

MESSAGE – Pledging our Allegiance

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It's not a simple journey for David to become king.

First he is anointed by Samuel to be king, even while Saul is still king, but becoming king takes much longer.

He proves himself not only as a warrior when he defeats Goliath, but as a man of faith.

He rises in recognition under Saul's kingship, lauded by many.

The people sang David's praises more than Saul's.

Saul becomes jealous and begins to reject David.

David does everything he can to stay true to Saul, but Saul and his family fight against David, seeing him as a threat.....battles take place.

Eventually, David becomes king of the southern region of Judah, but the northern area follows the family of Saul who continue to fight with David until this day:

2 Samuel 1-5, 9-10

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh and blood. ²In the past, while Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel on their military campaigns. And the LORD said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler.'" ³When all the elders of Israel had come to King David at Hebron, the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. ⁴David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. ⁵In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years. ⁹David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces^[a] inward. ¹⁰And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.

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"All the tribes of Israel" came to David.

These were the very people who had been originally fighting against David; they were aligned with Saul's family. Saul's son Ishbaal was their king. Why the change?

Because they found themselves in a place of need. Raw need.

A rash of betrayals had taken place.

- Their king, Ishbaal, accused his highest ranking general, Abner, of wrong-doing.
- Abner, hurt and cutoff, went and made peace with David.
- David's highest ranking officer, Joab, gets angry with this and kills Abner.
- News of all this gets back to Ishbaal and he loses heart.
- Two captains in his army take advantage of his weakened position and assassinate him.

All this leaves the northern kingdom without both their king and without his highest ranking general.

And they become afraid because the Philistines are still a threat to them and they now have no leadership and no protection.

It is then that they remember David, who has already shown his strength over the Philistines by defeating Goliath.

So it is a deep-seated need that drives those northern people to David, asking him to be their king.

This illustrates our faith story.

Our faith story begins with recognizing our need.

A need we cannot fulfill on our own.

Maybe we like to think of ourselves as self-sufficient; able to meet our own needs.

"I'm fine"

Until that doesn't work anymore.....like those northern Israelites.

Maybe we don't think of ourselves as having a need; refusing to recognize the need.

I don't have any failings, failures, sin therefore I don't need forgiveness

We can go on and tell ourselves that for a long time until we can't anymore and we realize that we are in need.

In need of love. In need of forgiveness. In need of community. In need of new life; renewed life.

*This is exactly where my faith story began.....*

And when we find ourselves finally in that place of need.....it's a vulnerable position to be in

Like those northern Israelites.....they had a need...they decided to go to David.

What would happen? Would David reject them citing their previous failures?

That's not what happens. David doesn't turn them away.

It says, "the king made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD,

This is how our faith story continues.

God receives us when we recognize our deep need.

Doesn't send us away.

Doesn't refuse to help.

Instead, God shows us mercy and grace and makes a covenant with us.

This is our baptismal covenant....in which we recognize that God has claimed us, named us, washed us, and given us a future and promise....

So I call you to remember your baptism and be thankful....

But there's a little more to the story still: "and they anointed David king over Israel."

They aligned themselves.

They pledged their allegiance.

They submitted to David's authority.

This too is part of our faith journey.

We are not meant to simply receive God's forgiveness and restoration and then walk away.

We are not meant to just claim Jesus as Savior....

We are to call him Lord as well.....

Pledge our allegiance to his eternal kingdom

Promise to live by his teachings

Serve him as our Lord.

Which brings me to ask:

Where are you in this faith story?

Still having to recognize your need?

Having to profess or renew your profession of Jesus as Lord?

The good news friends, is that wherever you are in this faith story, God is always ready to receive you, forgive you, renew you, and be in a living relationship with you.