

Daily Meditation 06/15/2023

Eckhart on the Nobility of All, Part II

Good morning.

We continue our meditations on Meister Eckhart's teachings to the poor about justice and their own nobility.

Professor Helen Kenick is a biblical scholar who wrote her doctoral thesis under Walter Brueggemann on the royal person in the Hebrew Bible. And she writes,

In a very real sense, every Christian is called to be a royal person, that is, steward of the world and builders of community within society.

The royal person, the king, was responsible for the preservation of order. And of course, this is a matter of justice: justice making. It is through justice that life is preserved and passed on. And justice is the ultimate test of the goodness of the king. She writes,

There is but one reason for the king's sovereignty -- that the life of God's people may be preserved. The dominion of the king is meant to guarantee that each and every person receives justice, that the integrity of society is guarded because individuals gain an equal hearing.

So this is the tradition that Eckhart is drawing on. And in the book of Hosea, chapter five, it says,

*Listen to this, priests,
attend, House of Israel,
Listen, royal household,
you who are responsible for justice.*

So that's right out in front, in the book of Hosea, chapter five, verse one: you are responsible for justice. That's the meaning of the royal person. The Prophet Micah says,

Listen, now you princes of the house of Jacob,
rulers of the house of Israel.
Are you not the ones who should know what is right,
you, enemies of good and friends of evil?
When they have devoured the flesh of my people
and torn off their skin
and crushed their bones...
then they will cry out to Yahweh,
but He will not answer them. "

So the poor are the ones who are to be uplifted, to see that justice permeates society. It is not just for the wealthy, and influential.

And here's how Kenik puts it:

The primary motivation for judgment can be expressed as justice. God's concern is for the poor, the captives, the blind, the stranger -- all those who become the objects of abuse.

So you can see why Ernst Bloch, a Marxist philosopher, can say that Marx drew from Eckhart, because Eckhart stood for the poor in a time of the peasant use by the dominant powers in his day.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.