

THE TWENTY FOURTH FLOWER: STAY VIGILANT

I am still standing on trial facing many claims waiting for your verdict. Yes, it is your verdict that I need. My accusers have nothing against me because I am not the Son of God. They are condemning you by their accusations to me. I am not but a witness to be martyred. They want to crucify you once again thinking that this time you will not trample down death and the light of the Resurrection will not shine.¹

My accusers are taking me from one judge to another and they are not hearing what I am saying. Their hearts became harder than a rock. They did the same to you, O my Lord. They crucified you with cold blood and, now, they want to crucify the fruit of your word. They think that by killing your members they will destroy the One who destroyed and trampled down death. They think that by killing your workers they will overcome the light that has annihilated darkness. They think that by killing the stewards, sons, of your Father they will scare the faithful and scatter them so that no one could proclaim your majestic name that has disturbed their life.

Even though I am one of those who proclaim your name to the nation, sometimes I crucify you by ignoring your continual epiphanies and restrict them to myself. Even, sometimes, I kill you for my desire and my ambition. Yes, O Lord, I kill you at the moment I turn my heart away from you. I kill you by my actions, my quarrels, my sins, my ignorance of others, my disrespect of others and your creation, my pride, and my fights for you. I even kill you in your name. Even while I am witnessing to your words, while I am testifying and proclaiming your words, while I am laboring in your field, I crucify you in many different ways. I do not have to elevate you physically on a cross, but simply I can harm you by using your name for my own glory.

My trials may become a source of pride or a source of resignation from the ministry of love while “I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”² My humility and my Christian way of living may become the source of my sin. My ministry may become a source of condemnation. A fine line divides salvation from condemnation. The same tools may become the ways to both destinations. But O Lord,

¹ Acts 24: 21.

² 2 Corinthians 12: 9.

I count on your mercy and grace and I wait for your verdict and for your wisdom with patience, hope and love for your name's glory.

I was left bound because the people and the rulers were bound by their sins.³ I was left imprisoned because the people and the rulers were imprisoned by their wickedness instead of their righteousness and their lack of self-control over their own desires. They kept me chained by their judgment, fearing the judgment to come, the judgment of their deeds. They thought that by tearing down my presence they would destroy the Truth, they would hide the Light and obliterate the Way.

They were deceived by their own powers. They were deceived by their own visions. They were not but slaves to their powers and visions. They were not but slaves to their blindness and sins. They tried to use their powers to empower, hide and fear the laborers of your field O Lord. They could not behold the light that came face to face with them for they had no eyes to see. They could not behold the personal calling for they had no ears to hear. But, they were attracted to their selfishness, their covetousness and their wantonness.

I ask, O Lord, for your forgiveness. I ask that you rescue me from slipping into the pit of judging my fellow neighbors including any enemy, for I should have no enemies, and label them according to my belief. Please, protect me from falling into the net of my righteousness and condemning the others like the Pharisees.⁴ Keep me vigilant in prayers for the salvation of the others and myself. Keep me aware of my sinful state even though I am advanced in your Way for my knowledge is nil compared to your knowledge. Remind me also that everything I achieved in this life emanates from your eternal grace to the whole of humanity. Embrace me with your mercy when I get caught in my tribulations and when I am witnessing to your words. Repeat into my heart that my ministry and my way of life are not honorary positions but rather a life of sacrifice and joy for your name's glory.

Help me, O Lord, to remember, walk and work according to your commandment of love.

³ Acts 24: 25.

⁴ Luke 18: 9-14 (The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector)