

HOW EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMI'S FIT INTO THE GRAND DESIGN Three Theories: M-theory, G-theory and B-theory

I happened to open the Facebook page of a Buddhist acquaintance, Jan Chozen Bays, who is co-abbot of the Zen Monastery in Clatskanie, Oregon. Jan's day-job is as a pediatric physician in Portland. She wrote this past week to a mentor in Japan about the earthquake and tsunami in what she called "A Letter to Japan."

The letter set off a string of thoughts about Stephen Hawking's "Grand Design," a theory of everything, that he calls the "**M-theory**." No one is quite sure what it means. Try M for "master or mystery." It's a physicist's answer about where the universe came from. One statement says, ***"The beginning of the universe was governed by the laws of science and doesn't need to be set in motion by some God."*** (p. 135)

This, of course, upset some who believe in what I call the "**G-theory**," the God theory of creation, or you could call it the Genesis theory. There is no proof, no series of equations, and no science to support this theory. Where the "M-theory" says,

"In the beginning nothing..." the G-theory says, ***"In the beginning God."***

Both of these theories lead to endless discussion. It should be noted that science is not necessarily united behind the M-theory and religion is not necessarily united behind a G-theory. There's no time to join these debates, except to say that science has expanded its theories farther than religion has expanded its theories. Few biblical scholars, however, would argue that Genesis is other than a powerful myth, and certainly not a basis for science.

Jan Bays offers a Buddhist theory that bridges both the M-theory and the G-theory. I call it a **B-theory**. She writes simply about the unspeakable power of earthquakes, tsunami's and nuclear disaster:

"As Buddhists we cannot take refuge in this being part of God's inscrutable plan, or even in the notion of God's wrath for a planet not cared for.

We take refuge in something that is hard for many to understand.

We take refuge in the truth of impermanence...

When our lives rest on that foundation, on the strange foundation of constant change, then our lives are anchored in truth."

She continues to say: ***"The wisdom eye sees constant change, even tsunami, as normal, as expected, as part of how IT IS."***

That's a "B-theory," a truth. Something you can count on she says.

"At the same time our tender hearts feel acutely the pain of human suffering on an unimaginable scale, and we are moved to do what little we can to help.

The small blessing of a natural disaster is that there is no one to blame.

The earth shrugged, a huge amount of water was displaced, and it flowed where it could.

With no energy wasted on blame, everyone can work together to help."

We're already seeing these three theories blending into a **C-theory**, a compassion theory, that moves differences aside to help in any way possible. That such compassion survives earthquakes and tsunami's is beyond explaining and as wondrous as anything humans can view of this endless universe.

Art Morgan March 18, 2011

(Look up Jan Bays Facebook page to find the complete "Letter to Japan." You will find compassionate words by a wise teacher that appeal to M-theory and G-theory alike).