

March 18, 2022

Job's Despondent Prayer

[Job 14:1-14](#)

14 If mortals die, will they live again! All the days of my service I would wait until my release should come.

The heading in my NRSV Bible calls chapter 14 “Job’s Despondent Prayer.” Most of us would agree that Job had reason to be despondent: he had lost his livelihood, he had lost his children and their spouses, and his friends were hovering around waiting for him to confess the sin that had caused all this loss. (Were they waiting to be able to spread the juicy news?)

Like Job, we are living in a season in which the news seems mostly bad: a global pandemic, disruption of family ties, loss of loved ones, growing distrust in institutions which had previously seemed stable.

When Job was alive, he and the people around him did not know about an afterlife; the time they had on earth was all there was. The story of Job is one of the oldest in our Bible, likely handed down orally for hundreds of years before being written in its present form. Job’s story is a window into the thought of the people of his time. Through that window, we see questions: *Is this all there is? Is there some possibility that a person can live after death?*

As we journey through the dark days of winter, we empathize with Job. We ask similar questions. We wonder about our fate and that of the world. We wail, with Job, that we are “mortal(s), born of woman, few of days and full of trouble.”

Through the window of the Gospel, we look further than Job did. We know that people *do* live after death. We know that what we have on earth is *not* all there is. Jesus’ resurrection shows us that we *can* live on. So we need to focus on the Good News and not let ourselves be distracted by the other news pouring into our eyes and ears. Resurrection is real!

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you suffered, died, and rose again so that we can have eternal life with you. When we are in despair and losing hope, remind us that you are with us no matter what is happening. Remind us of the reality of your resurrection and the faithfulness of your promises. Amen.

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