

The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan

THE BIBLICAL WILD

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wilderness.

We continue our journey through first and second Samuel this week in the story of a move from a tribal society to a monarchical society. David as the king is presented as one who carries both a blessing and a curse. One who carries the blessing of God and the cursedness of his own behavior and the behavior of those around him. In other words the tension between divine perfection and our own human frailty. The blessing is for every fortunate thing happens to David as he moves from advantage to advantage leading a somewhat charmed life and cursed because David's life his family the dynasty that begins with him begins to unravel in deception and violence. What we see is a juxtaposition of Yaweh's divine intention and the lived experience of David, a contrast of the idealized hope and the cold harsh reality of human frailty. A story all too common in movies, the theatre, and soap operas television specials, and yes indeed even in our own lives. Let's read a piece from II Samuel 7:14-16: I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. But, I will not take my steadfast love away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me, your throne shall be established forever. In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David. What we see in this passage from II Samuel is the contrast between God's deep and never ending commitment and steadfast love to us and human character that tests and seemingly jeopardizes God's commitment. This extended narrative articulates an ongoing theme throughout the Holy Scripture. God's intent is inextricably intertwined with humanity and all its brokenness and in particular with the dream of a restored Davidic monarchy. God remains steadfast love and his commitment to us. But at times we are tempted to stray from God's path, we find ourselves feeling distant from God as if God has abandoned us. Not unlike the feelings that undoubtedly David had that he would find himself drawing ever closer to God and then withdrawing. Straying from the paths and finding himself in inappropriate and immoral relationships. Having his heart burn with the desire to kill, resorting to violence to get his own way, looking for his own ends rather than for the good of all the people over which his is king. It's a story that would be easy to place on David and keep at a distance but it is in fact our own story. Not only the story of our failures but also of the promise that even in the midst of all of those failures God never abandons us. God is there to walk with us and be our deliverer in our darkest hour and time of need.

As you engage the Holy Scripture this week I invite you to ponder these two questions:

1. How do you experience God's deep commitment to you?

WEEK XVI: I Samuel 25-27 / Psalm 92

From psalm 89 let us pray.

I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. Amen.

I'm Todd Ousley bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan and this is the Biblical Wild, pioneers in the Christian

2. How do you test that commitment?

May God bless you and I will see you next week on the Biblical Wild.