

The Isaiah Poems

Isaiah 35:1-10 | Advent 2016

PARTICIPANT SHEET #3

Session 3: Treasure Hidden in Plain Sight

ENTRY POINTS: *By Janice MacLean*

The prophets know, as do children in Godly Play, that time doesn't really happen in a line. We think it does: today, tomorrow, and the next day. But it's really messier than this. Today never stays still! By tomorrow today will be yesterday.

And even in our today, our regrets and guilt and our fears and anxieties have us living in the past or foreshadowing the future. We are seldom here, in this moment, and this moment, and this moment.

The prophets know that time is really a circle, maybe even like a spiral. They know that for every ending there is a beginning and for every beginning there is an ending. It's a big mystery.

And there is a big mystery in this Isaiah poem. The wilderness means so many things to the People of God. It was their place of journey. It was where they were shaped into the fullness of their identity. So many things happened to the People of God in the wilderness.

Isaiah paints the transformation of wilderness. From dryness comes pools of refreshing water, from barrenness comes tender cactus in bloom. From vagueness of direction comes a clear and distinct path. It is a picture of wholeness; this means salvation. And it is joy.

Is this a vision of a future time? Is this a vision of the present unfolding? It doesn't matter. Time is a circle. All we need is to look for signs of endings and beginnings. If we look closely at our ordinary experience we glimpse the promise unfolding even here, even now.

There is a saying in Islamic tradition: "I was a hidden treasure, and I yearned to be known."

Think about this. This is incarnation. This is the longing of these days of Advent. Isaiah's vision wants an incarnation.

Isaiah's vision wants an incarnation. And even this Advent we can look for treasure hidden in plain sight.

May it be so.

Some of the language in this Entry Points is drawn from Godly Play. See www.godlyplay.ca