

Third Monday of Advent

December 17th, 2007

“I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.” (Numbers 24-17)

If I were to say to someone, “The tension in this country is so thick you could cut it with a knife,” I think that most people would speculate that I was talking about the political climate in this nation, and that would be correct. But how would you know that I was talking about the ideological differences that seem so strident right now? It was clear to you because that phrase signifies that the tension is great, almost touchable, and most folks have experienced this unease particularly right around the elections.

Perhaps when Balaam wrote this oracle he was speaking from that same type of gut-sense. As one would feel strong tension or chaos at such a deep level that it seems one could cut it with a knife, so too perhaps Balaam had that deep down sense that a Savior was coming. No he didn't see Him, but he felt his coming deep inside. That kind of heart knowledge leads a person to speak in mysterious terms and symbolic metaphors. This kind of wisdom defies using vocabulary in a normal way. Yet it is this use of language that will fuel the fires of hope in hearts that long for something more.

The Advent season is filled with expressions that dance around incredible possibilities, which cannot be explained by factual verbiage. This is the season of hope when expressions speak louder than rational text.

Those who take the time to live in the present moment are comfortable with expressions that speak of the mystery that goes on in their lives. People who are in touch with their hearts feel deep inside the stirring of the Spirit and discern the course of the movement. They become accustomed to strange expressions that are the right expressions for the experience.

During this Advent season is a good time to listen in a deep down way. Let the unexpected Savior introduce the profound experience of hope. Let hope permeate the outer layers of wishful thinking to discover the terrain of felt knowledge. Can we be open to experience the mystical movement of God?

Reflection Questions

- 1.) Do I listen with my heart?*
- 2.) For what do I hope?*

Prayer: Jesus help me to stay in touch with the movements of Your Spirit. Break into my heart and let me feel more deeply the hope of this season.