

Friends

As the weather continues to heat up, I am reminded of the times of drought in the Bible. Used primarily in the ancient texts as a spiritual metaphor for separation from God, we may also wonder whether our wanton destruction of God's creation through human-driven global warming means that the current excessive heat is not just a metaphor but a consequence of turning away from our responsibility as stewards of God's world.

One of the most well-known biblical accounts of drought is the one that lasted three and a half years and was eventually brought to an end after God answered Elijah's prayer on Mount Carmel. Separately, Jeremiah 14:1-4 speaks of a great drought, where servants are sent out for water by the rich, but even they arrive to find that the cisterns are dry. In 2 Chronicles: 13-14, God tells Solomon: "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain and command the locust to devour the land or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

As Methodists, we are not Calvinist in our approach to the world and its problems, but Arminian. Calvinism would say, "It is what it is. God has ordained it and we have to live with it." Arminianism says, "God is love, and in his love, he gave us the planet and wants us to love it." There is a responsibility inherent in Arminianism and the way in which it is interpreted by Methodism that doesn't allow for us to ignore responsibility by writing everything off as being "all in God's plan." Instead, we recognise responsibility inherent in the story of Creation and the love of God for humanity that did not even spare his only son.

It is hard when it is so hot that even our thinking has slowed down, to focus on our desires to be climate-friendly, eco-churches. Yet nevertheless, our scientists, our scriptures and our prophets tell us the same thing. We need to find what we can do and "do it with all our might" (Ecclesiastes 9:10). This week let's use the discomfort of this extreme heat to inspire us to make one change to improve the climate of the world for all.

God bless, Vicci