

Reflections for 9th May 2021

6th Sunday of Easter

What we really want

There are people who think they know what I want, what I long for. They send me emails, and letters in the post, and place 'targeted' advertising on websites that I look at. Usually they are trying to persuade me to borrow money, because they think that I'm longing for a new sofa, a new car, a conservatory, or the latest mobile phone. They think they know what I want, what I'm longing for – but they are wrong.

In all kinds of ways, our lives are shaped and driven by what we want, what we long for, or – if we are not careful – our lives are shaped and driven by what other people try to convince us we want, or make us long for. But, if we stop and take time to think, what is it that we really long for in the depths of our hearts?

This week our Old Testament reading comes from the prophecy of Isaiah. We often think that the message of the prophets is all about judgement, doom and gloom, but it is not all like that. This part of Isaiah (chapter 40-55) is full of positive assurances, full of God's promises for his people. This passage speaks to people who know all about practical needs, who know about being hungry and thirsty – and God promises they will be given, not necessarily what they think they want, or what other people try to sell them or convince them they 'need'. They are promised that they will be given what God knows they need, the good things that will meet the deepest longings of their hearts. And the same promise is offered to us.

Remember the words of Jesus in John's gospel (6. 35):

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

And the word of God from Isaiah offers us a challenge, and an invitation (55. 2):

Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labour on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.

Revd John Waller

Loving God, you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you:
pour your love into our hearts and draw us to yourself,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen.

Bible readings: Isaiah 55. 1-11; Acts 10. 44-48; John 15. 9-17

Story: 'The Lost Coin' (based on Luke 15. 8 – 10)