
Day 95 – April 5

Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

David's Rise to Power

Readings: 2 Samuel 28: 3-25; 31:1-14; 2 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 1:1-27

Reflections:

- Interesting to note that as Saul is filled with fear he turns to God. People turn to God when things are going bad. As he turns to God, he wants to hear God. God doesn't answer him because Saul's heart has turned hard and is under judgment. Notice the three different ways that he believed God could speak to him: dreams, Urim, or Prophets. The first was for him as king to have a personal dream. Second was for the priests to speak to him through casting the divine dice (that is a bit funny but hey, that's how God worked back then). The third was through the prophets of Israel. All that Saul cared about was that God would speak. He didn't care how or by whom. These three meetings were reflective of the three basic leadership roles now within Israel, Prophet, priest and king. Anyway, this shows here and as we will see in the coming of the Spirit, God can speak to us in a variety of ways, some internally and some externally. We simply need to be open and looking for wherever God is speaking.
- Once again Saul's heart is revealed as he rejects God's ways and turns now to a witch to help him. He goes to her to consult Samuel who is dead. As bizarre as it seems, God decides to allow Samuel's spirit to speak to Saul through the witch. Samuel repeats the judgment that is against Saul and Saul passes out on the ground. Saul finally gets up and after encouragement eats. He had been fasting but gives up fasting.
- Like a Greek tragedy, Saul and Jonathan now all die, Jonathan in battle and Saul by taking his own life. Saul's dead body suffers complete humiliation. It explains why Saul was rejected. It was because he rejected the Lord and refused to submit to God's will and purposes.
- David is told of Saul's death by an Amalekite. The text does not indicate the motive of the messenger, but he probably had an ulterior motive. He may have been proud in saying that he killed Saul as a way to gain favor with David and in turn, save himself after his people had been defeated by David. In any case, David still considers Saul the Lord's anointed and has the messenger killed for declaring that he had killed Saul.

- David's lament reveals his deep respect for Saul and his even deeper love for Jonathan. Key statement: "I grieve for you my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of a woman." After this great tragedy David will now be made king.