

One aspect of my ministry I have always enjoyed is the chance it gives me to get into Primary schools – to get to meet the youngsters and their teachers. In our sophisticated age, at times it is good to look at things through the eyes of a child, to sense the wonder, the excitement at things we adults so often take for granted. You can sense it in some of the songs they sing in Assembly. Adults tend to be a bit sniffy about hymns like ‘If I were a butterfly’ but there is a sense there of all creation praising God. Is it that different from the Cantic Benedicite with its invocation:

O all ye Green Things upon the Earth, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Seas and Floods, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O ye Whales, and all that move in the Waters, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

O all ye Beasts and Cattle, bless ye the Lord@
praise him, and magnify him for ever.

One song that is a firm favourite at the Burrow at the minute is

‘My God is so strong, so big and so mighty
there’s nothing that he cannot do.’

Again there is this sense of wonder at the greatness of God. This is brought out in two passages we have used in our service this morning; our Old Testament Lesson with that picture of Abraham looking up at the stars and our Psalm that celebrates the greatness of God.

If the older folk can be a bit sniffy about some of the hymns our young people enjoy, youngsters can also be a bit sniffy about the psalms – both are a great pity.

With the help of a few pictures I just want to think about this psalm. First the psalmist latches on to the hugeness of space,

‘the moon and the stars that you have made’

It is hard at times to get our heads around how big the universe is.

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This is a picture taken by the Hubble Space Telescope of the Seagull Nebula, a group of stars 3,800 light years away – that means it took 3,800 years for the light to travel from these stars to the Earth – it takes only 15 minutes for the light to travel from the Sun to the Earth. Working on the basis of that – if the distance between the Earth and the Sun were scaled down to just 1cm, that beauty would be 2,500 km away. This Universe that God has made is massive.

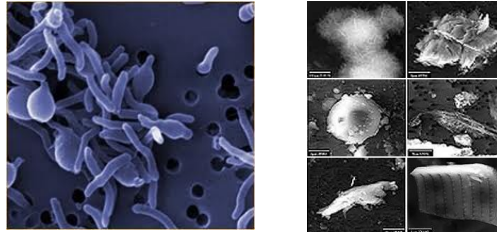
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Then around the stars are planets. Around our own Sun we have a number of planets including Saturn and our own Earth. Saturn has these beautiful rings. Because it is so far out from the Sun it is very cold so no life can live on it. But

our Earth is very different. It is just the right temperature for water to exist, has just the right atmosphere – it is home for a wonderful variety of life.

Slide 3 & 4



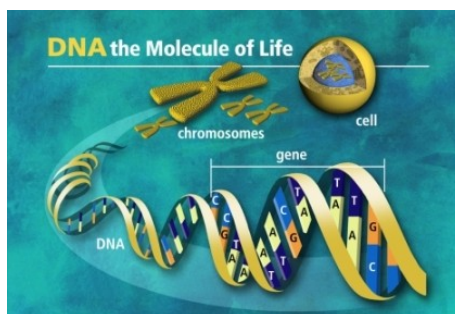
We have tiny life forms, microbes that can exist in a wide variety of places, from the wall of a volcanic lava tube to deep down in the Antarctic Ocean, in total darkness and very cold temperatures.

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Then of course there is the miracle of you and me. This is a picture of a baby in the womb, a full 6 months before he was born.

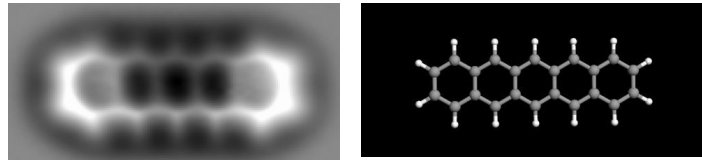
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Then each life form, from the tiniest microbe, the biggest whale, you and me, each has its own DNA, in every cell of its body that contains a code which will

determine the colour of my eyes, how tall I am going to grow, colour of my hair, my eyes, my skin.

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Going down even smaller we get to the atoms and molecules that make up everything. This picture, taken by one of the most powerful microscopes in the world, shows the structure of a molecule, how the atoms are joined together to make it.

So from the very smallest atom to the most distant star

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we celebrate the God who made it all, the God who is so big and so strong and so mighty.

That man who wrote the Psalms takes us one stage further. He not only looks in wonder and amazement at this wonderful creation, he goes on to ask in wonder and amazement:

‘What is man that you are mindful of him’

Why do you bother with us? Why are we so special?

We not only worship a God who makes, we worship a God who cares, cares for this world he makes, cares for us in all our goodness and in our badness. That is what Abram experienced that night as he looked up into the night sky. God cared for him, for his anxieties about his future and his family. Stuck out in the desert, God has a purpose for his life and for those who will come after him.

Let us go out from this place with something of the innocent wonder of a child at the glory of this earth, this universe in which we are set, reminding ourselves that the God who made all of this has an abiding care for you and for me. Let us show something of that wonder in simple care and service of one another in the week to come.