

The Haiti Question
Did God cause the earthquake in Haiti – if so why?

We have seen enormous humanitarian disasters in recent years.

In 2004 a massive undersea earthquake caused a tsunami. The earthquake and tsunami killed over 200,000 people. The earthquake was so powerful it tilted the earth.

We have seen an entire city (New Orleans) drowned under the floods caused by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

More recently we have seen well over 200,000 killed in the Haitian earthquake.

There are 3 possibilities in relation to God's involvement in these events:-

1. God created the earth so these things could happen but is not controlling when and where. They are "random" natural disasters.
2. God specifically made it happen but the place it happened is not significant i.e. he wanted to shake the earth but where he shook it is not significant. It was NOT for the purpose of judging a particular nation but as a warning sign to all.
3. God specifically made it happen at a certain time and targeted the exact area for the purpose of judgement on the nation it affected and as a sign to all.

So how do we know which is the correct possibility? Can we know?

Can we make a "judgement" call using our knowledge of God from the scriptures alongside the evidence of the event itself?

Let's start with the first possibility.

God made the earth so that earthquakes would happen. He possibly even designed it so that earthquakes would happen increasingly as we near the end but apart from that God is not controlling when and where. They are random natural disasters.

Scriptural evidence for this view might be (Please take time to look up each passage)

1. All creation is groaning. (Romans 8:22) – We know that in the Garden of Eden sin entered the world. God at that point cursed the ground itself. (Genesis 3:17) The cursing of the ground included earthquakes and all forms of "natural disaster". We know that all creation continues to groan even now.
2. We know that the labour pains of the earth will increase at the time of the end. (1 Thess 5:3) We know there will be an increase in earthquakes before Christ returns. (Luke 21:11) God knew it would happen and therefore could foretell it would happen. But he is not making each earthquake occur specifically.

These verses could substantiate the first possibility. God cursed the ground and earthquakes now happen naturally but they are not targeted on a nation as judgement. An earthquake is a "natural" occurrence and happens as a result of sin - like disease.

The second possibility is that God does specifically make the earthquakes to increase in number but is not targeting specific places for the purposes of judgement.

The scriptural evidence for this would be

1. The whole earth becomes increasingly wicked and godless so God himself increases the "groaning of creation". (2 Timothy 3:1-5)
2. God creates good AND evil - therefore he does create disasters. (Isaiah 45:7)
3. But all men are sinful so God would not target a specific place for judgement. Evidence for this would be "all have sinned and come short".(Romans 3:23) We also have the example of the tower of Siloam. Jesus says that when the tower fell, the people were killed by accident and they were not to be considered more sinful than other men. (Luke 13:4-5)

So with these verses we could say that God is causing more earthquakes to happen as a warning sign for all to see. But he is not doing it from a judgemental point of view on the nation that was affected as all people are sinful.

The final possibility is that God not only makes the earthquake and brings destruction but actually targets a specific nation for judgement and for a warning sign. The scriptural evidence for this would be

1. God has certainly done this in the past – though not necessarily with earthquake. Examples would be Sodom & Gomorrah (Genesis 18:20-21) or Egypt and the plagues etc. (Exodus 3:9) God does take action when “sins” reach a peak – Israel was told to invade Canaan when sin of the Amorites “was full.” (Genesis 15:16) They were to bring destruction on the nations living there. There appears to be a point when God says enough is enough. (Deuteronomy 9:4-6) In other words the sins of a nation reach a point when God will no longer tolerate it. (Jonah 1:2)
2. The final earthquake we know will affect the whole world and it is part of God’s final judgement on all the ungodly. (Revelation 16:18)
3. Finally, earthquakes specifically are very often associated with judgement of godless nations. (Isaiah 2:19, 13:13, Ezekiel 38:19-20)

So we do have evidence God has done this before and we know he will certainly do it in the future. We could conclude (as God is unchanging) that he could and can do it now. Amos 3:6 says “shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?”

So how do we know which possibility is correct?

Well we have some principles.

Was the calamity caused by man or by God?

Is it a manmade calamity or is it “an act of God”. A manmade building falling down as in the tower of Siloam could well be caused by man’s faulty building work. If the earth is shaken as in an earthquake it is highly probable that this is God not man. The two areas can become slightly grey if man is partly responsible. I.e. a major hurricane could be blamed on man and global warming. However, most “natural disasters” even if “helped” along by man would need God to implement it.

Individual or national?

So if we see God’s involvement the question then is - is it to specifically punish **NATIONALLY** because of the level of sin as with Sodom or with Egypt or the world in Noah’s day (Genesis 6:5) etc?

It is important to understand that God does distinguish between a **NATION** and an **INDIVIDUAL**. Please do read these next verses carefully.

Ezekiel 14:13-20 says

“The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, **if a country sins against me** by being unfaithful and **I stretch out my hand against it** to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it **and kill its men and their animals, even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it**, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD. " (NIV)

This is repeated **THREE** times in the same chapter! It is certain to happen.

Note: Most modern translations say “a land” or “a country”. The AV says “the land”

God clearly says a country or nation that sins can bring judgement from Him. Even if Noah, Daniel and Job lived there he would still bring the destruction. However those righteous people would be saved (ultimately) at the resurrection.

Therefore God is saying his action is not done at an individual level but a national level and in fact the “righteous” could get caught up in it.

Can the words of Ezekiel 14 be fulfilled in our day? Would God judge a nation now?

Surely we must answer YES. To know if He has we need to look at the nation involved. All nations of course are godless but has it reached a peak? Is it reaching a “full of sin” situation? Are there few believers there? Remember with Sodom, God would have saved the whole city for the sake of just 10! (Genesis 18:32)

If we see God’s hand bringing destruction on a place renowned for sin, false worship and wickedness we must be able to conclude that there is a very high probability this is targeted and specifically caused by God because of that. In other words Ezekiel 14 is being played out before us as specific judgement and a warning sign to all.

So let us take the largest earthquake we have seen (almost on record) in 2004. Let us take the hurricane Katrina 2005. Let us take Haiti 2010.

What is the evidence?

Are these places renowned for sin, violence, false worship etc?. YES

Haiti – RENOWNED for Voodoo worship, violence, corruption

New Orleans – RENOWNED for Sodomy, lesbianism, violence, “SIN City.”

Aceh – RENOWNED for merciless killing, violence, corruption

Are there very few (if any) true believers living there? YES

Do they fit into the mould of Sodom (immorality), Egypt (false worship), the world of Noah (violence and corruption)? YES

We must understand there are different levels of national sin and there does come a point when God intervenes as he has with Israel, Judah, Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh etc
It is national judgement NOT individual judgement.

In the last days BEFORE the final judgement it would be surprising to say the least if God did not begin to show the world what is coming. In fact Christ said he would ! (Luke 21:11) He brings disaster on nations who have utterly corrupted society and have very few saints living there.

My Conclusion

I believe that God has brought about these disasters for judgement on that nation (or city) and for warning signs of imminent global judgement for the whole world.

To say that God has picked a random place without thought, or was not involved in picking the place at all means that everything we see is chaos and without God in control. I am watching the enormity of the disaster on the type of nation affected.

I see these events mentioned, happening with God’s hand in them, controlling them and bringing his judgements on particular nations. Ezekiel 14 says he will do this.

I believe that they are a sign of the nearness of Christ’s return.

I believe they should cause all men everywhere to repent and turn to God before it is too late. (Acts 17:30-31)

God is actually merciful in showing the earth **beforehand a preview** of what will shortly happen to all those still living in sin.

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