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~ **The Widow and the Unjust Judge** ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read Luke 18:1-8.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

**1. Read the text of the story.**

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Luke 18:1-8 NASB	Luke 18:1-8 NLT
<p>Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, <sup>2</sup>saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. <sup>3</sup>There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ <sup>4</sup>For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’” <sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge *said; <sup>7</sup>now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? <sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”</p>	<p>Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, <sup>2</sup>saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. <sup>3</sup>There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ <sup>4</sup>For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, <sup>5</sup>yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’” <sup>6</sup>And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge *said; <sup>7</sup>now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? <sup>8</sup>I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”</p>

**2. Discover key cultural and historical insights**

From *Through Peasant Eyes* by Kenneth Bailey

1. In the Old Testament, King Jehoshaphat appointed judges to carry out the justice of God. But they could easily be corrupted or corrupt themselves. Amos spoke of such judges in 2:6-7 and 5:10-13.
2. Bailey quotes from Alfred Edersheim, “judges in Jerusalem were called robber-judges rather than Prohibition Judges. In Aramaic or Hebrew this was a play upon words. The former being Dayyaney Gezeloth and the latter Dayyaney Gezerot.”
3. The Talmud speaks of village judges who were willing to pervert justice for a dish of meat.

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4. The lack of respect for God and man has the sense of he has no shame. He did not have the sense of shame or honor that that culture lived by. Jeremiah speaks of prophets and priests who did not know how to blush. (Jer. 8:12)
5. Verses on widows – Ex 22:22-23; Deut. 10:18, 24:17; 27:19; Job 22:9; 24:3, 21; Psa 68:5; Isa 10:2; 1:17 & 23.
6. A widow would have no male protector in a male-dominated society. She would be extremely vulnerable. She would not have the strength to force. She would not have the money to buy justice.
7. When the judge said the woman was wearing him out, this was a boxing term that meant to blacken the eye. The woman was bringing a blow to his head, not literally, but giving the man a headache. The judge is exaggerating but he is clearly irritated with her behavior.
8. Continually coming – in the Greek it is *eis telos* – unto the end. The judge realizes that the women will never stop.

**Answer these reflective questions.**

**Jesus told the story to encourage the disciples. Evidently they were starting to become fearful and lose heart. Is there any fear that you have in your life? Are you in need of encouragement in any way?**

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**Describe some of the ways the widow would have been vulnerable. Do you believe you are vulnerable in any way?**

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**In what ways is God different from the unjust judge?**

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**Do you continually bring your requests before God?**

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**Jesus asked if he would find faith when he returns. Does he find faith in your heart right now?**

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