

## Will Jesus Find Faith on Earth?

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In the eighteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus taught His disciples about the need to pray and not lose heart. To do this, He told a parable. The parables of Jesus have often been described as “earthly stories with heavenly meanings.” This definition unintentionally reduces the force of the parables. This leaves us with the impression that the lessons of the parables will be experienced in Heaven. Jesus expected the principles of the parables to be lived out in the world.

More to their point, the parables are heavenly stories with earthly meanings. Jesus said the parables reveal the secrets of the kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 13:11). The truths of the parables emanate from Heaven and are expected to be lived out on the earth. The parable of the persistent widow and the unjust judge makes this very point (Luke 18:1-8).

### About the Parable

A widow had suffered a grave injustice. She took her claim to a judge. Jesus described the judge as being ungodly and having no regard for his fellow man. Sound familiar? The judge’s lack of character did not deter the widow from seeking justice. Day after day, the widow persisted. Finally, the unjust judge relented and issued a ruling for the widow.

After telling this story, Jesus gave the meaning. He said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Luke 18:6-8).

### The Persistent Widow and the Unjust Judge Teach Us...

**1). God’s elect suffer injustice.** We may know this intellectually, but when we suffer an injustice, it often surprises us. We would expect that God’s people would be spared such treatment; however, this is not the case.

Jesus warned, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household” (Matt. 10:24-25). We must prepare ourselves to suffer for our faith in Jesus.

**2). Injustice tests the resolve of God’s elect.** Suffering is disorienting. Hardships cause us to wrestle with God. For example, consider the all-but-forgotten prophet, Habakkuk. He wrote, “O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to

you “Violence!” and you will not save? Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted” (Hab. 1:2-4).

Habakkuk was confused and angry. He felt abandoned and defeated. Like the psalms of lament, though, Habakkuk’s sentiment was born of faith that God would bring justice. He was resolved, “...the righteous shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4). Yes, God will bring justice, but how?

**3). The justice of God.** The justice of God was shown in and through the cross of the Messiah. The righteousness/justice of God was revealed at the cross. This is how Paul explains the meaning of the Gospel. In his letter to the saints in Rome, Paul wrote, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:16-17).

God showed His future/coming justice in the present when Jesus was crucified and raised from the dead. Everyone who wants to share in God’s righteousness must have faith in the cross of Jesus. Paul quotes Habakkuk to make this vital point.

**4). Will Jesus find faith on earth?** The widow could have given up and quit. After all, the judge was ungodly and had no regard for his fellow man. But she persisted. Of course, Jesus is not a heartless, unjust judge. Therefore, we have every reason to persist when we suffer.

When we suffer as Christians, will we trust that God will make it right? Will we faithfully endure the trials of life? That is what Jesus is challenging us to do in this parable. When He returns to bring justice, will He find faith on the earth?

Our faith is made possible by what God accomplished through Jesus. We are urged to believe the Gospel. Faith is a believing loyalty to Jesus. Regardless of what happens to us, we must faithfully endure in hope.

The Gospel teaches us how to faithfully endure in hope. Paul wrote, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 5:1-5).

## **Conclusion**

As God's elect, we will experience injustice and suffering. Hardships may come through the natural course of life. They may come because we are Christians. No matter the case, we must remain faithful to the Lord.

We must persist in our faith through prayer. God hears us and will help us. We must persist in our faith through worship. We can find strength in one another and the God we praise. We must persist in our faith by preaching the Gospel. This is how faith is advanced in the world. We must persist in our faith by exemplifying Jesus in our families. Our families are to become beacons of hope in our communities.