

**Sunday August 23, 2020**

## **Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church**

### **Welcome & Prayer (Paul B)**

Welcome to church this week Today we reach the end of Job's journey through his suffering. What has God been doing? Why has God allowed Job to suffer this way? Suffering is the great test of the Christian faith. Suffering exposes our view of God. Suffering tempts us to either run to or run from God. Martin Luther said that "Whoever does not know God hidden in suffering does not know God at all."

Yet, surprisingly, in today's passage God doesn't even address Job's many questions about the role of God in his suffering. God doesn't give him specific answers to his question but turns Job's attention to something much more valuable: He turns Job to ponder the character and power of God himself.

But now, please join with me in **prayer**. *"Heavenly Father We thank you for this opportunity to take time out of our week to meet corporately, in person or online, to worship you. We thank you for your Word, we thank you for gift of this revelation to us. And as we listen to it being preached, and sing about it in song, give us hearts that open to your instruction. And particularly as we examine this critical issue of suffering and Your sovereignty, give Steve clear words to say and give us understanding. May we leave here today closer to you, understanding you deeper, and ready to understand you in all our sufferings deeper. In Jesus Name, Amen*

### **Songs – Indescribable Praise to the Lord**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IlVfkY5q54>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGAaRtkovZQ>

### **Bible Reading – Job 38:1-33**

*Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: <sup>2</sup> "Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? <sup>3</sup> Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. <sup>4</sup> "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. <sup>5</sup> Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? <sup>6</sup> On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone— <sup>7</sup> while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy? <sup>8</sup> "Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, <sup>9</sup> when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, <sup>10</sup> when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place; <sup>11</sup> when I said, 'This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt'?*

*<sup>12</sup> "Have you ever given orders to the morning, or shown the dawn its place, <sup>13</sup> that it might take the earth by the edges and shake the wicked out of it? <sup>14</sup> The earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features stand out like those of a garment. <sup>15</sup> The wicked are denied their light, and their upraised arm is broken. <sup>16</sup> "Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep? <sup>17</sup> Have the gates of death been shown to you? Have you seen the gates of the deepest darkness? <sup>18</sup> Have you comprehended the vast expanses of the earth? Tell me, if you know all this. <sup>19</sup> "What is the way to the abode of light? And where does darkness reside? <sup>20</sup> Can you take them to their places? Do you know the paths to their dwellings? <sup>21</sup> Surely you know, for you were already born! You have lived so many years!*

*<sup>22</sup> "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of the hail, <sup>23</sup> which I reserve for times of trouble, for days of war and battle? <sup>24</sup> What is the way to the place where the lightning is dispersed, or the place where the east winds are scattered over the earth? <sup>25</sup> Who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain, and a path for the thunderstorm, <sup>26</sup> to water a land where no one lives, an uninhabited desert, <sup>27</sup> to satisfy a desolate wasteland and make it sprout with grass? <sup>28</sup> Does the rain have a father? Who fathers the drops of dew? <sup>29</sup> From whose womb comes the ice? Who gives birth to the frost*

*from the heavens<sup>30</sup> when the waters become hard as stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen?<sup>31</sup> “Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades? Can you loosen Orion’s belt?<sup>32</sup> Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs?<sup>33</sup> Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God’s dominion over the earth?*

## Announcements

- **Church Services this term.** We seem to be getting into a new routine for our am services. Just a couple of things to note that would help with things week by week
  - If it your week to attend Church please respond to the invitation to register by Thursday night
  - If it is not your week to attend, there will always be a chance to register from Thursday night.
  - Marissa is now looking after the registration process so if you have any questions (especially on Fridays and Saturdays) please contact Marissa (preferably by text) on 0498 250 129
  - If you are unable to attend because of a change of circumstances please contact Marissa so that someone else can turn up in your place.
  - If on a Sunday morning you can’t come please text Stephen on 0426 829080. That helps those who are on the door and allows people who walk up on the morning to come if there is space.
  - Thanks one and all for helping us out and doing your bit
- **Face masks.** Currently the NSW State government strongly recommended that people wear Face masks if they attend places of worship but stopped short from saying you had to wear face masks. We would strongly recommend that you do wear Face masks in church at the current time. There will be some washable facemasks available from the back of the Church if you would like one.
- **Sing for Christ.** Marilyn Oliver’s family have run a singing competition for the last 30 years and this year it is online. This are sections for soloists, choirs and musicians who want to sing two stanzas of a Christian song. It is starting very soon so if you want to receive more details please look up their website [www.singforchrist.com](http://www.singforchrist.com) or contact Marylin on 0422 184 165
- **Hunter Women.** There will be an invitation to gather around God’s word and an opportunity to meet other Presbyterian women and learn from each other. It will be held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September from 9:30-12:30am at Grace Presbyterian, Warabrook. Study leaders Bev Paterson & Susan Ravenhall. If interested please reply to Bev on 0409 571 141.
- **Focus for August – Hospitality.** If you are not coming to Church on any given Sunday why not invite another person/couple /family around to watch the interactive service together? If you haven’t spoken with someone for a while, why not arrange to catch up? If there is someone in the church that you haven’t met as yet why not look them up l the phone book and give them a call? These are all ways of showing hospitality to one another.
- **Grief Seminar.** We are planning to run a seminar on Grief on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August from 2-3:45pm at the Charlestown Church. We will think about the characteristics of grief, coping with grief, supporting others through grief and we will interview one of our people about what has helped them in their grief. Ruth Myers, Jo Barlow and Stephen Taylor will all contribute. Let Jo know if you would like to come.
- **Finances.** July was a great month for us financially. In particular there were two one off donations that meant we easily met our offering budget. This sets us up for any shocks that could come in the coming months. Thanks to all those who are giving generously and sacrificially.

### Finances for July 2020

Offerings – Budget	21,864
Offerings – Actual	53,279
Surplus for July	31,415
Surplus for Jan to July	35,319

- **Prayer meetings.** Don't forget we run two weekly ZOOM prayer meetings on Monday at 8pm and Thursday at 7pm. If you can't attend by ZOOM why not pray yourself or ring someone and pray together?

## Kids Talk – QUIZ WORX

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q\\_XKPVIGThbLaLcn9MiC1v53m6cg81dG](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q_XKPVIGThbLaLcn9MiC1v53m6cg81dG)

**Song – I will praise you in the storm** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YUGwUgBvTU>

## Pastoral Prayer (Jon B)

God of all grace, we come boldly to the throne of grace, so that we can receive mercy and find grace in our time of need. We are always in need of grace, and you're always meeting our need. You have blessed us with every blessing in Christ. And in him we get grace heaped upon grace. Father help us to see that everything you send our way, the good and the bad, the joys and the sorrows, are all to make us more like Christ. Help us to humble ourselves under your hand, knowing that in due time you'll lift us up.

God of all wisdom, we pray for Central African Republic. Thanks for saving so many people in this part of the world. We look forward to meeting our brothers and sisters one day around the Throne of the Lamb. In the meantime, we pray for your church in this region. Pour your Holy Spirit out on them. Protect them from false teaching. Protect them from Islamic extremist groups. Give them great boldness to proclaim Christ in the face of persecution. Help them to love their enemies. Have mercy on many of terrorists and criminals, and instead turn them into saints and preachers of peace. We pray for the new converts that they would be firmly grounded in Christ and stand firm in Him.

Sovereign God, we pray for the elderly during the pandemic. Especially those in Aged Care facilities. Protect them Lord. Turn many to yourself. Help the workers, our governments, and us to care for them. Lord, we pray for the homeless during these difficult times. Comfort them and lead them to find shelter under Your wings.

Lord we pray for Josh Montzka. We thank you for him and the great work you started in him and pray you would bring it to completion. Help him to daily take up his cross and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus. Thanks for the Winter Conference and all the video tech stuff that Josh was involved with. We ask the groups that Josh set up will help keep people more connected. And we pray for the #Hack virtual meet up that it would go well and there would be no tech problems.

Father, thanks for Sparklers Play group and the work you're doing through Suzie and all of those involved. We thank you for the couple who are doing Chris9anity Explored and ask that they would meet your Son and follow Him. We pray for the group as they navigate with all the hygiene stuff that you would give them patience. Give those involved strength to persevere and love one another in practical ways. We ask all these things in the name of our Lord Jesus, the head of the church. Amen.

## Bible Reading - Job 40:1-14, 42:1-6 (NIV)

*The LORD said to Job: <sup>2</sup> "Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!" <sup>3</sup> Then Job answered the LORD: <sup>4</sup> "I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. <sup>5</sup> I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more." <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. <sup>7</sup> "Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. <sup>8</sup> "Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself? <sup>9</sup> Do you have an arm like God's, and can your voice thunder like his? <sup>10</sup> Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor, & clothe yourself in honor and majesty. <sup>11</sup> Unleash the fury of your wrath, look at all who are proud & bring them low, <sup>12</sup> look at all who are proud and humble them, crush the wicked where they stand. <sup>13</sup> Bury them all in the dust together*

shroud their faces in the grave. <sup>14</sup> Then I myself will admit to you that your own right hand can save you.

Then Job replied to the LORD: <sup>2</sup> "I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. <sup>3</sup> You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. <sup>4</sup> "You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' <sup>5</sup> My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. <sup>6</sup> Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

## Sermon – Out of the storm <https://youtu.be/KmFA2EDrf3A>

A number of years ago in a remote part of India, two gods were summoned to appear before the local court. You see a local man named Manmohan Pathak believed he owned a 1.4 acre piece of land, but most of the locals claimed the land belonged to the Hindu gods Ram and Hanuman, who were worshipped at the temple on that land.

So when the case came to court, the judge decided that the only way to settle the dispute was to get the two parties together. So the gods were summoned and so was Mr Pathak. But how do you get a god to appear in court? Well, they first tried to find the god's address but no address was found. Then they took out a newspaper ad but needless to say the gods didn't turn up. In the end nothing the judge could do to get the gods to appear in court.

Slide 2

Now for the last 37 chapters of Job debate has been raging over whether Job is guilty of sin and hence is being punished by God or whether God is guilty of injustice for punishing Job unfairly. Job's three friends have had their say, Elihu has had his say and even Job has had his say. But God hasn't shown up. Job has even said in chapter 23 that he has laid his case before God & he wants God to appear. He wants the judge of all the earth to answer him.

Slide 3

And then in chapter 38 Job's prayer is answered. You know that old saying, be careful what you pray for? It might just come to pass. Well Job gets more than he bargained for. Look at verse 1, "*Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: <sup>2</sup> 'Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? <sup>3</sup> Brace yourself like a man; I will question you & you shall answer me'.*"

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God speaks! Imagine that. God coming down to talk to a man. God not being silent but letting mankind hear his word. As the debate has raged back and forth, as Job has felt his physical, mental, psychological and spiritual pain it seems that God was distant. But no that was not true. Not at all. God knows where Job is and now he comes to him & speaks to him.

The Lord God spoke. Yahweh spoke. The God who has made a covenant, a set of promises with his people, actually speaks. Yahweh was & is still "*the LORD, the LORD, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love.*" Yahweh is the one who never leaves or forsakes his people, this God is faithful, this God is trustworthy and it is this God who speaks to Job out of the storm.

Slide 5

He comes and speaks out of the whirlwind, in all its violent, dramatic, terrifying power and force. The storm has wreaked havoc on Job's life & God doesn't wait for the storm to pass he speaks in the midst of the storm! Oh I am sure Job wanted the sunshine to come first but that is not God's way in this instance. So in the midst of the lightning and thunder, the rain and hail God speaks. And surprisingly he doesn't answer Job's questions, he questions Job.

He questions Job over 70 times. He queries him again and again with the mysteries of this

world. If Job thinks he knows better than God. If Job thinks that he could do a better job of running the universe well let me take you to court Job. Let me see how much you really know about this world. Then we will see who is in the right and who is in the wrong.

Slide 6

God says *“Who is this that obscures my plans with words without knowledge? Brace yourself like a man; I will question you & you shall answer me”*. Job are you wise, really? No it is only

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### 1. God who is wise (chapters 38-39)

Job you have spoken words without knowledge, you have questioned my wisdom. But I want to show you how very little you know. So tell me Job, v4, *“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? Tell me, if you understand. <sup>5</sup> Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone <sup>7</sup>while the morning stars sang together & all the angels shouted for joy?”*

Do you know what happened in the beginning? Was there a big bang? Is it due to a big God? Creation or Evolution? Job you seem quick to tell me how to run my world, so how did this world begin? And what do you know about the far reaches of the earth? What do you know about the seas? The dawn? The light? The weather? The afterlife? The stars? The heavens?

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Surely you know these little things if you are telling me, the God of this world how I should run this world and especially how I should run your life. Job don’t you realise that man might be the pinnacle of all my creation but you are not be all and end all. It’s not all about you! Job *“who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain and a path for the thunderstorm, <sup>26</sup> to water a land where no one lives, an uninhabited desert, <sup>27</sup> to satisfy a desolate wasteland & make it sprout with grass?”*

Job think about it? Why would I send rain to a desert if no one actually lives there? Why would I turn a wasteland it a place of plenty if there is no human there to enjoy it? Job do you know? Do you know the answers to these questions?

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You see God is trying to teach Job a new perspective. He is pointing him in a completely different direction. Job’s suffering has narrowed Job’s vision. All he can see is his situation. All he can feel is his pain. And so it is like God says come with me Job. Let’s go for a walk, let me conduct a tour of this world, this wonderful world.

He’s saying, *“Look at that! Did you see that? Do you see what I made? How about that storm! Did you see that storm? Look at the thunder. Listen to the thunder. Look at the lightning bolts. What about the snow on the mountains? What about that funny looking creature? How about the way light works? Do you understand the complexities of the world that I have made? Open your eyes to what is around you. Look around you at this amazing creation. How much do you know about it Job? How much do you really know about it?”*

And if you don’t understand what is going on in our world how are you going to understand the suffering that is going on in your world? But Job, I made this world. I know the answers to all these questions and a million more. You see I was not just there at creation, I am the creator. I was the one who put together the blueprints for this world. I am the one who knows how every piece of the puzzle fits together. Job I am the wise one here.

And we will look at it in a moment but Job’s response is to put his hand over his mouth. To stop his ignorance from coming out of it any longer. God has come down to his level. God has spoken to Him. Job has had a personal encounter with the God who created the world.

And this is a massive contrast with what has happened for the last 35 chapters. In the story up until now we have heard men talk and talk. We have listened to theology and philosophy and psychology but unless we have a personal encounter with God it is all hot air. God is the God of wisdom. This is his world. And if we want to be wise we don't get it through a debate but through an encounter with the true & living God.

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And this God graciously makes himself known to Job. And that silences him. Job can rest secure and live in the light of God's word. He doesn't have to have the answers to all his questions. And if Job can do that, how much more can we do that? For according to Colossians 2 *"the full riches of complete understanding, the mystery of God"* ... is found in *"Christ,<sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge"*.

God's wisdom is found in a person Jesus Christ. And we can debate about him with others. We can read about him in books but ultimately we need to have a personal encounter with him and his word. Jesus reaches out to us in grace. Jesus offers us a relationship with him by grace. And we respond to him in faith. Not blind faith as if we know nothing about Him. But in biblical faith where what we know about him is trustworthy and what we don't know about Him and his world, well we are happy to trust him with that as well.

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## 2. God is wise and **God is sovereign (chapter 39)**

Because as we reflect on the questions that Job has been asked in chap 38 we see that they are more than, do you understand what is happening Job? They are also asking Job are you in control of these things Job? *"Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons? Can you raise your voice to the clouds?"* Are you in control of the heavens and the earth Job?

Then God's questions move from the inanimate world to the world of animals. *"Do you hunt the prey for the lioness & satisfy the hunger of the lions<sup>40</sup> when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in a thicket?"* What even the lions need help from God to get a feed? They are the kings of the jungle! <sup>41</sup>*"Who provides food for the raven when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?"* What even the birds depend upon God for food each day?

And what about the mountain goats or the wild donkey or the wild ox? Man cannot domesticate these wild creatures but God can. He can harness them. He can tell them where to go and what to do. Man is pretty good with some animals but there are a lot that are just plain wild. But none of God's creatures are too wild for the Lord God their creator.

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And what about the ostrich! How silly is she? *"She lays her eggs on the ground and lets them warm in the sand,<sup>15</sup> unmindful that a foot may crush them, that some wild animal may trample them.<sup>16</sup> She treats her young harshly, as if they were not hers; she cares not that her labor was in vain,<sup>17</sup> for God did not endow her with wisdom or give her a share of good sense.<sup>18</sup> Yet when she spreads her feathers to run, she laughs at horse and rider"*.

God even makes the dumb animals. God has created all sort of creatures. In fact with some of them he has bit of fun. But with others he did some of his best work. What about the war horse for example, *"It paws fiercely, rejoicing in its strength, and charges into the fray.<sup>22</sup> It laughs at fear, afraid of nothing; it does not shy away from the sword"*. Job who controls the warhorse, the hawk and the eagle?

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And the answer again and again is, Job doesn't know. Job cannot know. Job isn't in control but our God is. He is not just wise when it comes to the world around us, he is sovereign. In the words of Abraham Kuyper, *"There is not an inch of this universe that Jesus Christ does not say "It is mine."* The earth is the Lords and everything in it. He is wise. He is sovereign.

And so as God asks Job question after question, Job although he doesn't answer out loud is saying to each question no I don't know. No I can't do that. Only God knows those answers. And as we hear these rhetorical questions asked we are drawn into the conversation as well. Dr Stu Blanch will be able to say yes to some of those questions and maybe David Attenborough will know a few more answers. But none of us know little more than the basics about how the world was made, how it runs and how it all works.

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But God does. And so our focus is shifted away from the question of suffering and pain and onto the God who is in control of a world that is full of suffering and pain. He knows far more about what is going on in this world than we do. He is God after all. Can we really comprehend his wisdom? Can we really understand his majesty? Can we really fathom the deep things of this world? And so Job's response is silence.

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Chapter 40:3, *"Then Job answered the LORD. <sup>4</sup>'I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. <sup>5</sup>I spoke once but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more."* Sometimes we need to be silent before our God. Sometimes we need to listen to him speak not speak ourselves. Sometimes we need to stop defending ourselves, stop arguing our case, stop listening to the voices all around us and instead clear our agenda and listen to God speak. If wisdom is fearing God, let's fear God. If wisdom is found in an encounter with God, let's open ourselves up to what he is going to do in our lives.

Our world is full of action. Most of us have noise in our ears most of the day. How can we listen to God when that is happening? How can we meditate on his word? How can we be open to his Holy Spirit? Job is silent and maybe, just maybe, you and I need to find ourselves before our Lord in silence more often. He is wise after all and he is powerful and thirdly

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### 3. God is Just. (chapters 40-41)

For Job's silence is not enough. In the words of Archbishop Glenn Davies *"God doesn't want the dumbfounded silence of a conquered foe, but a joyful submission that flows from the springs of a repentant heart."* And to get that in Job, God has to continue his questioning. And this time the emphasis is on God's justice and how God can and will control the evil in this world and ensure goodness will win in the end. So the Lord speaks a second time.

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<sup>6</sup>Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm: <sup>7</sup>*"Brace yourself like a man; I will question you and you shall answer me. <sup>8</sup>'Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself? <sup>9</sup>Do you have an arm like God's & can your voice thunder like his? <sup>10</sup>Then adorn yourself with glory & splendour, and clothe yourself in honour and majesty. Slide 19 <sup>11</sup>Unleash the fury of your wrath, look at all who are proud and bring them low, <sup>12</sup>look at all who are proud and humble them, crush the wicked where they stand. <sup>13</sup>Bury them all in the dust together; shroud their faces in the grave. <sup>14</sup>Then I myself will admit to you that your own right hand can save you."*

Job you have claimed that I was not just when I sent you suffering, well here are my royal robes, my judges wig, my kingly crown, go on you do a better job. It is a bit like that movie Bruce Almighty where TV reporter Bruce Nolan complains about God once too often and God gives him the chance to do a better job himself. Which of course is just a recipe for disaster. But here God says to Job can you do a better job? Let's start with the Behemoth.

And God goes onto describe something that looks a bit like a hippopotamus. A creature that in ancient times was incredibly difficult to capture or control or domesticate. So what has a hippo got to do with justice? Let's park that thought for a moment or two and look at the second creature that God asks Job to

subdue, Leviathan. Which begins to look a bit like the crocodile or at least a mixture between a crocodile and fire breathing dragon.

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*“Can you pull in Leviathan with a fishhook or tie down its tongue with a rope? <sup>2</sup> Can you put a cord through its nose or pierce its jaw with a hook? ... Who can strip off its outer coat? Who can penetrate its double coat of armour? <sup>14</sup> Who dares open the doors of its mouth, ringed about with fearsome teeth? ... Flames stream from its mouth; sparks of fire shoot out. <sup>20</sup> Smoke pours from its nostrils as from a boiling pot over burning reeds. <sup>21</sup> Its breath sets coals ablaze & flames dart from its mouth....” “Nothing on earth is its equal— a creature without fear. <sup>34</sup> It looks down on all that are haughty; it is king over all that are proud.”*

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Now that’s not a normal crocodile! That’s almost supernatural. And that is the point. Leviathan is a bit like the Hounds of Baskerville in the famous Sherlock Holmes story, like Smaug in the Hobbit, like the Beast of the book of Revelation. Actually I think it is the beast of Revelation, it is a pictorial description of the evil one, the devil. For throughout the OT Satan is often called Leviathan. Death is often referred to as Leviathan’s lair.

Now Job cannot control the hippo. Let alone Satan. But both are God’s creatures, created by God and subservient to God. God is a God of justice because he can domesticate even the wild animals like the hippo and he even puts a hook in the mouth of Satan and controls evil and death. Evil is on a leash. God can put a hedge around people and protect them from evil, we saw he did that in the opening chapters of Job. But sometimes his purposes are achieved by breaking down that hedge. Saying to Satan this far but not an inch further!

God alone can bring justice because God alone can control the whole ambit of this world. The good and the evil. The wise and the unwise. The animals and all the human beings. And we see that most dramatically at play in the book of Revelation. The beast of the earth, the beast of the sea, they wreak havoc on this world, until God says enough is enough. And he sends his son to destroy the devil, to kill death itself, to get rid of Leviathan once and for all.

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God is good and completely just. God is sovereign. God is wise. And I find those points fascinating because isn’t that the way that the problem of suffering has been classically portrayed? if God is *all good*, then he must want to abolish all suffering. And if he is *all knowing*, then there is no suffering that he is unaware of. And if he is *all powerful*, he must be able to do what he wishes. Therefore if suffering exists in the world, God can’t be all knowing, all powerful and all good!

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It seemed that God was ignoring Job’s questions about pain, suffering & evil but now we see he wasn’t. He was instead laying down a framework to put everything, the whole world into perspective. In other words, God has found a way in which he can be loving, just and powerful all at once. But because we don’t see the full picture, we can’t see how it all works together. But he does. He sees the full picture. And in his goodness, he is determined to bring good out of bad. The problem is we won’t always see that good, and so we will just have to trust Him. Which leads us to how

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#### **4. Job responds to this God (Job 42:1-6)**

*“Then Job replied to the LORD: <sup>2</sup> “I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. <sup>3</sup> You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.”*

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God’s speech has not humiliated Job it has humbled Job. In the words of Christopher Morley *“I had a million questions to ask God but when I met Him they all fled my mind & it didn’t seem to matter.”* Job



doesn't have the answers to any of his questions but he now knows that God does have all the answers. And he can trust that God will do what is right.

There are things too wonderful for Job to know. Too wise for him to consider. Too high above his pay grade & that is ok. Job doesn't have to know everything there can be still be mystery in this world. Things we don't understand but that God does understand. Friends often pride gets in the way with our relationship with God. We can speak without knowledge about things we really know very little about. We need to be humbled like Job was humbled. We are small. God is big. We are weak, God is strong. We are foolish, God is wise. Trust him.

Slide 26

*"You said, 'Listen now & I will speak; I will question you & you shall answer me.'<sup>5</sup> My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. <sup>6</sup>Therefore I despise myself & repent in dust & ashes"* Job has to repent of what he said to God about his suffering. The friends were wrong, Job's sin hadn't caused his suffering. But his suffering had led to sin that he needs to repent off. He spoke wrongly about God. He claimed that God was not just & Job was wrong

Slide 27

The great Puritan, Thomas Watson, once said that, "Repentance is a spiritual medicine made up of six special ingredients – sight of sin (Job now sees what he has done wrong), sorrow for sin (he repents in dust and ashes), confession of sin (he admits his fault), shame for sin, hatred of sin, and turning from sin." All these are seen in Job. Watson goes on to say "If anyone is left out, it loses its virtue, its power, and its potency."

Slide 28

So maybe that is a good place for us to be as well. Are repentant this morning? Is our God too small? Have we spoken rashly and foolishly about God and his world? Have we humbled ourselves before God and his word? Are we found in silence before God as he speaks to us? Are we willing to trust in God's wisdom rather than our own wisdom? Do we believe that in the resurrection of Jesus, Satan is now chained, he is on a leash, evil is not in control?

Do we? Then in the words of preacher David Strain, *"When the Holy Spirit walks into the attic of your heart & turns on the light & all the skeletons in your closets are exposed, what will you do? Confess. Confess. Don't blow up in anger. Don't let ego defend you. Don't let your pride deceive you. Confess. You see, the Scriptures interrogate our hearts not to condemn us, but to save us."*

**Song – Jesus thank you**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHp8eThI2qk>

**Song – Who is on the Lord's Side?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfunlcqcBXA>

## **Benediction.**

<sup>4</sup>"You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.'<sup>5</sup> My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. <sup>6</sup>Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

## **Morning Tea**

Our morning tea is a vital way that we give and receive fellowship during a time like this. We don't want to be just consumers of Church, we want to be a part of the family of God. So why not give one or two people a call. Who might your ring now?