

## “Seeking Justice”

### Psalm 72

We continue our journey to the cross and this morning, we hear a prayer for the king as our Scripture, a prayer that reminds the king that he is to enact God’s purpose here on earth, a prayer for the king to govern with justice and righteousness, a prayer with the hopes that through the king’s just rule, there will be true shalom for God’s people. A prayer for justice, a prayer for righteousness, a prayer for wholeness.

A prayer that reminds us as people of faith of our true purpose as the community of God: to love kindness, to seek justice and to walk humbly with our God.

The ironic thing about this prayer is that even as the psalmist was praying it and writing it down, the psalmist realized that the Israelite kings really had never done what they were supposed to do when it came down to ruling with justice and righteousness. Most of the kings had gotten caught up in the power and wealth of the kingship and had ignored the pleas of the people, ignored the pleas of the poor, ignored the pleas for true justice that would bring wholeness and true shalom for the community of God. Even as the psalmist is writing these words, he realizes that

there is a history of ignoring God and ignoring God's people when it came to ruling as the king of Israel.

But the good news is that even as the psalmist was saying this prayer, maybe even at the new king's coronation, the psalmist is clinging to the eschatological hope, that one day, God's justice will be acted out on earth. That God's righteousness will be given to all of God's people here on earth. That God's true shalom will be shared with all of God's creation. That God's reign will be embodied here on earth, where tears will be no more, where there will be no more hunger, no more death, no more sorrow, no more despair. The psalmist is clinging to the hope that although he lives in an imperfect world, that God's reign will come and bring healing and wholeness to all of God's creation.

And that is where we as Christians, as people of faith, as travelers on a journey, seeking the Messiah, enter into the story. As Christians, we understand that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the one we call Christ, we see the reign of God embodied here on earth. As Christians, we understand and hold firm to the belief that from the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus preached justice. The stories about His ministry here on earth tell us about how Jesus was called to "bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim the year of the Lord."

As Christians, we see and proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah because he came and preached justice for all of God's people, and not just justice that one receives from the court systems. Jesus came and preached true justice, justice that flows from the heart of God, justice that embodies the character of God, justice that is founded in God's love for all of creation. Justice that unites and brings blessing to all of God's children.

As Christians, we understand that Jesus is "the clearest sign that God rules the world." We understand this because we know that death and darkness did not have the last word, life, hope and new beginnings did. And these are only things that can be found through the gift of God's grace for all of God's children.

As Christians, we "profess [Jesus] to be king/messiah, the one proclaimed and ultimately embodied the reign of God by defending the poor and needy, by offering peace by inviting all nations to be blessed. We profess Jesus to be our Messiah because he brought justice to God's people for all time.

But as Christians, as people of faith, as travelers once again seeking the Messiah on our journey to the cross, our story, The Story does not end with Jesus' coming and bringing justice the first time around. King Jesus, King of justice and peace, affirms what "Psalm 72 affirms" all along: what this world ignores, that power and wealth will not bring wholeness, that might will not bring peace, that our human laws will not bring true justice for all of God's creation. What King

Jesus teaches us as his followers and what Psalm 72 reminds is that “right is might”, which means that only when we live in right relationships with God will there be peace, that only when we live in right relationships with all of God’s people will there be wholeness, that only when we live in right relationship with all of God’s creation will there be true justice for all.

No, our story does not end with Jesus’ coming and proclaiming and embodying the Kingdom of God here on earth. That’s only the beginning of our story. Our story as people of faith, as Christians, as people seeking the Messiah, continues from where Jesus left off. I guess, I should really say, our story continues from that moment when Jesus first invited us to experience God’s grace, to experience God’s welcome, to experience true justice and live in true shalom. That moment when Jesus said to us: “Love your neighbors as you love me.” That moment when Jesus said to us: “Red, Yellow, Black and White: all are precious in my sight”. That moment when Jesus said: “Your faith has made you well. Go and do likewise.”

That moment when we realized that by claiming and proclaiming Jesus as our Messiah, that we have and will continue to experience God’s grace, God’s justice, and God’s peace in our lives and because God loved us so much to give us the gift of God’s son, we are asked to share that love, that grace, that justice with

all of God's children. That's our true story. That's our true calling. That's our fervent prayer just like the Psalmist's who wrote Psalm 72

Because like him, we understand that we live in an imperfect world, full of hate, full of hurt, full of violence, full of brokenness. A world where true justice cannot survive because there is not wholeness, there is not peace, there is not restoration for the people of God. Because just like the psalmist of 72, we cling to the hope that one day, God's justice will be acted out on earth. That God's righteousness will be given to all of God's people here on earth. That God's true shalom will be shared with all of God's creation. That God's reign will be embodied here on earth, where tears will be no more, where there will be no more hunger, no more death, no more sorrow, no more despair. The psalmist is clinging to the hope that although he lives in an imperfect world, that God's reign will come and bring healing and wholeness to all of God's creation.

Because just like the psalmist we know that right is might: that when all live in right relationship with God, there will be healing. That when all live in right relationship with one another, there will be peace. That when all live in right relationship with all of God's creation, there will be justice for all of God's children.

And until that moment, we pray. We pray for justice. We pray for peace. We pray for healing.

And until that moment, we act. We act for justice. We act for peace. We act for healing.

And until that moment, we seek. We seek justice for all. We seek peace for all. We seek healing for all.

And until that moment, we will continue to pray, act and seek the Messiah, the one who came to bring justice for all of God's creation and will come again one day.

And until that moment, we continue to cling to the hope that God will have the last word.

And until that moment May we continue to seek the Messiah, the king of wholeness, the king of peace, the king of true justice for all of God's creation.

Amen.