

RESOURCES FOR 8.00AM SUNDAY 8th OCTOBER 2023

EQUALITY, EQUITY, & JUSTICE IN THE LAND

PRINCIPAL READING Micah 3: 5-12

5 Thus says YHWH concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who cry “peace” when they have something to eat, but declare war against those who have nothing to put in their mouths.

6 Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision, and darkness to you, without revelation. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day shall be black over them; 7 the seers will be disgraced, and the diviners overcome with shame; they shall all cover their lips, for there is no answer from God.

8 But as for me, I am filled with power, with **the spirit YHWH, and with justice** and courage, to declare the crimes of Jacob and Israel to their faces.

9 Hear this, you rulers of the House of Jacob and chiefs of the House of Israel, who **abhor justice and pervert all equity,**

10 who build Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with injustice!

11 Its rulers give judgment for a bribe, its priests accept fees for their rulings, its prophets give oracles for money; yet they lean upon the Lord and say, “Surely YHWH is with us! No harm shall come upon us.”

12 Therefore because of you, Zion will become a ploughed field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION:

WHAT DO YOU RECALL ABOUT THE JEWISH PROPHET MICAH & THE BOOK WHICH BEARS THE SAME NAME?

LECTIONARY READING Psalm 19:7-11

Your law, YHWH, is perfect; it refreshes the soul.

Your rule is to be trusted; it gives wisdom to the naïve.

The statutes of YHWH are right and equitable (*yashar*); they gladden the heart.

Your commands are clear, giving light to the eyes.

Holding you in awe, YHWH, is purifying; it endures.

Your decrees (*mishpat*) are true and steadfast, and all of them just (*tzedek*).

They are more precious than gold, than the purest of gold, and sweeter than honey, than honey fresh from the comb.

In them your faithful people find instruction; there is great reward in keeping them.

CONTEXTUAL READINGS Deuteronomy 16:18-20

“You shall appoint judges and officials throughout your tribes, in all your towns that YHWH your god is giving you, and they shall render just decisions for the people.

You must not distort justice; you must not show partiality; and you must not accept bribes, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the case of those who are in the right. Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, so that you may live and occupy the land that YHWH is giving you.”

THE JUDGEMENT IN MICAH 3:5-12 IS A DIRECT REFERENCE TO THE STIPULATIONS IN DEUTERONOMY 16:18-20

Deuteronomy 17:8-10

“If a legal decision is too difficult for you to make between one kind of bloodshed and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another – any such matters of dispute in your towns – then you shall immediately go up to the place that YHWH will choose, where you shall consult with the levitical priests and the judge who is in office in those days; they shall announce to you the decision in the case. Carry out exactly the decision they announce to you from the place that YHWH will choose, diligently observing everything they instruct you.”

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER ARE EXAMPLES OF THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE COVENANT, JUSTICE, AND THE LAND.