



DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

Week of November 13, 2022 (Micah 1:1-5, 5:2-5, 6:6-8)

Prayer for Groups & Personal Devotion:

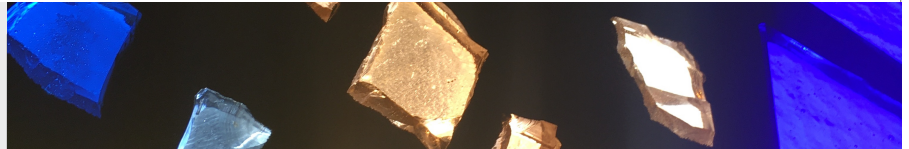
God, you do not want our sacrifice, you do not want our piety, all you ask for is that we walk with you the humble path of justice and love.

It is not in grand gestures but in humble service that we can best reveal your love so God, may we strive not to be special but to be ordinary so that we can get alongside other ordinary people and make a difference in the world: bringing peace not war; bringing love not hate; bringing freedom not oppression.

As we look for ways to know peace may we look to ordinary people in whom your love is revealed.

God we lay before you today all the areas of conflict in our world: conflict that still rages and places still ravaged by war and its consequences.

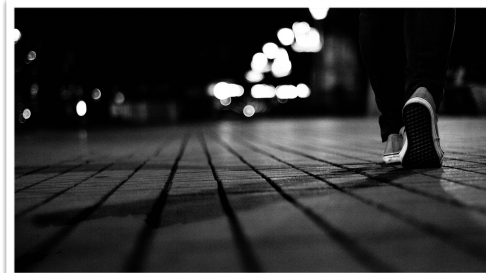
God, out of the ashes of conflict may the phoenix of your love arise as people and...



Devotions for Life

The Story: Micah 1:1-5, 5:2-5, 6:6-8

Context: This week we begin a departure from narrative texts to prophetic ones. The prophetic texts are tricky, because on one hand, they hold eternal truths and can stand on their own, but they also come in a specific context. That is, a prophet is speaking from a specific social and geographic location, on behalf of God, and to other specific people in a specific time and place.



This week's prophet is Micah, considered a "minor prophet", which speaks more to the volume of their work than the significance of it. Micah is a prophet not directly connected to any court or king, but is located among agriculturists in a more rural setting. It is about the mid 8th century bce, which is a time when the Assyrian empire has been a great threat to Israel. There is a sense of impending doom in Israel, and the people are almost asking God why. "What have we done to deserve this?"

Micah's prophecy offers an answer to that question, but perhaps more than that a command as to how respond in this moment. From a Christian perspective, however, Micah is a messianic prophecy hinting toward Jesus. The

...nations resolve to find paths to peace.

Give us such creativity that we can shape a brave new world out of the scars of war, give vision and courage to leaders and governments who seek to resolve conflict, help them to find real alternatives for all those whose livelihoods depend on war and help us all to be prepared to surrender power and wealth in the interests of peace.

For the sake of all the ordinary people whose lives you honour and cherish, God of justice, peace and love. Amen.

Compassion & Justice:

This month we are supporting STEP's annual Christmas toy drive. As the Bible calls us to **do justice**, it's important to remember the ways in which STEP is a primary organization in town that does this work to which we are called. One of their biggest fundraisers is their "give to the max campaign", wherein gifts given before November 17th are matched up to \$50,000. If you have the means, make a contribution before then! Head to www.stepslp.org for more info.

*Selected content © 2014 Spill the Beans
Resource Team <http://spillbeans.org.uk>*

Messiah is to come from the line of David, and we references to this line and words and images also associated with Jesus in chapter 5.

Reading the Story: As you read this prophecy pay close attention to the images. The Hebrew Prophets don't merely speak messages on behalf of God. They are also poets. As you read allow your mind to envision the picture Micah is painting with his words. Explore the depth and breadth of them. Also, remember that this is a Hebrew prophet in a specific time and place, speaking into a specific time and place, but in so doing, also look for glimpses of Jesus. Where might this passage hint towards him?

Questions for Reflection & Discussion:

1. What do you think verses 1:3-5 are about? What is the "sin of the house of Israel" and the "transgression of Jacob"? What does Micah mean by saying "Is it not Samaria... is it not Jerusalem?"
2. Where else do we read about Bethlehem in the Bible? What might be significant about Bethlehem and "little clans of Judah" in comparison to Jerusalem?
3. In what ways does Jesus fulfill the words in 5:2-5?
4. We don't come to God with "calves" and "rivers of oil" today. What kind of "offerings" do we come to God with today? What is God calling us to in terms of our "offerings"?
5. What is justice? How do we "do justice"? Who gets to decide what is "just" and what is not?
6. What is kindness (some translations say "mercy")? How do we love kindness and mercy? What does kindness and mercy look like in 2022?
7. What does it mean to walk humbly with God? First what does it mean to "walk". Then what does it mean to do so "humbly"?

