

Monday Evening Bible Group: Monday 24th June

I suppose the underlying theme is New Life and New Hope? There is a Resurrection message built into this, The Genesis story is, of course, pre-Resurrection (in our sense of Resurrection). So is the Psalm. With Romans and Matthew also we have messages about life in this world and not just life in the next world.

Genesis: A bit confusing if you read Genesis 16 and Genesis 21: double expulsion of the wretched Hagar? The background story of Abraham's uneasy relationship with Abimelech and his army and with the Philistines is also a bit dubious in terms of what we know independently of the history. But the family story is the main thing: the passion for a male heir, the non-status of slaves (including slave women). God cares for Ishmael and Hagar too. Sarah is not attractive as the single-minded wife and mother.

Psalm 84: 2017 is also a time when the believer can feel a bit isolated.

Romans 6: It is quite difficult for Paul to balance the belief that God is a God of forgiveness who loves unconditionally and saves us from ourselves (and often despite ourselves) – GRACE IS ALL; and the belief that we have to repent, to change, and to live well. Not easy for us either!

Matthew 10: Jesus is more challenging than a comfort blanket!