

Pushing Back the Darkness

People come together to give encouragement and strength ...

We expect “the world to be an orderly, predictable place, showing ample evidence of God’s thoroughness and handiwork, but pockets of chaos remain” Rabbi Harold Kushner writes. And chaos is seen to be equated with that which is evil. It prevents people from believing in God’s goodness.

True, there are occasions when we have to live with the earthquake and tsunami, the flood and tornado, knowing that there are aspects of reality that stand independent of God’s will. We suspect they anger and sadden God, even as they anger and sadden us.

There are times, too, when these chaotic events hold us captive so all we can think of is how these destructive forces impact our lives and the lives of those we hold dear.

We lose our capacity to see beyond the darkness of our despair. Yet all around us people, many of them strangers, are going out of their way to fill the sandbags, to cut through the fallen trees, to help us find temporary shelter, to bring us food and clothing and pray with us.

For many their faith is a source of strength and comfort. So they offer their hands and feet, their hugs and tears. The wailing and lamenting give voice to a neighbour’s suffering and pain. They may even shout out at God in anger and with feelings of helplessness

Those same helpers refuse to allow us to get bogged down in the darkness. With the power of their own bodies they lift us, they show us sparks of light and visions of hope.

Through this shared experience both they and we find ourselves being nurtured spiritually. Even together we may not have enough strength nor enough courage to carry on by ourselves. But there is a Spirit that shows us what great things can be accomplished when we work together. And the chaotic powers once again lose their furry.

Thanks be to God.

(written by Joyce Sasse)

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