

Care of Creation June 2017

Is this how God works?

The world is a dangerous place, with Climate Change and wars, to say nothing of local crime, with even children attacking dairy owners. I listen to a Bible scholar who likes to point out how certain patterns repeat in history. God tells prophets what God is going to do. When people listen and act, things go well, as in the story of Joseph. Daniel also came to be respected. When people do not listen a series of increasing disasters makes the point clear. E.g. The Flood, although we do not get the full story. With Moses and Pharaoh it comes clearly. Jeremiah had a hard time but the powerful people who had not listened ended up in Babylon. Jesus warned of the destruction of Jerusalem and believers moved out to tell of the Resurrection somewhere else. In our time we have had Silent Spring from Rachel Carson and a succession of warnings from scientists, some of them Christians. The sea levels are rising, storms and droughts are becoming more drastic. Are we listening?

As for wars, The Lord of Hosts was the name the people called the One who could save them. Tribal battles were the background to Israeli as well as Muslim history and The Buddha's father had hoped Gautama would follow him as a warrior king. These things still go on. A young woman in Auckland, Lizzie Marvelly, praying that we not yet be blown to smithereens, sees certain modern leaders as "overgrown toddlers in a sandpit" and fears the day when one of them hits another with his spade. Wars still go on and the bigger the nations the bigger the mess. It is not only Christians who want peace, but differences of belief can become another cause for strife. Can we learn to love our neighbour even if she/he holds beliefs as different from ours as were those of the Samaritans and the Jews? It was to a Samaritan woman that Jesus openly declared that He was the Messiah.

I am wondering how this fits in with other teachings – like the sheep hearing the shepherd's voice and trustfully following. We are not told what happens if they do not listen, but no one can imagine a sheep as stupid as that.

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