

““Why doesn’t the Almighty bring the wicked to judgment? Why must the godly wait for him in vain?”
Job 24:1 NLT

[lectio] // JOB 24:1-12

Job goes off in the wicked, and a lot of it is how they treat the poor, weak, widow and disenfranchised. My first inclination is that I would ask Job, “so what are you doing about?” However, I get the sneaky suspicion that Job’s righteousness was tied to the fact that he WAS generous, helpful and just. He lists the problems every society, social structure has throughout time - there are wicked, there are wealthy, there are poor, but there are also those who push against that to help. Job asks some great questions that I would ask about modern day wicked. Like, why do they get away with it? Or better, why does God let them get away with it? I can only imagine (because I don’t run the world) there are a few reasons: 1) When I point at the wicked, I must include myself! I may not steal property, rob widows or mock the homeless, but I’ve got my own sin, disobedience and selfishness to deal with. Sure, I’d like to think it’s not as bad or not hurting anyone - but that’s not true. I am wicked as well, do I want God to stop or punish me? 2) God did not cause any of the wickedness mentioned in Job 24. He did not approve of it either. But somewhere in God’s creation plan is something called “free will.” God does not override that process by stopping human decisions no matter how awful the consequences might be. He lets wickedness run its course because he created us to choose, even if that’s against his will. Does he intervene, ever? I’m sure he has, does and will, but it’s not something I have ever figured out. 3) Our will for evil and to do evil is our responsibility, so it’s most often up to us as humans to judge, correct, protect, save, rescue those who are most vulnerable to wickedness - the orphan, the widow, the poor. There are whole communities of wicked people, there are whole countries led by wicked people - they get more wickedness done that way. It’s much harder for righteousness to stop them because they are literally warring against the righteous, so they can do their evil without hindrance. This is where and why those who grieve for the weak need to continue to care for and help the weak. This is our human responsibility as well as our spiritual responsibility!

pray as responding to the words, phrase, sentence that God has stirred within you

Dad,
Knowing that you are right, true and just - always, helps me frame my own sin, but more importantly my responsibility to the weak. I know YOU are the advocate for the orphan, the widow and the poor. However, since we have a relationship with you and your Spirit in us, that means you have appointed and equipped us to do the work of an advocate. The righteousness, the humble, the capable are your means to fulfill your will towards the weak. When we take up the cause of the weak, we take up your will, your desires to bring aid, justice and help to those who are incapable of doing it for themselves. Some needs are easier to see and tend to, but others are complicated by political wrangling and packaged in divisive ways. Then others, like orphans, or children in foster care are so complicated that they are ignored. Help me see with your eyes and dispatch care with your wisdom. I would like to say that wickedness toward the weak was put in check by those who are not without sin, but can’t stand by while the wicked run over the weak.

[contemplatio]

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root