

Minster Bethel Congregational Church MBCC

6th September

Welcome to today's thoughts. I am sorry this does not follow our Genesis theme. This will return soon. Unfortunately the the prepared sheet is on a computer many miles away so we will continue with Genesis soon.

We have borrowed this weeks thoughts from the Jersey Salvation Army. (They have borrowed many of our thoughts)

I hope you enjoy

It is well with my soul



It is well with my soul

I was talking to someone this week who started recounting all the difficult things that had happened in 2020 so far. It was quite a long list, and he finished by asking the question "how on earth do we cope with all this?!" That conversation got me thinking about what our response could be...

In the Bible at the beginning of a book called Job, it says:

Job was a man who lived in Uz. He was honest inside and out, a man of his word, who was totally devoted to God and hated evil with a passion. He had seven sons and three daughters...

God said to Satan, "Have you noticed my friend Job? There's no one quite like him—honest and true to his word, totally devoted to God and hating evil."

...Sometime later, while Job's children were having one of their parties at the home of the oldest son, a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys grazing in the field next to us when Sabeans attacked. They stole the animals and killed the field hands. I'm the only one to get out alive and tell you what happened." While he was still talking, another messenger arrived and said, "Bolts of lightning struck the sheep and the shepherds and fried them—burned them to a crisp. I'm the only one to get out alive and tell you what happened." While he was still talking, another messenger arrived and said, "Chaldeans coming from three directions raided the camels and massacred the camel drivers. I'm the only one to get out alive and tell you what happened." While he was still talking, another messenger arrived and said, "Your children were having a party at the home of the oldest brother when a tornado swept in off the desert and struck the house. It collapsed on the young people and they died. I'm the only one to get out alive and tell you what happened." Job got to his feet, ripped his robe, shaved his head, then fell to the ground and worshiped:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, naked I'll return to the womb of the earth. God gives, God takes. God's name be ever blessed."

Not once through all this did Job sin; not once did he blame God.

Hopefully none of us have gone through difficulty like Job has in these verses.

Job went from everything being fine one minute, to total disaster the next. His livelihood as a farmer gone. His home destroyed in a tornado. And his children killed as his house was destroyed.

When you read that story, you can't help asking yourself - what the flip would he have been feeling and thinking in that moment.

That story is a complicated one - there are bits that are too complicated to unpack in this short message, and are for another time.

But the underlying message is that Job finds the strength and courage to believe in God. To believe that God is inherently good, and completely faithful.

He makes the decision not to blame God, but to praise God in spite of the difficulties he is facing. He is determined to keep on praising God.

As we read through the rest of Job's story, this first verse is only the beginning of his troubles. He loses friends, he comes up against so much, but continues to praise his faithful God. But Job's story doesn't end in sadness and pain. It ends with God lifting Job out of the mess, and restoring him. It ends with Job saying to God:

"I'm convinced: You can do anything and everything. Nothing and no one can upset your plans."

With all that he had lived through, the chaos, disasters and horrendous life- events, he looked back on his life and recognise God's faithfulness.

I love the way Job responds to God with praise in all circumstances, putting his whole trust in a God who doesn't let him down. God fulfills His promises and more, restoring Job and showing him so much love.

It is easy to see all the difficulties in life, but I want to ask the question:

What would it look like if we responded like Job?

What if we actively praised God, everyday, regardless of our circumstances?

What if our message to a world of pain, was a testimony of God's faithfulness?

Our hymn this week is Blessed be Your name, is based on Job's story. My personal testimony of singing this song in a dark, dark place, is that God really is so so faithfull!



Hymn

Blessed be your name - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTpTQ4kBLxA>

Blessed be Your name

In the land that is plentiful

Where Your streams of abundance flow

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name

When I'm found in the desert place

Though I walk through the wilderness

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name

When the sun's shining down on me

When the world's 'all as it should be'

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name

On the road marked with suffering

Though there's pain in the offering

Blessed be Your name

Every blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise

When the darkness closes in, Lord still I will say

Every blessing You pour out I'll turn back to praise

When the darkness closes in, Lord still I will say

[Blessed be the name of the Lord](#)

[Blessed be Your name](#)

[Blessed be the name of the Lord](#)

[Blessed be Your glorious name](#)

You give and take away, You give and take away

My heart will choose to say Lord, blessed be Your name

You give and take away, You give and take away

My heart will choose to say, Lord, blessed be Your name

Let us Pray

Father, as we look around us we are often overwhelmed.

There is so much pain, fear, uncertainty and struggle.

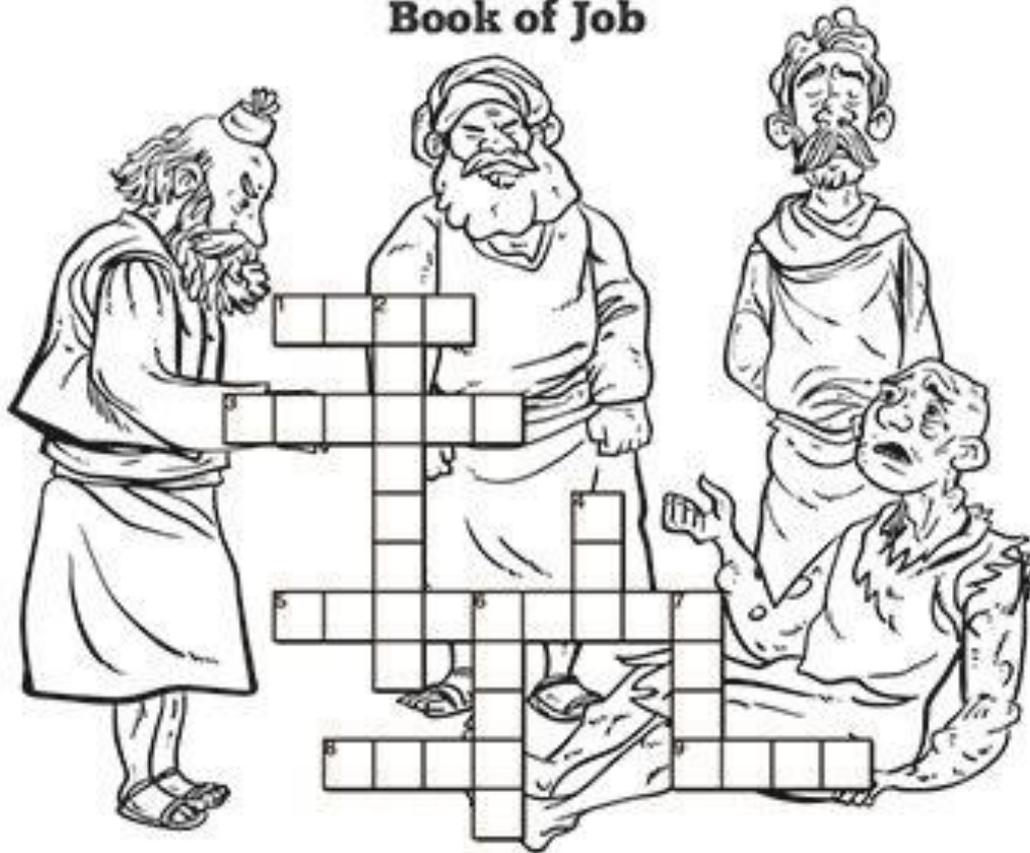
And yet we believe that You are a God of love and faithfulness.

**As we praise you, in the good and bad of life, help us to fix our eyes on you,
And may we find strength, comfort and joy in You.**

Amen.

THE STORY OF JOB

Book of Job



Across

1. Job was honorable and _____.
3. First Satan took Job's wealth and _____.
5. Satan felt that Job loved God only because he had received so many _____ from God.
8. Job's _____ encouraged him to curse God.
9. God told Satan that he could do whatever he wanted to Job, except _____ him.

Down

2. Because Job had faith, God blessed him with more _____ wealth and possessions than before.
4. How many children did Job have?
6. Satan made Job's body covered in _____.
7. Satan thought making Job's body _____ would make him reject God.

**May God's blessing surround you each day
As you trust Him and walk in His way;
May His presence within
Guard and keep you from sin.
Go in peace, go in joy, go in love!**