

Today we read: “The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.” / The Final Judgement / What happens to the wicked.

Perhaps we need to keep this ending in mind when thinking about the question: “The problem With Evil.”

-The Israelites and the Church have grappled with this question since the beginning / Why does it sometimes seem that the wicked prosper in this life / While the good suffer / This question reminds me of “The Psalms” found in the Bible.

-I remember an awesome teacher at Seminary: Dr. Kelly Anderson. / She taught us this about the 150 Psalms.

-In The first half of the Psalms written before the [Exile (Israel is exiled from their land and taken under Babylonian captivity)]: Their theology was simple: Good things happen to good people, and bad things to the wicked.

-Most of the 2nd half of the 150 Psalms are written after the exile / Now they are asking (Why do bad things sometimes happen to (The people of God)?

-In the Psalms we read:

“Why is it that the good have many troubles?”

Perhaps a proper perspective to have IN THIS LIFE IS: Even the wicked, who prosper materially, and the good will both have trials and suffer / We’re in a broken world / Our disobedience and sin have created evil acts creating various forms of trials and suffering experienced by both the good and the bad.

-In 1st. Kings: Solomon asks for Wisdom / Godly Wisdom is so much more important than worldly intellect, Intelligence, and knowledge.

-Solomon understands this / Which is why he ask for Wisdom / Eyes to see.

-When we have eyes to see / We will see JESUS CHRIST AND OUR FAITH as a treasure of infinite value / A Pearl / We will understand this life is simply like Bootcamp, preparing us for Heaven / For those who daily, choose to follow Jesus and His Church.

I watched the Movie “Frequency” the other night: starring Jim Caviezel (“Sound of Freedom” and “The Passion of Christ” fame), and Dennis Quaid as His father; set in Queens, New York (simultaneously in 1969 and the present day of 1999) / (I Loved the family theme, of healing and redemption) / Jim Caviezel is a broken man in the present day of 1999 / Through a miracle he is able to converse with his father 30 years in the past in 1969 / Through their conversations / All suffering and loss is erased / Jim’s character regains both parents / his marriage, family

and friends / All is restored in the present / I went to bed that night thinking about the beautiful perfect ending / Something wasn't quite right. Lol / While in the Chapel the next morning it hit me / Uh, I think that is What we call Heaven / For those of us, who daily choose to follow Jesus / Redemption and true restoration awaits us / But in the present day / Both the good and the bad will experience loss, trials, and suffering in this life.

St. Paul uses the term Predestination:

-God created all of us for this perfect ending / But in the end "WE", by how we have lived and loved will choose either this glorious reunion, or we will have chosen to reject Jesus, His Church, And the Good / Thus, we will choose to be separated from God and His love for all eternity.

-Remember in this life we are just passing through / Heaven is our home.
I have a tee-Shirt that says: "Heaven is my home, I'm just here recruiting."

Notes:

-St. Paul uses the word Predestination: Some Christians believe God predestines some to hell, and some to heaven at our births / NO! / To understand this word properly from the Church's perspective from the beginning / We always need to place "Predestination" beside the word "Freewill," / God is Love / And True Love demands we have the freedom to choose a relationship with God and His Church, or not / We are predestined (wired and created for a relationship with God and His Church) / But out of Love we have received the gift of Freewill to choose this end or not to choose God and ultimately Heaven.

It is a sad fact / But many will freely choose to reject God and the teachings Jesus gave to His Church through the Bible and Oral Tradition / Look at the world today / I am grieved by the broken lives that I see around me.

May we pray for our own deeper conversions amidst our trials, as we are daily being conformed to Christ in preparation for Heaven / And may we pray for the conversion of those who are openly rejecting Jesus and His Church.

**Vivat Jesus,
Father Vic Gournas**