

***If I were God....!***

*Genesis 24-9,15-end; Psalm 65; Revelation 4; Luke 8<sup>22-25</sup>*

*Where is your faith?[Luke 8<sup>25</sup>]*

How do you respond when the creator of the world, the one who called it into being by the sheer force of his will, who made man and woman and breathed life into them, who (according to the Psalm and the Gospel) can command the wind and the waves, but doesn't do what you or I might want or expect?

There is a difference between what God can do, what we think he should do and what he will do!

- ✠ Revelation 4 is always a good starting place when we want to think about God - John gets a chance to peek through the open door into heavens throne room. The image of God enthroned and surrounded by the emerald rainbow, surrounded by the 24 elders and with the 4 living creatures accompanied by thunder and lightening and the counterpoint of the day and night singing of **Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come and You are worthy, our Lord God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you have created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**

That image is mirrored in the Psalm, which is a Psalm of praise - **Praise is due to you in Zion** for this is the God who **answers prayer** but also to whom **vows be paid**. This is the God who **set fast the mountains** and who stills **the raging of the seas**.

This is the image that continues into the Gospel - of Jesus being woken from sleep and **rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased and there was a calm**. It is the response of the disciples that brings us back to the awe of Revelation 4 - **who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water and they obey him?**

Our God can do anything - in fact that there isn't anything that is that he didn't form or cause to be and there is nothing that is that isn't answerable to him!

- ✠ In Mark's account of the stilling of the storm there is an additional phrase: the disciples say to Jesus, don't you care that we are perishing? And there are those who, in reading the story in Genesis 2, believe that God set humanity up to fail. God's power is seen in creation - especially in the crown of his creation (you and me) - but why does it feel like God chooses not to help us; that God opts to stand back; that it can feel like God sets us up to fail?

True faith trust that if God doesn't intervene, if Jesus can be asleep through whatever storm afflicts us, then we can still trust: God knows when to intervene.

What if we were to try to think about this from God's perspective. The story from Genesis helps us with this. God thought about what was needed - Humans were created to be responsible for the world (dominion has become too biased towards power without responsibility); Male and female were created for one another - and in the creation of difference God created sex as a positive thing and always linked it to the deepest level of commitment between human beings; Innocence was part of the creation - **they were naked and were not ashamed!** how far society has moved from that, although shame seems to be more out of fashion than nudity; boundaries were created for safety - God knew what we didn't need to know, yet (following the Billy Connolly principle or *never trust a man who, when left alone in a room with a tea-cosy, doesn't try it on*) the boundary was tested - one tree, one fruit, one warning, one failing!

God does not abandon his creation when it lets him down, but plans for a way out and it is this we celebrate in the Eucharist!

How would you complete the sentence, ***If I were God....?*** Tempting, isn't it to place ourselves at the centre of worship and as the axis around which the world spins, but if we do with responsibility the same as our responsibility for the created world it doesn't bode too well.

Far better to leave the creation and the stilling of storms to God, even if - especially if - that doesn't suit us!