

By Jesse Jose

A Cup O' Kapeng Barako

In the world of religious wingnuts, fundamentalism trumps compassion.

As scenes of the horrific destruction and gruesome death in Haiti from that monster earthquake a couple of weeks flashed on our TV screens and spilled into our living rooms, the Rev. Pat Robertson, the televangelist and founder of The 700 Club, came on his televised bully pulpit, and barked:

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“Something happened a long time ago in Haiti, and people might not want to talk about it. □ They were under the heel of the French.

□

And they got together and swore a pact to the Devil ... They said, ‘We will serve you if you get us free from the Prince.’

□

“And so the Devil said, ‘Okay, it’s a deal.’

□

“They kicked the French out, the Haitians revolted, and got themselves free.□ But ever since, they have been cursed by one thing after the other, desperately poor ...”

Slave rebellions are the work of the Devil? Never heard that before. Reverend
nd Rob

ertson also said that the earthquake that devastated
Haiti

was

“a blessing in disguise”

because it will give that forsaken country the opportunity

“to rebuild its spiritual and physical structure.”

Oh, my Lord, I tell ya ...

Instead of preaching to his one-million strong congregations, to open their hearts and their arms and their wallets, like the rest of mankind, this religious wingnut was spewing bile about a “pact that the Haitian people made with the Devil” and blaming that for the death and destruction that rained on those people.

Really, I think that’s an ignorant statement that can be uttered only by an honest-to-goodness wingnut. In high-school science, we have learned that earthquakes are caused by the shifting of the Earth’s tectonic plates, “not by vengeful deities,” as Kathleen Parker of the *Washington Post* aptly said, “bearing malice toward any particular man, woman, or child.”

After the 9/11 attack on America, Reverend Robertson also said that “**God had given us what we deserve.**”

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And, as his Christian coalition colleague and fellow wingnut, the late Reverend Falwell, recited this litany, Robertson, at his side, nodded on vigorously his agreement: “**The pagans and the abortionists and the**

feminists and the gays and lesbians ... the ACLU, the People of the American Way – all of them who have tried to secularize America – I point a finger in their faces and say, ‘You helped this happen!’”

When Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, the Reverend Robertson, blamed that calamity on abortion. He said:

“We have killed over 40-million babies in America

. We are unable somehow to defend ourselves against some of the attacks coming to us, either by terrorists or now by natural disaster ... could they be connected in some way?”

Yes, those are the words of a wingnut.

FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS: I am not as you might say an overly religious man. I sin every day, even knowingly at times. I am weak.

But I go to church regularly.

I pray.

I believe in God.

I believe that the Christian faith, my Roman Catholic faith, at its heart, is about mercy and forgiveness ... and redemption.

And that God is full of kindness.

I am a lector at our Holy Family Church here in Auburn, Washington, and not too long ago, I proclaimed, with joy in my heart, to our congregation this reading from the Holy Bible:

A reading from the Book of Genesis ... Then, the Lord said: “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grave that I must go down and see whether or not their actions fully correspond to the cry against them that comes to me.

□

I mean to find out.”

□

Then Abraham drew nearer to Him and said: “Will you sweep away the innocent with the guilty?□ Suppose there were fifty innocent people in the city; would you wipe away the place, rather than spare it for the sake of the fifty innocent people within it? □

Far be it from you to do such a thing, to make the innocent die with the guilty, so that the innocent and the guilty would be treated alike!

□

Should not the Judge of all the world act with justice?”

□

The Lord replied, “If I find fifty innocent people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

□

Abraham spoke up again: “See how I am presuming to speak to my Lord, though I am but dust and ashes!□ What if there are five less than fifty innocent people? □ Will you destroy the whole city because of those five?”

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“I will not destroy it,” He answered, “if I find forty-five there.”

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But Abraham persisted, saying, “What if only forty are found there?”

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He replied, “I will forbear doing it for the sake of the forty.”

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Then he said, “Let not my Lord grow impatient if I go on.□ What if only thirty are found there?”

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He replied, “I will forbear doing it if I can find but thirty there.”

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Still he went on, “Since I have thus dared to speak to my Lord, what if there are no more than twenty?”

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“I will not destroy it,” He answered, “for the sake of the twenty.”

□

But he still persisted, “Please, let not my Lord grow angry if I speak up

this last time. What if there are at least ten there?”

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For the sake of those ten,” He replied, “I will not destroy it.”

□

The Lord departed as soon as he had finished speaking with Abraham, and Abraham returned home.

□

The word of the Lord.□

The Lord is kind, indeed, and patient. I believe in His words. He’s full of compassion. His words trump the words of any wingnut in this world. **JJ**