

Reflection Wednesday week 26 – 2022

“If only” the two words that can lead to the deepest of depressions and a sense of hopelessness. Impossible though it is, however hard we might try, we cannot change the past. And yet, time and again, we say to ourselves *if only, if only* ... just as Job does in the first reading today.

But there is another side of *if only* that urges us to look beyond the past and see the present, the people and the future more clearly and more positively.

Could we but draw back the curtains
that surround each other's lives,
see the naked heart and spirit,
know what spur the action gives,
often we should find it better
purer than we judged we should,
we should love each other better,
if we only understood.

If we knew the cares and trials,
knew the efforts all in vain,
and the bitter disappointment,
understood the loss and gain—
would the grim, eternal roughness
seem—I wonder—just the same?
Should we help where now we hinder?
Should we pity where we blame?
Ah, we judge each other harshly,
know not life's hidden force:
knowing not the fount of action
is less turbid at its source:
seeing amid the evil
all the golden grain of good:
and we'd love each other better.
if we only understood. (Anon)