



Micah 7: 1 - 7

Here is the text of our challenging reading for this time in the early days of Advent. Stay with it. There are glimmers of hope at the end in verse 7 like the slightly brightening sky that is lifting the murk of this December morning!

1. Woe is me! For I have become like one who, after the summer fruit has been gathered, after the vintage has been gleaned, finds no cluster to eat;
There is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger.

2. The faithful have disappeared from the land, and there is no one left who is upright;

They all lie in wait for blood, and they hunt each other with nets.

3. Their hands are skilled to do evil;

The official and the judge ask for a bribe, and the powerful dictate what they desire;

Thus they pervert justice.

4. The best of them is like a brier, the most upright of them a thorn hedge.

The day of their sentinels, of their punishment has come;

Now their confusion is at hand.

5. Put no trust in a friend, have no confidence in a loved one;
Guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your embrace;
6. For the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her
mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
Your enemies are members of your own household.
7. But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation;
My God will hear me.

Thought:

Here is a cheerful message from Micah for today! I hope you did stay with it however. Micah's name means "Who is like Yahweh?" He saw all too clearly the dysfunction of so much in his world - so much endemic evil - and he saw the saving power of God as the only solution. But he did see this as a basis for real hope.

In Micah Chapter 6 verse 8 we can read the most memorable of his sayings in his teaching "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." These are watchwords to us all to fight for justice in our times and stand up to the wrongs of our world. They are a true basis for living well in hard times.

But we soon come to today's verses to remind us that these inspiring words in Chapter 6 shouldn't trip too easily off our tongues. Consider verses 5 and 6 as you plan your family get togethers this Christmas! Some may sadly recognise them all too well if certain family members have overstayed their welcome in those days of limbo between Christmas and New Year!

But others would want to say rightly this is all too cynical. We can celebrate those relationships well which are positive and healthy. But in every human dynamic we look for trust and rightly so. Micah feels that the corruption of the people of God is total so he cannot go there.

A weary cynicism is alive and well in our own society. It is all too easy for people to decry our modern politics for example. In today's news the people of Hull top the list of those who see no hope or expectation in any political party to make a difference and change society for the better which is extremely dangerous. What can we do to change this and offer signs of hope?

In a culture of gloom, Micah and those he sees as the remnant of the faithful still wait expectantly upon their God, confident that he will answer their prayers and revive their souls.

This Advent, as we wait for the coming Christ child, we can look to deepen our relationship with him and become assured of his ability to walk alongside us when the world is a tough place to be. If the darkness of a violent and cynical world overwhelms us and leaves us not knowing even what to pray, we can look trustingly and with confidence to the One who can bring us into the brightness of a true and glorious spiritual light.

I leave you with the first verse of a wonderful hymn by Robert Bridges:-

“All my hope on God is founded;
He doth still my trust renew.
Me through change and chance he guideth,
Only good and only true.
God unknown,
He alone
Calls my heart to be his own.”

Nick Thompson

