

Monday Quotes



Grain

“Grief is a symptom of letting go when we don’t want to.”
–Dr. Amitha Kalaichandran

Field

38Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind: ²“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? ³Gird up your loins like a man, I will question you, and you shall declare to me. ⁴“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? ⁶On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone ⁷when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy? ⁸“Or who shut in the sea with doors when it burst out from the womb?— ⁹when I made the clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, ¹⁰and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors, ¹¹and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stopped’? Job 38:1-11

Thoughts

Job was a famous ancient sufferer. We recall that in earlier chapters, his friends only made matters worse for him, claiming that the righteous wouldn't experience the kind of misfortune that he did. If Job lived in the 21st century during COVID and talked about losing his health, livelihood, and family, would his friends have been more sympathetic? Instead of spewing out lines that could have comprised a book on everything not to say to the suffering, maybe they would have said, “Right, COVID. This is a hard time, brother,” and they would have shared their own personal stories of loss. Maybe they would have joined with Job in oscillating between trusting in and questioning God, and in the end, letting go of some of their certainty about the details of how God loved.

A worldwide Job-like experience descended upon us during the pandemic and still isn't over, especially for those who lost loved ones, employment, or their health. Many children are still not protected in the U.S. And some countries are still in the thralls of the pandemic. We may join with Job and ask why this has happened/is happening. In response to Job's own demands, he was given a tour of the universe with an accompanying message: ⁴“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.” The vast creation was more complex than Job expected. He couldn't reduce what was wrong in his life into a simple formula.

In the end, Job emerged from his suffering celebrating new horizons. Anna Carter Florence points out that Job even had a new understanding of equity, sharing his inheritance with both his sons and daughters.

So many of the things that seemed secure, beginning with daily routines and simple interactions, were shaken during the pandemic. We are still feeling the impacts. Some people are grieving more deeply than others. In our grieving and celebrating, let us be good friends to one another and notice what propels us into newness in our personal lives and society. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy