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Where is God?

"I think God is angry with the world" someone told me a week or so ago. The person in question then went in to point to all of the disasters we have seen around the world this year; flooding in Australia and New Zealand, Earthquakes and Tsunami in Japan - and to all of the turmoil that is happening in the Middle East, including a civil war in Libya.



I suspect the person I spoke with isn't alone in their view of an angry God pouring out His wrath upon the earth. When the media uses terms like, "floods of Biblical proportions," it only serves to enhance the perception that people have of a God who metes out His punishment on a world with which He is displeased.

Yet surely this explanation is too simplistic. It is too easy to throw ourselves back into the early chapters of Genesis and say that God is going to wipe us all out - not to mention that it flies in the face of the New Testament's assertion that God loves the world. It is much more difficult, and yet more rewarding, to ask God to open our spiritual eyes as we struggle to comprehend what is going on in the world around us and to consider those things in the light of His love rather than His judgement.

The Victorian novelist, G.K. Chesterton reminds us that nature is not our mother, she is our sister - part of the fallen order of things and as such is just as capable of error or fault as is fallen humanity. And yet when nature displays her faults innocent people in their hundreds or thousands suffer as a result and people who previously had no belief or interest in God suddenly decide that this God they don't believe in is to blame for everything!

There is no simple answer to the unjust and unfair suffering of millions of people around the world. As we approach Easter, we are reminded that Jesus - who had done nothing wrong in his earthly life - suffered unjustly at the hands of his peers and was nailed to a cross of wood. What we can say is that Jesus - the ultimate innocent victim - now relates to all innocent victims around the world.

Where is God in the earthquakes and the floods? He is in the eyes and the faces of the bereaved and mourning. God has always participated in the affairs of humanity, but not as one who seeks to destroy, rather as one who in Christ seeks to reconcile the (ever more broken) world to Himself.