

Meditation on Psalm 101:1-8

I will sing of your love and justice, O Lord

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Psalm 101 is a royal hymn, spoken by the king of Israel. King must have used the psalm as his inaugural speech, describing his vision for his country, that he is determined to eradicate all forms of injustice from his land. In the psalm, the king is humble before God, acknowledges that he is a servant of God and rendering love and justice to fellow human beings is the measure with which God judges his rule! The king's kingdom must reflect peace and prosperity that God envisions for all his creation. King pledges his commitment to be blameless before God and asks: 'O God! when will you come to me' [v.2]? The king's longing to be with God is about seeking a wisdom like that of King Solomon to govern his nation. Blameless before God also means to denounce wickedness. In verses 3-5, psalm lists seven [completeness] vices for the king to abolish from his kingdom: 1. vile things, 2. faithlessness, 3. perverse heart, 4. slander, 5. haughty eyes, 6. arrogant heart, 7. evil. King pledges to illumine his heart and that of his people with God's character, his wisdom!

Psalm acknowledges the damaging effects of violence, hatred and injustices in the land. The king promises to God that he would be a servant of all; the poor and marginalized will have their just share of the resources of his kingdom. The king would dissociate himself from people who have deceitful and crooked intentions, who want to destabilize peace in the land, who would lie for selfish motives! King prays that he would rule with integrity in his heart and faithfulness to God; he will not let arrogance and wickedness to control his mind.

Psalm dreams of a ruler who wants to rule according to the mind of God. Psalm defines the mind/heart of God as 'steadfast love' and justice; love is the nature of God in *himself* and justice is about God's will for the well-being of all his creation, his *outward grace* that sustains all. Earthly rulers are to represent the love and compassion that define God's character. It is not just the king, but all are called to a life of integrity in the presence of God, a life of mutual love and service-the way of perfection or wisdom! In the psalm, the king asks God to possess his heart that he may always do God's will. The true king, according to the mind of God is Christ, about whom Hebrew 10:9 says: '*here I am, I have come to do your will*'! On the day of Epiphany, the Magi recognized in Child Jesus the everlasting king who would rule with love and compassion. This New Year 2019, ask for the grace to listen to the voice of the Spirit inside you [in prayer and meditation] and may your response to that voice shape you into a compassionate being!

Father Jose