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Where is God in the floods?

Will it ever stop raining? The January rainfall totals in Buriton were 13.5 inches, nearly three times the average. In other villages close by, such as Finchdean and Hambledon, many properties have been flooded. Livestock have had to be housed. Everyone is fed up, waiting for something better to come along.

Where is God in all this? Some misguided people see similarities in this with the story of the flood in the Bible. They see it as being God's judgement on the sinfulness of humanity. They couldn't be more wrong. God is love. He doesn't punish those people who have the misfortune to live in low lying areas, irrespective of whether they are fundamentally good or fundamentally wicked. He loves those people; he loves you; he loves me. God understands hardship, he understands suffering.

The Bible tells us that God became incarnate. Jesus lived on earth; he experienced the realities of life on earth. But more than that he experienced being beaten and scourged; being nailed to a cross; hanging in agony until he died. God understands human suffering more than we can imagine. That means that, far from causing people to suffer, he suffers with us as we suffer; he is alongside us; he never leaves us, whatever we are going through. He provides the ultimate answer to hardship and suffering, in this life and after we die.

So perhaps, in between showers, we might take a moment to wonder at the small miracles of nature; at the drifts of snowdrops in our churchyards; at the daffodil stems bursting through the ground; at the ducks, positively relishing this weather; at the astonishing sudden burst of colour provided by the kingfisher which graces Buriton pond; at the love and care which people show to each other; at God, who loves us all.