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Day 96 – April 6

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## Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

### *David becomes King*

**Readings: 2 Samuel 2:1-4:12; 2 Samuel 5:4-5; 1 Kings 2:11; 1 Chronicles 3:4b, 29:26-27; 12:23-40**

### ***Reflections:***

- David is first established in Judah but it takes seven years of civil war before he is established as King of all of Israel. This period is marked by terrible murders and bloodshed. David remains committed to honoring Saul's house and refusing to support dishonorable forms of murder as a way to establish his kingdom. Yet, his own responses to these acts are at times violent and disturbing. We must remember that through this period, although it is God's overarching plan to establish David as king, that these acts are not the direct result of God's commands but simply people acting in violence, including David. Also, we should remember that the overarching theme is God showing us how bad things can get. David, as good of a king as he is, is still surrounded with bloodshed and violence and his kingdom is far from a kingdom of peace that God had promised and would one day bring through the true King, the Messiah.
- The story of Abner and Joab shows how awful and sad life gets when "enemy hate" rules the day.
- David taking back Michal is again a very sad story. How terrible it must have been to see her husband following behind her crying as he was forced to lose the wife he loved. Remember God had warned Israel that a human king would not bring them good but would cause them pain (1 Samuel 8:6-20). These stories remind us that even the most perfect of Kings, David, still brought pain to Israel. Only God as King would bring blessing and peace.
- This passage ends by outlining the army of David from across all of Israel. Although this is a physical army, the descriptions of this army gives us a wonderful picture of a unified movement of fully equipped and committed people: "brave", "who understood the times and knew what Israel should do", "experienced soldiers prepared for battle with every type of weapon to help David with undivided loyalty", "fully determined to make David King", "there was joy in Israel". Those that follow Jesus as King are not called to establish a physical kingdom through violence but a spiritual kingdom through sacrificial

service. The principles for success can still be transferred to the spiritual mission. As a community committed to Christ, are we brave or fearless? Has God's perfect love cast out fear so that we can walk confidently in completing his purposes in the world? Do we understand our cultural context and know how what is the wisest and best approach to serving the broader community? Are we well equipped with life experience and tools? Do we possess undivided loyalty to Jesus above all other loyalties? Are we fully determined to proclaim and live the message of Jesus? Do we possess the joy of this kind of passionate and mission-driven community? What a great vision of community! May those of us who are Christ-followers settle for nothing less.