**Small Group notes – 14 March 2021**

**Welcome**

What do you think is God’s greatest achievement?
What do you think is man’s greatest achievement?

**Word - The rebuke in suffering**

Job is going to hear an answer from God. However, what he is going to receive is not an explanation about why and what he is going. There is no mention about the whole conversation between God and Satan, no apologies of any kind. Instead, a rebuke and a fresh revelation of who it is that Job has been professing to worship and trust. Job has several questions for God and God has some questions of his own for Job. To be more specific, over seventy! ‘

We can summarise God’s questions to Job in three points:

* Job can you explain my creation? – 38:4-38
* Job can you oversee my creation? – 38:39-39:30
* Job can you subdue my creation? – 40:6-41

**The big question God has for Job is are you my equal?** “If you can explain my creation, take care and rule over my creation. Then and only then are you my equal”. Job is unable to do any of these things. **God’s rebuke** seems harsh and unfair to me. Job was undoubtedly innocent at the start of the story. It appears God rebukes him for simply asking for answers as to why he is going through so much pain and suffering. Job is asking why God is not doing something about it?

Let’s try and catch the heart of God in this encounter with Job. It may be that God asks Job the questions in a no-nonsense fashion and as an educative reminder that Job is limited in his understanding and wisdom of the world. Job thinks he knows so much about life and the universe.

God says; Job, let me amaze you by the complexity and intricacy of it all; the skies, oceans, stars, galaxies and the animals. Job, do you see all this? Do you understand how it all works and fits together? Life is more than you and your world. There is a bigger picture.

I believe God asks these questions to get Job to see beyond his narrow view of his world.

*“God’s rebuke is not meant to destroy Job but to teach him a valuable lesson concerning the relationship of his own life to Gods government of the world. Although Jobs suffering is important to God, evidenced in the fact that God Answers Job, there is a mystery concerning the way God governs the world, which means there is a mystery from a human standpoint concerning the whole subject of suffering”.*

**Richard Belcher**

**Job’s response to his encounter with God – 40:1-5**

Job humbles himself and acknowledges that he is foolish to speak out against God. He was foolish to think that God is not in control and that he is blameless and God is guilty.

*“God made each living thing, including man, suited to its environment and task. But man is not content to be the creature, he wants to be creator, and that is Satan’s promise to man if he will disobey God. The next time you are tempted to listen to Satan’s lies, that you could do a better job at running planet earth, look at Gods creation and remember that you are not God and you are certainly not his equal.”* **Warren Wiersbe.**

**It is tough when our prayers seem to go unanswered or when there are no answers to life’s mysteries or when God just seems to allow painful things to happen to us! On those occasions I am strengthened to Implement my whatever, whenever & however response to life’s dramas.**

* If Gods ways are higher than mine, then WHATEVER he allows I will seek to trust him.
* If God has answers I lack, then WHENEVER he speaks I will seek to listen & learn from him.
* If God is in full control, then HOWEVER he directs my steps I will seek to follow him.

**Questions**

* The voice of God came to Job out of what?
* What does God speak to Job about?
* Who are the sons of God? 38:7
* What basic criticism does God make of Job in 40:8-14?
* How do the creatures Behemoth & Leviathan relate to this criticism?
* What effect do God’s words have on Job? 40:3-5
* Has God ever had to rebuke you? Why, how?

**Reminders**

Sun 14 March @ 8pm – Prayer

Mon 15 March @ 11am – Coffee & chat

Wed 17 March @7.30am – Prayer

Thurs 18 March @ 12.30pm – Reflection

**Future dates**

01 April Maundy Thursday Reflection @ 12.30pm - Zoom only

02 April Good Friday Reflection @ 12.30pm - Zoom only

**Zoom & NMBC Premises**

04 April Easter Sunday Baptism 10.30am

11 April Testimonies 10.30am

18 April New Sermon Series ‘Singing in Babylon’ 10.30am

25 April New Sermon Series

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Sunday morning services will resume in the church building with a maximum of 40 attendees with a booking system in place (as with the autumn reflections).  We will be adhering to Covid secure regulations; wearing face masks, social distancing, no singing, no refreshments and no socialising afterwards.

If you would like to book for any future Sunday morning services in April please telephone or email the church office in the week prior to the service to book your place (max 40 places).