

Meditation on Psalm 82:1-8

Give justice to the weak and the poor!

Psalm 82 denounces ancient Near-Eastern polytheistic belief in many gods as contradictory to God's self-revelation to Israel. There is only One true God [I am who I am-Yahweh: Exodus 3:14] and he disapproves human atrocities against humans in the name of their gods and goddesses [today, gods could be political and social systems humans create]. Psalm 82 reflects Catholic social teachings on the 'preferential option' for the poor and the weak. Unjust social systems discriminate and divide human family; it is an affront to God who is creator of all that many live in dehumanizing living conditions. Those who believe in One true God have the obligation to work for justice/fairness in society, to build God's kingdom in human hearts. Man and woman embody God's image in them and psalm 82 calls them 'gods' [children of the Most High], nevertheless, they shall die [v. 7]. Transient nature of human life on earth must awaken in human heart an understanding, knowledge that the divinely ordained mission of life is to establish peace [well-being] in families and societies according to the mind of God.

Psalm 82 reminds humans that the measure with which God judges the world depends on how society takes care of its weak, orphans, elderly, needy etc, especially to protect them from unconscionable oppressors [v. 4-'rescue the weak']. God's will in creating the world is about harmonious co-existence between human beings and rest of creation. This is possible only when the human mind is guided by constantly transforming word of God and justice for all. God speaks through Isaiah about a vision of just world: "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt or destroy, says the Lord' and 'a little child shall lead them' [Isaiah 11:7; 65:25]. God has forgiven humanity its iniquities in his Son Jesus Christ, in his sacrificial love-offering on the cross, therefore, humans should repent and show mercy and fairness to one another. Psalm speaks of 'death of gods', gods as non-existent! Falsehood, violence, hatred and all such killer-weeds must die [dying to false, selfish-self] in human hearts. Meditate on what is lasting in life's journey here and beyond and that would be God's loving, saving and all embracing presence!

Father Jose