

Sunday, October 24, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Job 42:1-6, 10-17
“Now My Eye Sees”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In pairs or groups of three, have participants share their responses to the question: “How has being part of this group been meaningful for you?”

Job 42:1-6, 10-17. Context. This week's reading begins with Job's response to God who appeared to him out of the whirlwind, concluding the long and often contentious dialogue that Job had with his friends over the place of suffering in a world created by a good, all-powerful God. Job's response to God is rather terse and enigmatic: he will admit that God's wisdom and power far exceed his own (he quotes God's own words which God had used to call Job to account); but he does not tell us that he has decided that God has not dealt with him unjustly. It would seem that God's appearing to Job, who had assumed that God was remote and unreachable, had caused him to set aside all his earlier questions, even if God's appearance didn't quite answer them. The reading continues with the conclusion to the prose story with which the book of Job opens (God tests Job with suffering; Job refuses to curse God for his suffering) that had been interrupted by the preceding dialogue about God's justice. The conclusion is a classic "happy ending" with Job receiving double the blessing he had enjoyed before and reinforces the rather simplistic thinking of Job's friends, whom God explicitly had said are wrong. But coming as it does on the heels of the dialogue of Job and God, it leaves ambiguous, or at least multivalent, the "message" of the story.

Read Job 42:1-6, 10-17

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn't make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Job 42:1-6, 10-17 again.

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Group Dialogue:

(Read the entirety of chapter 42, if time permits.)

Optional Opening Exercise:

Draw or color an image that represents being restored. For the more tech-savvy participants, use a cell phone, tablet, or other device to find images that represent restoration. Share your images with the group. Another option is to talk about times when they have felt restored.

Opening Question: What does restoration look like?

- How would you feel if you were Job after your encounter with God and the restoration of your property and relationships? (Job's cattle are doubled!)
 - Justified
 - Perturbed
 - Confused
 - Blessed
 - Acquitted
 - Humbled
 - Other
- Do the abundant gifts given to Job make up for the trials he endured? If not, why do you think God blessed Job with so much?
- Does Job get what he wants from God? How does Job get more or less than he desired?
- How do you think Job's understanding of God has enlarged since the Satan first encountered him (42:1-6)?
- When God mentions (v. 7) that Job has been right, do you think that refers to Job's response to God or that Job has been right all along?
- Do you think Job's action (v. 15) of giving his daughters a share equal to that of their brothers (not a common practice) and his prayers for his friends (v. 10) had something to do with his trials? [Interestingly, Job was already offering sacrifices for his children just in case they might have sinned (1:5).
- Do you agree with the sentiment, "Being with God is more important than understanding God"? Why or why not?
- What might we learn from Job about what it means to trust God in all situations?

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

God of Resurrection, we long for the day when your righteousness will be at home. Our hearts are weary from hearing stories of suffering and pain. Yet, we do not despair. As people of hope, we remember that Jesus did not abandon the cross but took on the sting of death. It is the empty tomb that reminds us that death, evil, and sin do not have the last word. Rather, the empty grave

has the last word. Your love prevails. Give us the eyes to see and the words to share about your goodness. **Amen.**

And now we pray The Lord's Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven

hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.