



*"...The heart of the sons of men
is full of evil,
and madness is in their heart
while they live..."
(Ecclesiastes 9:3)*

*Wherewith shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before the high God?
He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good;
and what doth the LORD require of thee,
but to do justly, and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with thy God?
(Micah 6:6, 8)*

a homily on just society and our mad state of rebellion

healing our brokenness inadequately (part 4):

Season's greetings from your state legislatures

*"They heal my people's brokenness inadequately, asserting:
'It's OK! It's OK!'
But nothing is OK!" (Jeremiah 6:14, author's translation).*

Introduction

Judicial inequality and injustice. Economic inequality and injustice. Rampant greed and fraud on the part of wealthy individuals and essential institutions. Bribery and corruption of government officials. Inordinate influence of the wealthy of laws and public policy. Unjust laws and policies favoring the powerful and influential while disadvantaging the less powerful and influential. The infliction of the vulnerable with hunger, homelessness, sickness, and anxiety. Self-righteous justification of the mad state of rebellion. Stubborn refusal to acknowledge these and a host of other societal ills.

No, I am not talking about America of 2024. However, if the shoe fits...

I am talking about late 6th and early 5th century B.C. Judah. These, and many other evils undermined the temporal, moral, and spiritual health of the nation. All the signs were there.

The nation was on the verge of collapse. It was in desperate need of truth, however sour it might be to the national palate. But the nation's shepherds fed the populace an empty diet of propagandistic myths of nationalism. Many of Israel's prophets joined the fray. Israel's watchmen, Jeremiah charged,

“Heal my people's brokenness inadequately, asserting:
‘It's OK! It's OK!’”

“But nothing,” Jeremiah replies, “is OK!”

Does this, too, sound familiar? Strike close to home? It should. Too often, today's religious leaders—whether they go by the name, “prophet,” “priest,” or “pastor”— seem to lack both discernment and courage. They seem utterly blind to and mute about sin and evil, unless, of course, it involves some form of real or imagined sexual deviance. If they do speak out, it is often with muted, vague, delicate, and generalized voices and statements. These shepherds seem not up to the challenging task of bold and clear truth telling of the sort that our society so desperately needs. Now is not the time for delicacy and caution.

This homily is the fourth in an ongoing series entitled, “Healing Our Brokenness Inadequately,” based on Jeremiah 6.¹⁴ In this series, we explore specific examples of individual and societal sins about which political and religious leaders all too often remain willfully blind or, if sighted, stubbornly mute... and therefore complicit. Tragically, sometimes their complicity is even active and enthusiastic. With these examples in mind, we will often call upon the classic Hebrew prophets as well as other ancient and not so ancient prophets to speak as if from the dust. We read these discerning writings in light of the societal ills and injustices that abound in our modern world. Sometimes we even imagine and take a stab at replicating what a Hebrew prophet might have to say if he were to come to us from the past.

In today's homily, we offer another example of our brokenness about which too many remain silent and worse, in which too many engage themselves. Such moments as ours desperately

cry out for the type of discernment, boldness, and truth-telling so characteristic of the Hebrew prophets.

Season's greetings from your state legislatures

Christmas Season 2023 is off to a rip roaring and jolly good start. America's state legislatures and officials are bound and determined to prove the genius and discernment of Hebrew prophets. Isaiah wasn't happy with law makers of his day.

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees,
and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.”¹

With that in mind, we recommend for your consideration the Ohio state legislature and its unreasoned rejection of the basic laws of physics. The more molecules in a fixed space, the more often they collide. The more cars on the road, the more accidents. The more guns in the state, the more shootings and deaths. Elementary math.

But after passing a new pro-gun law about every 15 minutes for the past ten years, the Ohio legislature has determined that gun ownership is still insufficiently protected in the wild, wild, rootin' tootin' state of Ohio. Hence its latest foray into madness—the highfalutin sounding “Second Amendment Preservation Act.”

As any good Hebrew prophet might say,

Unsatisfied to have merely placed targets on the backs of its citizens
that can only be seen in the light of day,
the legislature wishes to slap glow in the dark targets on the backs of its citizens
so that they can be shot to death in the dark of night as easily as in the light of day.
It is madness.
Irrational beyond description.

¹ Isaiah 10.¹

A sickness of the heart.

A cancer on the American soul.

May those who act so cynically as to create and pass such murderous laws find no preservation.

No, not for a second of any moment.

Meanwhile, a quick 15-minute magical sleigh ride to the southwest brings us to a land of make-believe pro-lifers whose laws force a mother of two, who very much wishes to be a mother of three, to carry a fetus that has no chance at life and threatens the health of the mother as well as her future prospects of having that much desired third child. And, of course, the jolly little elf of a State Attorney General who is so intent on enforcing the state's godforsaken abortion laws that he would criminalize anyone who has the audacity to seek or practice healthcare that secures the health of women is, himself, a criminal of the first order.

You can't make this stuff up.

It is madness.

Irrational beyond description.

A sickness of the heart.

A cancer on the American soul.

May these power hungry

exercisers of unrighteousness dominion over woman

be made to carry their heavy burden of wickedness to full term

only then to have heaven abort them

into the dark underbelly of hell.

But, of course, as is par for the course, prophet, priest, and pastor remain as silent about these abuses of human dignity as the silent night on which the One they claim to represent was born. They do and say nothing to heal the brokenness. Far from joining the angelic choirs in signing "peace on earth, good will to men," too often, when they do open their mouths on such topics they only add to the disease, assist the cancer to grow.

So, already, barely half-way through the advent season, I can hardly sleep, so anxious am I to see

what other gifts America's wacko state legislators, governors, and supreme courts will bring us this Holiday Season.

Ho. Ho. Ho, everyone. And a Merry Christmas!

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