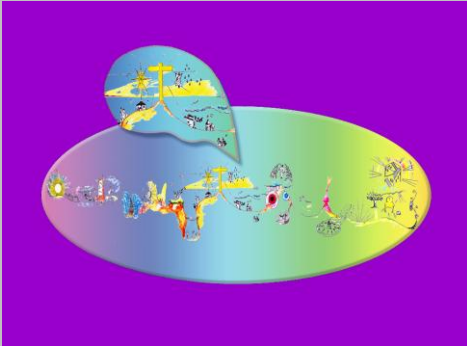


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Eternal Fellowship News Bulletin

We believe in one GOD, in three persons; FATHER, SON and HOLY SPIRIT. We regard the Bible (both Hebrew Bible and New Testament) as the only infallible authoritative WORD OF GOD.

HULDAH MINISTRY aims to return to the Word Of God, founded on Hebrew background and to interpret it from Hebraic perspective, acknowledging that Jesus is a Jew and the Jewish-ness of His teaching as a continuation from the Hebrew Bible. The Ministry also aims to put His teaching into practice, to have a closer relationship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to regularly have a Christian fellowship so that this-worldly kingdom of God will materialise in the midst of the followers of Jesus here and now, as well as earnestly seeking Christ's Return to establish the otherworldly Kingdom of God on earth.

All activities are free of charge and no obligation whatever. Just enjoy our fellowship!

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HULDAH MINISTRY

LETTER TO THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST

【 ENIGMA OF SUFFERING IN A DYING WORLD 】

Job continued his discourse: "How I long for the months gone by, for the days when God watched over me, when his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness! Oh, for the day when I was in my prime, when God's intimate friendship blessed my house, when the Almighty was still with me and my children with cream and the rock poured out for me streams of olive oil.

When I went to the gate of the city and took my seat in the public square, the young men saw me and stepped aside and the old men rose their feet; the chief men refrained from speaking and covered their mouths with their hands; the voice of the nobles were hushed and their tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths. Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him. The man who was dying blessed me; I made the widow's heart sing. I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth. I thought, 'I shall die in my own house, my days as numerous as the grains of sand. My roots will reach to the water, and the dew will lie all night on my branches. My glory will remain fresh in me, the bow ever new in my hand.

"Men listened to me expectantly, waiting in silence for my counsel. After I had spoken, they spoke no more; my words fell gently on their ears. They waited for me as for showers and drank in my words as the spring rain. When I smiled at them, they scarcely believed it; the light of my face was precious

to them. I chose the way of them and sat as their chief; I dwelt as a king among his troops; I was like one who comforts mourners. **JOB29.**

After his three friends abruptly silence their arguments, Job makes his final long speech, a soliloquy as his final defense in Job 29-31, followed by a surprise interruption by a mystery man Elihu and also by God's own voice out of the whirlwind. Job reviews all his past life, beginning with God's blessings, which is depicted in chapter 29, as quoted above. In his earlier days, the sense of the immediacy of God's presence was his daily experience. He was a rich man with a grown family of seven sons and three daughters. He lived blamelessly and uprightly, and had renown as a good man, a man of God. He was pious and moral, and actually the greatest man of all the people of the East according to the account in chapter 1. His material prosperity itself was a sign of God's blessing and he lived out His standard. As the Scripture again and again presents God as the One who is good, who rewards those who seek Him and live obediently, so Job enjoyed God's abundance in every area of his life, physically, environmentally, domestically, socially, materialistically, and spiritually. He willingly and unsparingly helped the poor, the fatherless, the widows, the strangers, the dying men, the blind, the lame, and all those in need. He never doubted that his own death would proceed with peace and honour. He naturally and reasonably looked forward to such a blessed life. But then the utterly unexpected happened. Recalling the days in his prime, in the last third section of this chapter 29, verses 21 onwards, Job somewhat carelessly generates reckless and self-respecting statements to exalt himself to the top of the people as chief and king, although he later regrets and acknowledges his wrongs.

In previous chapters of the "Book of JOB", in the first round, Job's theology-oriented friends argued that God always blessed the righteous and punished the wicked. Job rebutted. In the second round, they insisted that the wicked alone was to suffer always. However, their arguments were not in accord with Job's own experience. In the third round, Job again vehemently rebutted their theology. His friends, without experiences, had faith in their own creed but they were not of God Himself. God's way is not necessarily understood by us and so, we sometimes have to go through frustrations, depressions, pressures, riddles, agonies and pains in our faith lives. Job's faith in God was invincible throughout his sufferings and he well knew that He is always Sovereign. Yet, he still needed to exercise faith in the God who rules through his real experience. Also he needed to acknowledge the fact that his view of himself was still woefully inadequate. Throughout the "Book of JOB" we, so-called believers are all challenged to understand the inherent depravity of our own hearts and the fact that because of it we unconsciously tend to defend ourselves as the prophet Jeremiah and the apostle Paul pointed out: ***'The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?'*** (Je.17:9) and ***'I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God'*** (1Co.4:3-5).

These powerful chapters of Job's final soliloquy give us a deep insight into the psychology of grief. While Job kept his integrity, he sometimes indulged in self-pity and strongly became self-assertive. While the logic of the doctrine of rewards pressed by Job's three friends simplifies things in this world as a matter of cause and effect, yet there remains the fact that good and innocent people do suffer in this world and so, it is apparent that such a doctrine grievously misses the mark. Through Job's story in which he served the Lord faithfully to the end, God intended to reveal to us, readers, the assured ***hope*** in the place of utter despair and alienation, even during times in which Job did not know that God Himself was always present with Him. It was his hope in faith that sustained Job and gave him a glimpse of life beyond 'sheol', i.e., invisible but eternal life with God. Seeing things in our earthly lives in this perspective is very important for each of us to overcome the present difficulties and trials. When we wrestle with Job in his inexplicable suffering and pain and struggle to make sense of his situation, it reminds us that our senses and sights are very limited and there are divine secrets, hidden things from our views. The answer only comes from God, the Creator of all sources of the universe, and true wisdom does not come as part of the belief system of human-being but it comes from above as God's gift. When we come to the Lord in reverence and fear, He reveals Himself to us in communion with Him as mentioned: ***'But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? Man does not comprehend its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living...Where then does wisdom come from?...It is hidden from the eyes 'of***

every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air. Destruction and Death say, "Only a rumor of it has reached our ears." God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells, for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens...And he said to man, "The fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding" (Job 28:12-28).

This year we have experienced several global disruptions caused by freezing weather in the northern hemispheres, which marked one of the worst in decades. The function of society revealed how vulnerable it was against such extreme weather conditions. Especially travel was severely been hampered. These events are set to rise along with the global trend of increasing natural disasters; forest fires, droughts, earthquakes, floods, freezing weather by heavy snow and ice, volcano eruptions. As I referred to the coming a "new ice age" in No.172 of our newsletter, a ratio of snow in Britain has radically grown this year and may mark the beginning of the slipping into an Ice Age. There are many threats around us, from the natural realm to international, political, economical, environmental, and social realms. Nowadays, it is reality that more and more people are experiencing unwelcome and unexpected situations and problems in a way that they have not known before. What has been taken for granted in our lives (blessings, protection, etc) before cannot be guaranteed any longer even for Christians who always prayerfully ask Him for their safety and peace. This may be inferred from Job's experience. According to his confession, he was a kind of person whose piety and care extended to offering sacrifices as the responsible head of the family on behalf of his children, and who made it his life-long habit, his regular custom so that his family should be purified from sin, thinking: *'Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts' (Job1:5)*. Nevertheless the worst befell him under the Lord's unseen and unfathomable purposes and he lost almost everything except his own life, so, likewise, the same can happen to any of us as Christians. I have already seen many cases of sincere Christians undergoing such inexplicable sufferings. In the end of the last days, as predicted in the Scripture, to a greater or lesser extent, every Christian should be prepared for such a trial. We cannot expect to go on living intact, but at the same time we must remember how Job was proved right finally and in the end, amazingly rewarded in affluence by the Lord Himself. I repeat the fact that we need to see things from the Lord's perspective beyond the present situation to understand His goodness fully.

Concerning the present weather conditions, we should not be affected by political atheistic information of pseudo-scientific scare-scams such as "global warming", blaming the CO₂ emissions from our cities and industrial plants, but we should firmly trust in God's controls over everything that He has once created to sustain His creation perfectly. For Him to control the order of the global environment is not difficult even though in our viewpoint it seems impossible. Behind the scene, there has been an adversary since the creation of the universe who has been going to and fro on the earth to find evidence of God's people's disloyalty and to accuse them before Him in His heavenly court. Satan, our everlasting accuser but merely a created fallen angel, attempted to disguise himself as an equal to God and has sometimes succeeded in persuading humans to believe so, but the Scripture never supports such a dualism of good and evil. While we God fearers must not ignore the reality of spiritual warfare, we need to remember the fact that the contest is not between equals. As Job maintained his faith in the Sovereign God, God is always sovereign and Satan is a mere adversary on a chain under God's authority. Then, what does it mean that Jesus Christ suffered more than anybody else on earth from the beginning of His life to the end; rejection, misunderstanding, cruelty, injustice and culminated in crucifixion? He suffered neither because He was wicked, nor because He needed to be disciplined and awakened so as not to astray from God. He had to suffer to show us the fact that suffering is one of God's ways thorough which He demonstrates that Satan is a liar and deceiver. In fact how Satan's distorted premise that man could only serve God from self-interest in exchange for His blessing, was exposed as being wrong by Job's wholehearted faith in the Lord. ***Suffering was needed to prove Satan's defeat.*** Job demonstrated how faithfully God should be served even when He did not seem to bless him any longer, solely because He is worthy of the praise, glory, power and worship. Christ as well suffered to demonstrate to prove the worthiness of God no matter what happened.

Acknowledging the utter impossibility of directly defeating God, Satan has turned his strategy to cunningly deceive human-beings by false theories and doctrines in order to destroy His redemptive plans of human salvation. One of those that this world defends desperately is the Theory of Evolution of "Darwinism" which proposes natural selection, survival of the fittest and random mutation against "Creationism" which claims intelligent design. However, Satan's contest won't last long, which is

seemingly a matter of time because truth has increasingly been unveiled as a radical development of technology and science is ready to interpret the inner workings and mechanism of the invisible world more clearly than ever. There is a lot of information available today to prove God's creation. Among them, first I would like to present the following article which explains a sin-plagued dying world and this points to Paul's teaching in Romans 8:22.

'Cancer affects many humans and their loved ones, and a new report has found that certain animals are also suffering from higher cancer rates. Sadly, this is what is to be expected in a dying and decaying world. The technical results of the study are slated to appear in the July edition of *Nature Reviews Cancer*. Lead author Denise McAloose, Chief Pathologist for the Wildlife Conservation Society's Global Health program, said in a WCS press release that "we now understand that cancer can kill wild animals at similar rates [to humans]."

The WCS study identified California sea lions, dolphins, porpoises, and green sea turtles as creatures with cancer rates that were higher than expected. Most of the described cancers likely have a viral source, but it is possible that human-caused pollution—including loose, carcinogenic chemical waste—could exacerbate the maladies.

Cancers are caused when an error occurs in the genetic machinery that regulates a cell's growth. Since mutations relentlessly add up during an individual's lifetime, it is only a matter of time before one of those mutations disrupts a cell's growth regulation. This could lead to a tumor, which could lead to cancer.

Genesis indicates that human sin resulted in a universal curse, whereby man, animals, and the entire creation "groaneth and travaileth together". This accurately reflects today's world, in which cancer is an increasing calamity. Some endangered animals are even facing extinction due to cancer.

In the bigger picture, fossils show clearly that nature has "deselected" the vast majority of life forms in the past through widespread catastrophes. And now nature continues to "deselect" more through disease. There is therefore no scientific basis for the Darwinian philosophy that living forms find a way to adapt and improve, ever-increasing their repertoires of functional biological mechanisms.

Rather, extinctions are the rule. In almost every animal and plant phylum, there has been a decline in variety, with most varieties having been catastrophically buried and fossilized. The grim reality is that over the long haul, if a created kind can avoid natural disasters, it will eventually succumb to cancer from mutations.

Scientific observation upholds the Bible's depiction of a world that was created to be very good, but that is now suffering from the increasing effects of decay and corruption. That is not the end of the story, however. For those who have been redeemed through Christ, death will not have the final word' (*Rising Animal Cancers Point to a Dying World*' by Brian Thomas, M.S., Science writer at the Institute for Creation Research in July 2009).

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This month, a money gift of \$***** has been sent to Mary Jane in the Philippines to assist her ministry to poor children and mountain tribes. Last October she bought two used Philippine-originated "Jeepnies", which extended her ministry, enabling tribal children to be gathered for their regular Bible studies, and also enabling the united meetings to be freely held from different areas. The local authority allowed her to open a pharmacy "Botika Binhi" in Soldier Hills, which would support livelihood of the tribes, to whom her ministry has been reaching out. The other two applications having been dismissed, she has determined to launch out hog raising for the people in San Isidro and poultry for the Dumagats in order to help their livelihood. Mary Jane writes: 'It really takes a lot of love for the tribes for me to eat, sleep, and live with them and like them, what they eat I eat, where they sleep I sleep... most of the tribes homes are as small as a dining table for ten people..and sometimes in one house there are four families living, we squeeze in... most of the time the tribes would take their bath in the rivers without soap..I experienced just bathing without any soap or shampoo, my hair was as kinky as the tribes... the tribes prioritize food, so that's what I always bring with me, food for the community. Anyway, we are praying for sustainability of the livelihood projects we are planning.'

Frederic in Burundi, writes: 'Ministry wise, we have been up and down serving the Lord in peace building and reconciliation, trauma healing and counselling, training pastors through many seminars in a holistic approach to the word of God, Stewardship and the like, training church leaders to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, and doing some research related to refugees and repatriation in a bid to reintegrate the returnees, how they view the sharing of land, peace villages where some are given barren land. In all these we are thankful to the Lord for whoever have prayed for us and supported us either morally, financially and spiritually...May we be able to serve the Lord faithfully and wholly committed to that which he has called us to do!' This year Frederic has lost four his close family members, experienced several ordeals socially and domestically, and even so, he never ceases praising God, who is good all the time. Continue remember both brother and sister in the Lord in your prayer. We wish all of you a Happy New Year, expecting His continual goodness upon us all!