

The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan

THE BIBLICAL WILD

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Diocese of Eastern Michigan and this is the Biblical Wild, pioneers in the Christian wilderness.

Now as we shift into the book of I Kings we find that king David is lying in great weakness. When David's time to die grew near, he charged his son Solomon saying: I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, be courageous, and keep the charge of the Lord your God, then the Lord will establish his word that he spoke concerning me: 'If your heirs take heed to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel. So the promises that we first began to see with Abraham and his generations following him have continued into a new way with the Davidic line. God is promising that if one walks in the ways follows the statutes the ordinances all of the commands that have been given, then God's faithfulness and our faithfulness and obedience to God will be rewarded. And in this case with the promised successor of the line. Then David slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the city of David. So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established. Others are positioning themselves for control and assumption of power. It's not a smooth transition, but rather one where there are vacuums in power vacuums in political control and jockeying for position. So Solomon is not only looking to the tribes of Israel for power and authority or a center of authority for him. He is looking beyond the borders looking to Egypt, building political alliances around him through marriage and other political strategies. Positioning Jerusalem, Solomon's house and a temple as centers of not only earthly political authority but also intertwined within this is a sense of divine power and authority. We've moved from a tribal society to a monarchical society the establishment of a particular house, the house of David that will be those who would be king among the Israelites. And consolidating that in to a particular place, in this case Jerusalem as the center of not only political power but with the temple, also a center of religious authority. Reinforcing Jerusalem as the center of the world puts us once again into a consideration of the power of place. I recall in my own life how place has figured prominently in my sense of self and my own authority as a person and as a beloved child of God. It was a place that gave me touchstones, a sense that I had a place and there was some sort of center of identity and a center of authority as a person coming from that. In more recent years a coming home as it were to a place I first discovered in 1982 and knew was heaven on earth the state of Michigan. Here I am in a place that I understand that the tensions between land, water, and air and the changes of seasons, the kind of people who are hardworking and fun loving and deeply connected to the land yet also shaped by a tension that arises from our experiences as immigrant farmers and laborers, the rise of the middle class and the labor and union struggles that have marked who we are as a people. All of this gives a sense of place and an understanding of culture and identity. So

WEEK XVII: II Samuel 10-12/ Psalm 98

From Psalm 81 let us pray.

Sing aloud to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob. Raise a song, sound the tambourine, the sweet lyre with the harp. Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our festal day. For it is the statue for Israel, and ordinance of the God of Jacob. He made it a decree in Joseph, when he went out over the land of Egypt. Amen.

I'm Todd Ousley bishop of the Episcopal

it was for the people of Israel that they saw an importance of identifying a place and deriving identity from that place and how it related to their relationship to God.

This week as you consider these passages, ponder this question.

What place is at the center of your own understanding as a beloved child of God?

May God bless you and I will see you next week.