

“But for those who are righteous, the way is not steep and rough. You are a God who does what is right, and you smooth out the path ahead of them. Isaiah 26:7 NLT

lectio // Isaiah 26:7-15

I feel like this has been a theory for a very long time. Are the righteous given certain perks and privileges or is it just a “positive” attitude and framing that allows them to weather or even rise above the storms of life? Isaiah says “it’s not steep or rough for them.” And he believes that God goes out ahead of the righteous to smooth things out. It’s a little like that phrase that King David boldly proclaims, “I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.” In Psalms 37:25 NIV. I have snidely thought, “yeah, kings never do see the poor suffer.” And what if WE HAVE seen the righteous suffer and things go horribly wrong? Jesus made it very clear that the righteous will suffer and that suffering does not always mean that God is mad at you, and evil can and will prevail in the short-game! There is something far more eternal than temporal going on here. I’ve heard friends tell me they are trusting God and REFUSE to complain or give into pain, suffering or unknown of their circumstances. What, are they lying to me? No! They are bending toward God and determining their will to stay focused on what God really is (true, right & just) instead of being swallowed up by fear or doubt. So which is it? Is it their long suffering and supernatural strength to believe even in the darkness or is God smoothing out life in front of them? Maybe it’s both! I have been through some very dark and awful times in my life and although it felt steeper than I could climb and rougher than I could endure, I knew that God was near. I could not see anything but darkness ahead on the path, but I knew, undeniably, that God was with me. Friends were promising light and good things ahead, I could not see them or believe in them, but I could hold tight to God and let him comfort me in the middle of the storm. Did it ever get “smooth” for me? After it was all over (which took awhile), it did get smooth. I found the path and slowly started making sense out of the plan. FYI, I didn’t have the best attitude and outlook while slogging through the darkness. I found that God was gracious and patient and best yet - He was RIGHT.

Dad,

I still don’t know if or how my attitude of righteous or doing right had much to do with an eventual smooth outcome. I do know how faithful, merciful, patient and kind you are when everything falls apart. When everything is stripped or seemingly taken away - you are still there. I will forever be grateful to you.