

What is the relationship between adversity and faith that is shown here? In your life have you found that adversity drives you to Christ or to despair?

The parable ends with a strangely unnerving statement by Jesus. Reread it, bearing in mind that this parable is the culmination of a discussion that began with Luke 17:20. Why does Jesus ask this question? (See Matthew 24:1-13.)

What is Jesus implying about the world at the time of his return? What is he worried about? How does he want us to live? (See Romans 12:12.)

In light of the eschatological (that is, end times-related) message of this parable, what is it that Jesus is specifically asking us to be persistent in prayer for? (See Matthew 6:7-8, Philippians 4:6.)

Kingdom Life – Prayer The Unrighteous Judge



St. Luke Seated, Illumination from the Coronation Gospel, 9th Century

Read Luke 18:1-8 (the parable) [Luke 17:20-37 (the context)]

Study Questions:

Place this parable in context. What is the question that ultimately prompts this parable (see Luke 17:20)? What is Jesus warning his disciples about in the preceding passage (Luke 17:20-37)?

Who is the audience for Luke 17:20-37? How does the scene change in Luke 18? To whom is Jesus directing the parable?

Sum up the scene that Jesus sets before us in the parable. Who are the characters? How are they described?

What is the position of the widow in this parable, and why do you think that Jesus chooses a widow as the hero? What might this suggest about how we are to understand our relationship with God?

Read Exodus 22:22-24 and Psalm 68:4-6 for examples of how a righteous judge ought to respond to a widow. But what actually motivates the judge to act?

Jesus uses an anti-hero, the unrighteous judge, in the symbolic position of God. Why does he do this? In what way does this give the believer comfort? (See Matthew 7:9-12.)

This parable contains an important teaching on prayer. What is it? How does Jesus tell us to pray in verse 1? How are we to emulate the widow? (See also 1 Thess. 5:16-8, Col. 4:2, 12, Eph. 6:18.)

The message of this parable closely parallels Luke 11:5-13. Read that passage. What more do you learn about how we are to pray?

Examine your own prayer life. What causes us to become discouraged or tempted to give up prayer? What comfort and/or warning does this parable give?