# God speaks to Job in the midst of a whirlwind. This theophany is meant to remind Job and really all of humanity that we are not God. Even those among us, like Job who have behaved righteously, have many material possessions and have been blessed with good health and everything we need in life need this reminder occasionally. I have been very sympathetic to Job up until this point. It has certainly struck me as being unfair that he had everything taken away from him. It is not a surprise that he wants answers from God. The problem for Job is that he is but one creature in a vast world/creation and a mere human being at that. This world is highly unpredictable at times. We cannot control the weather, we cannot control other people, we cannot control where we are born, who are parents are, when illness will strike, and the list goes on and on. I don’t know about you but I like to have control over my life. I like at least the illusion that there are elements of my life that I know are predictable and go exactly as I plan on them going. Time and time again I have been proven wrong. Time and time again I am reminded that not only is this God that appears out of a whirlwind sufficient but I am no more important than anyone else. Time and time again I find my fulfillment not in anything I buy or anything I do but in serving others in times of their need rather than my own. This is when it possible to go outside ourselves to see the bigger picture that we need one another. We need God most of all. It is when we approach our lives with humility that we can know the vast mystery of a God who has created and provided for all creatures. When we put our own supposed needs before the needs of other living beings, including those of plants, animals, fish, then we start thinking we can control nature, we can control one another and we end up disrupting the natural processes of the life cycle of creation. Sometimes, in fact, quite often unexpected things happen that we not only can’t predict but have absolutely no control over. If you don’t believe me ask Ruth Hamilton. This is the headline NPR recently wrote about Ruth: “A meteorite crashes through a home in Canada, barely missing a woman's head.” This meteorite came through her roof in the middle of the night landing close to her head. She awoke not because it hit her but because drywall hit her face. Obviously, Ruth is astounded that such a random event could happen and she said she had never been so scared in her life. She was not hurt at all. Ruth lives in British Columbia…at first the police thought of the obvious, most rationale answer, that a nearby construction site had an explosion and a piece of a building had landed in Ruth’s house. It turned out the rock came straight from the sky. Ruth wants the meteorite back when scientists are done studying it because she feels it’s a lucky talisman and she is grateful to be alive. I’m guessing that nobody here has experienced a meteorite coming through their roof, but I imagine that most of us have experienced a random event that woke us up to a deep place of gratitude and humility and made us realize something about the fragility of human life.

Humility is not necessarily what is shown by God in the theophany of a whirlwind but it is what’s shown in God’s decision to come into the world in the flesh as Jesus Christ. Especially since God knows all too well the cruelty and danger humanity presents not only to itself but to a human God. To know that God was willing to endure what we endure and yet show us a completely new way of living and relating to one another shows us that God’s nature is both awesome and empathetic. Although we cannot be exactly like Jesus, we can use his example to be more like Jesus. We too can try to help people understand that they are loved just as they are. Jesus called people from all walks of life to follow him. The disciples were working men, fisherman, tax collectors, and not the rulers and wealthy of society.

Yes there are people who do evil things. Yes, people sin daily, we all do. But these actions are often caused by mistreatment, people that are hurt or dismissed or abused from a young age are not evil but may practice the only example they have ever known. It is so important to know not only God’s love but the love of God through our caregivers and guardians, teachers and mentors. We, who know the example of Jesus, know that all are beloved and that the mystery of suffering and who experiences it, is not selective or deserved. Suffering is sometimes created by unjust systems, inequitable distribution of resources, war, persecution and other human created factors. God lets us know today from the whirlwind that this creation was made way before we human beings ever entered into it. It was made so that all had food to eat and there was a balance in the ecosystem. All beings thoughtfully made and taken care of by their creator. There is so much beyond human understanding that is unknowable to us here on earth. God’s ways are truly beyond anything we can ask or imagine. We understand this world, ourselves and one another from such a narrow perspective while God sees everything from the very beginning, from all times and spaces. God as the creator of all, truly sees and knows everyone, every miniscule part of creation. But even so, God chose to be present to us in human form and decided to become a servant not a king. There is so much we can never understand or control in our lives and in our world. The disciples constantly lift up to us the ways we misinterpret humanities role here on earth by equating themselves with God and asking for a place at God’s right hand and left hand in glory. Job is also asking for something that is not for us to ask for: to be spared loss and suffering: both parts of the human condition.

The reason for this is a cause of great mystery… but our acceptance of this aspect of life and all the blessings that come into our lives are important. It is also important to realize that overarching all of these things and all of life is a Creator that loves us and wants our love and praise. A good friend shared this new poem with me titled I’m Learning to sit with not Knowing by Carrie Newcomer and it is a reflection on acceptance of the unknown:

I’m Learning to sit with not Knowing

I’m learning to sit with not knowing.
Even when my restless mind begins jumping
From a worried
What next?
To a frightened
What if?
To a hard edged and impatient.
Why aren’t you already there?

I’m learning to sit and listen
To pat myself on the knee,
Lay my hand on my heart,
Take a deep breath,
And laugh at myself.
To befriend my mistakes,
Especially the ones,
That show me how
I most need to change.

I’m learning to sit with whatever comes
(Even though I’m a planner.)
Because so much of this life
Can’t be measured or predicted.
Because wonder and suffering visit
When we least expect
And rarely in equal measure.

I’m learning to sit with
What I might never know
Might never learn,
Might never heal.

I’m learning to sit with
What might waltz in and surprise me,
Might crash into my days,
With unspeakable sorrow
Or uncontainable delight.

I’m learning to sit with not knowing.

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