Bible Study 30

February 9, 2022

The Book of Samuel

Last week we saw how Samuel as a child is called by God. He is the son of Hannah who had been barren and mocked for many years. She vows to God that if he gives her a son, she will consecrate him to God. A son is born, she names him Samuel and give him to Eli the High Priest to raise in the holy of Holies. Eli’s sons are bad and have fallen away from God.

Eli’s sons are not just bad, but they are evil. Samuel is called three times in the night by Yahweh. The third time he responds, “Here I am Lord, I come to do your will.”

Chapter 3 -The time of the Judges is a precarious time. It is the time where although the Hebrews occupy the land of Canaan, they are surrounded by their enemies. Only the unity of the 12 tribes around the Ark protects them. The Judges are the leaders who call the 12 tribes together in time of war, conflict or crisis. Samuel will grow to be a Judge but also a prophet.

In Chapter 4, the Philistines steal the Ark of the Covenant. The Israelites are defeated and the two sons of Eli die. When he receives the news in Shiloh, Eli falls and dies. All the people realize that God no longer shines his favor on Israel.---However, everywhere the Ark is taken it brings destruction with it.

Chapter 5 - The Philistines are forced to send the Ark back to Shiloh so great is the fear in their cities. With it they send a ransom sum, in order that God does not punish them.

Chapter 6 - But Samuel calls all 12 tribes to fight the Philistines at Mizpah. In a great battle they are defeated after Samuel has sacrificed to God.

In Chapter 7, Samuel has grown old and his ‘sons do not walk in his ways.’ At Ramah the people begin to clamor for a king like the other nations. It is a critical moment in Jewish history.

Samuel tells them that they have a king in Yahweh according to the Covenant with Moses. “Give us a king!” they shout. Samuel pleads to God who tells him to tell the people everything a king will do. He will take their sons for war. He will tax them. He will take the best of everything: fields, vineyards, servants and property. But the people refuse to listen.

From here on everything all the way to the Great Exile in Babylon will be blamed on this hunger for a king. Kingship divides the 12 tribes and separates the Northern Kingdom from the Southern Kingdom. It breaks the Covenant, and the Prophets will not ever let Israel forget it. Chapter 8

Read Chapters 7 & 8