



“It came to me in a disturbing vision at night, when people are in a deep sleep. Fear gripped me, and my bones trembled. A spirit swept past my face, and my hair stood on end. The spirit stopped, but I couldn’t see its shape. There was a form before my eyes. In the silence I heard a voice say, ‘Can a mortal be innocent before God? Can anyone be pure before the Creator?’”
Job 4:13-17 NLT

lectio // Job 4:1-21

This is a pretty creepy passage here in Job. Job’s friend, Eliphaz, was advising him and then tells him of this vision he had. Fear gripped, bone-rattled, hair-standing on end - it sounds like something wicked this way came to him in the night. THE ACCUSER! Right, it had to have been. Look at the soul piercing question he posed, “Can a human be innocent? Can anyone be pure?” Whoa! This fallen angel would know, he accepted the worship, grasped at power and was thrown out of God’s presence - down to the earth. And in this domain he plays his games to thwart God’s plans of redemption for those who bear his image, as he himself once bore. Here in these verses of the oldest book in the Bible, maybe even the oldest book in the world, there is the answers to our deepest questions about evil and free will. The answer, “NO.” Without an advocate, without a redeemer, without a substitute - no one is innocent, no one is pure. Only God himself can be both perfect and provide a covering for his creation. This is Jesus! Job and Eliphaz have to believe forward by faith to a time far into their future where one does come, one who is perfect, one who is truly righteous. And yet, even the son of God suffered. He was far more righteous, good, full of integrity and love and yet he endured the cross and death. Righteousness and “right” living can never be associated with no suffering or pain. To suffer, to have pain IS to BE human! It is part of our existence until everything is made right and whole in the end.

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Dad,

I don’t know if I’ll ever get to the point of my life where I welcome pain and suffering in my life, or certainly in the lives of others. This past weekend, I was presented with more than one of our friends going through enormous pain and heartache. Waiting for a biopsy report, a neo-natal baby boy to respond to a blood transfusion and an infection, a grandmother watching her grandson wanting to “transition” into a girl - it felt UNBEARABLE. Our deeply disturbing emotional pain was overwhelming. And yet, this is our state, our position for now. Come quickly Lord Jesus and bring wholeness to our humanity.

contemplatio

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