

Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

David Becomes King

Readings: 1 Chronicles 16:37-43; 2 Samuel 6:20-23; 8:15-18; 9:1-13; 1 Chronicles 17:1-2; 2 Samuel 7:4-29; 1 Chronicles 18:14-17; 2 Samuel 7:1-3; 1 Chronicles 17:3-27

Reflections:

- The tabernacle worship is re-established and everything is seemingly falling in place for David's reign as a godly king. David as a forerunner for the coming king, the Messiah, displays in many ways a heart and passion for God unlike any other king. He is a man whose heart is set to worship God and to walk humbly before God. Yet as we will see in time, even with all of this in his favor, he still ends up committing adultery and murder.
- Michal again is shown to have a hard and judgmental heart. The judgment of childlessness is a cold reminder that spiritual barrenness follows hearts that are proud, hard and judgmental. David refuses to submit or accept her judgment but takes a stand against her harsh words.
- In contrast to Michal, we see David's heart of compassion and tenderness as he seeks out and welcomes into his household Mephibosheth. Here we see again a wonderful picture of the coming Messiah and his heart of compassion for the broken, outcast and needy. As Mephibosheth asks, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?" The answer is quite simple. He has done nothing to deserve this grace but only in his humility and weakness does his broken condition reveal the incredible mercy of the king. God chooses us not because we are worthy but because he was looking to reveal his grace to the on looking world. Who better to choose than the lowest and the weakest and the neediest? The only condition he asks for is humble trust in him. This also helps us understand covenant faithfulness as David continues to remain faithful to his covenant to Jonathan, even after Jonathan has passed away.
- David's heart for God leads him to want to build a temple. As he sits in the house God provided for him, he wants to pour out generosity back to God. Nathan's response gives us insight into understanding two aspects of God's will for us, his general will and his specific will. Nathan first responds to David's idea with God's general will for David's life and situation: "Whatever you have in mind, do it, for God is with you." In other words,

when you are in good relationship with God, he wants to bless the desires of your heart and you should feel free to pursue those desires as they align with his heart. After Nathan sleeps on it, in the night, God reveals to him his specific will which is different than God's general blessing on David. Here we see God has specific things in mind for David that led him to tell David not to build a temple but to leave that for David's descendent.

- This prophecy from Nathan is multi-layered and is rich in helping us understand how God speaks. First, God's heart is one of blessing the humble and being a God full of compassion. He responds to David by wanting to bless him more! He reminds David that it was his will to bring him up from being a simple shepherd boy to becoming king of Israel. God's desire is to bless David and make his throne secure and his name great. Humility and passion for God opens the door for God to pour out this kind of blessing on his children.
- The prophecy about the coming king is fascinating. It weaves both the immediate future of Solomon with the long term vision of the coming Messiah, Jesus. We will see this over and over again as the prophets come forward and take a more active role that God loves to speak on multiple levels, revealing something that is true for the near future but also holds meaning for his long term purposes. In this way, it takes eyes of faith to see both meanings and not simply default to the obvious and first impression. Jesus would speak this same way in how he taught and used parables with multiple levels of meaning. It helps us see the divine brilliance and wisdom. Paul's term in Ephesians is "mystery." A good word to describe the hidden deeper meaning within God's word.
- David is overwhelmed, humbled and re-impassioned for God. God's grace simply causes us to fall in love with him over and over again. It leads us to trust him at the deepest level and simply abandon our lives to him in humble, joyful devotion. As David declares, "You are God! Your words are trustworthy...!"