



Job was a good and faithful man. The story is familiar. Job became ill; he suffered. He lost his livestock. His children died. And still he was a good man who loved God. His friends wondered how he sinned and why God was punishing him. Job cried out to God wondering why the innocent suffer and the wicked live well—A question we ask in our own day. Job wants from God to listen to his cry.

The text from the lectionary from the book of Job is when God responds to Job. William Blake, in his illustrated manuscript, captures a vision of an overpowering whirlwind and God, Yahweh, speaks. God speaks to Job. In The Message God speaks,

*“Why do you talk without knowing what you’re talking about? Pull yourself together, Job! Up on your feet! Stand tall! I have some questions for you, and I want some straight answers. Where were you when I created the earth? Tell me, since you know so much!*

God has come, and Job cannot understand the

mystery of God or God’s care for all creation. God does not answer Job’s questions, but God hears his cries and comes. Job voices questions we ask in the midst of suffering. If the restoration of a family for Job and his health, and his livestock and his friends leave us with questions, it is because we continue to ask why we suffer.

The Lectionary writers paired this passage from Mark as Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee with his disciples in a boat. A violent storm appears suddenly. The disciples and Jesus have been doing powerful acts, healing and teaching about God. Suddenly, caught in the power of the wind, they are out of control and in fear of their lives. Their teacher, Jesus, is not listening. He sleeps calmly in the boat, unaware of waves crashing around them as the wind picks up more water and thrashes the boat. We too sometimes sit in chaos and out of control, crying out because we fear we are going to drown. The disciples waken Jesus, and he cries out, *“Peace! Be still!”* to the wind. And waves cease and the wind dies.

What does it mean to live a life in Christ when we encounter the chaos of the winds around us in our own time? How do live with the fear that is part of our human experience? How does faith change the way we live?

Susan +