it a springboard to go into the Gospel. Many Christians today are so keen to sound sympathetic, that they

go on the defensive, expressing uncertainty about why God allowed it and fail to share Biblical truth. As a result, God is made to appear weak or uncaring or both. We should use Jesus as our model (example) for pro-active evangelism in such situations. When a tragedy happened in the time of Jesus, and people were trying to understand why it happened, Jesus used it as an opportunity to call them back to God, by warning them of coming judgement:

“There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those 18 on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:1-5).

He didn't go on the defensive, but instead went on the offensive and challenged them to get right with God, for soon death and judgement would come upon them also. He made it clear that those who died were sinners, deserving of death. However, they were not the victims of a direct judgement of God (as if they were hand-picked by God as being especially sinful). Their physical death was a result of the general curse on sinful man (every man will also face God's direct judgement, but this is normally reserved until after death). Therefore what happened (death) to these people would also soon come upon all other sinners. Thus rather than man questioning God in a tragedy, he should receive it as a warning (a wake-up call) that the same destruction (death

followed by eternal judgement) will come upon him soon (**'you will all likewise perish'**). The sufferings and death of this life are a sign and proof of man's sin and the sure judgement to come. It is only by God's Mercy that we remain alive, for our sin means we all deserve death. The purpose for His Mercy is to give us time to repent and be saved from the coming judgement. This time can suddenly end without warning as tragedies demonstrate, therefore we must not take the time we have for granted, but we must use it to get right with God and warn others to do likewise.

Therefore to go from Tragedy and Death into the Gospel, following Jesus' example, we explain to them that:

- (1) it is man's sin that causes such things (not God),
- (2) the present condition of man (under selfishness, strife, pain and death) proves that the Bible is right in saying that all have sinned,
- (3) this means that man is under the judgement of God and that although this life may have its sorrows, it is a time of grace, but after death comes eternal judgement, which will be far worse,
- (4) when people die around us, it is a warning that our time may come any time (we are just a breath away from eternity) and therefore we must be ready to meet God. Then we share the Gospel of how Jesus died for our sins to save us from judgement, challenging them to receive Him before it is too late.

Jesus continued on this theme: **"He also spoke this parable: "A certain man (Jesus) had a Fig Tree (Israel) planted in His Vineyard, and he came (offering salvation) seeking fruit (a positive response of faith) on it and found none. Then he said to the Keeper of his Vineyard (God, the**

Father), **"Look, for 3 years I have come seeking fruit on this Fig Tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?" But he answered and said to him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down"**(v6-9).

This is a warning for the nation of Israel but the principle applies equally to God's dealings with all men. Israel's time of grace to receive Jesus as her Saviour was running out (they already had 3 years, and God would give them one more year and then it would be too late). Unless Israel repented of her rejection of Messiah, the whole nation would 'all likewise perish' (v5) in sudden, tragic circumstances (this was fulfilled in AD70)! **All mankind is in sin, heading for judgement and Jesus comes to them in a time of grace offering salvation, but if they don't respond the time will close and it will be followed by terrible judgement.**

The Tsunami struck the Muslim world. Indonesia, the worst hit, is the largest Muslim nation. Is there a connection? Yes - the rejection of the true God and the worship of false (substitute) gods by a nation, takes it out of God's blessing (protection), opening the door to the curse. We see this principle most clearly with God's dealings with Israel, where increasing curses come on the nation as it moves further from God (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28). It is clear from the Old-Testament that God deals with nations as well as individuals. Whole nations come under blessing or curse, depending especially on how they treat Israel and believers in their midst (the seed of Abraham-Gen12:1-3). Occultism, lawlessness, violence and immorality will also bring curse, but righteousness exalts a nation. Israel, as God's chosen nation (the firstborn with special responsibilities) receives

double blessing (for obedience) and double cursing (for sin). Tibet's oppression by China is due to her being the centre of occultism. Haiti's obsession with voodoo helps keep her the poorest nation. When a nation comes under a curse this affects all its inhabitants, so the people hit first are not necessarily the worst, but God will see that perfect justice is done in the end.

Appendix: A prophecy from before 1917, given to a Russian Nun, Mother Barbara (taken from 'Battle for Israel' by Lance Lambert):

“An evil will shortly take Russia and wherever this evil comes, rivers of blood will flow. This evil (communism) will take the whole world and wherever it goes, rivers of blood will flow because of it. It is not the Russian soul, but an imposition on the Russian soul. It is not an ideology, or a philosophy, but a spirit from hell.

In the last days Germany will be divided in two.

France will just be nothing.

Italy will be judged by natural disasters.

Britain will lose her empire and all her colonies and will come to almost total ruin, but will be saved by praying women.

America will feed the world, but will finally collapse.

Russia and China will destroy each other.

Finally Russia will be free and from her, believers will go forth and turn many from the nations to God’.

The old monk then said to her, ‘You will live to see Russia free, but you will not live to see the Antichrist.’”