

God's Game of Thrones *Naked Dancing King 2* Samuel 6:1-5;12-19 Rev. Brian

Today King David leads the people as the Ark of God is brought to the conquered City of Jerusalem. The Ark is where the tablets of the 10 Commandments are stored and it is the throne of God and thus represents the presence of God with Israel. It is the most sacred, most treasured and most ancient possession of the people of Israel—having been brought on the escape from Egypt. Those who have watched the movie, *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*, may remember the Ark destroyed evil doers in the climax of that film. Though this action is never recorded in scripture, the Ark is thought to literally contain the power of God – (which is why the man was struck dead for touching it.) Because David knows that God has given the people their military victory, he orders them to bring the Ark into the new Capital of Israel where it will become the center of the worship.

David's actions reveal both, an awe/fear of God and a deep faith and trust in God. And being a musician himself, David makes sure that God is worshipped with reckless abandon as they finally bring the Ark to Jerusalem. In the scripture following what we heard David explains why he dances before the Lord with such humility:

David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!" David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

It is easy to imagine why Michal has contempt for David... He was after all the enemy of her Father, and David only becomes King because Saul, and Michal's brother, Jonathon, are both dead. But we see something else in Michal's response. We see one

of the oldest forms of division and prejudice: classism. Michal thinks it is “unbecoming” for a king to dance with so little on before the common servant people... making himself common and vulgar. And David responds with his philosophy of ruling – he says “God has made me Prince over Israel (For David this means God is King) and I will debase myself even farther, but I will be held in honor” by those common people. And he is correct, David remains a hero to be emulated and followed, in his time, in the time of Jesus, and even today. The Israeli flag- the two triangles in a hexagram is called the Star of David (or in Hebrew Magen David [ma: 'ye:n da: 'wi:ð] or shield of David). The symbol became representative of the worldwide Zionist community, and later the broader Jewish community, after it was chosen as the central symbol on a flag at the First Zionist Congress in 1897. Now there is no historical example of David using it, in fact the earliest Jewish usage of the symbol was inherited from medieval Arabic works by Kabbalists for use in protective amulets where it was known as a Seal of Solomon. But King David is so loved for his leadership, that his name usurps that of his son, Solomon, revered as the wisest person ever.

David’s popularity seems to be built on his basic belief that his job is to serve all the people, not just his military men, not just the productive workers, but scripture says “all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each was given a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins.” It is the Biblical equivalent of a chicken in every pot.

This acceptance of all people, is not new for David... we remember when he was in exile the people who gathered with him were from the edge of society... people who were not part of “polite society.” Perhaps this is one reason his wife, who had been sheltered in the courts of her father, does not understand King David and his love of and valuing of the common people.

Jesus emulates King David in the people with whom he chooses to follow him. This leadership style of elevating the common people, and even those at the edge of society is inspiring, but it has been keeping me awake at night. Here's why... In the last few weeks the Governor and legislature has finished the Florida State budget and there were two items in our own county that are troubling.

First, Gov. Scott vetoed \$758,000 in funding for Goodwill Manasota, so three out of five positions in their program that supports veterans were eliminated. Goodwill Manasota President Bob Rosinsky said the pilot program, which began in 2014, was supposed to be funded with \$403,000 over two years from the state budget. Scott's veto meant they could not fund the additional positions for the second year. Scott's budget said the item was vetoed because it "circumvents the established grant review process."

The second item was a two-point-five million dollar grant to IMG Academy in Bradenton - a fine For-Profit school and training center for Athletes that contributes to the economy here.. Tampa Bay Time reporter, Jeremy Wallace wrote,

"It is interesting how that came to be. Most state budget requests have to be presented in local hearings in the county and are reviewed in the early stages of the budget process, but IMG went through none of that. Instead, while House and Senate leaders were negotiating other budget issues, lawmakers quietly slipped \$50,000 in the budget for IMG.

Well, OK \$50,000 is not nothing, but things slip through the "processes" sometimes.. But here is the real kicker... Wallace writes, "Then just before midnight... just as legislators sent the budget to the printers another \$2 million was sent to the project." This is on top of the 7 million dollar the legislature has sent to IMG in the last two years

As people of faith we sometimes have to ask what would King David do in this instance? How would Jesus react to this disregard for veterans and their families and

the blatant disregard for rules by legislators on behalf of a For-Profit Business who receives almost \$10 million dollars. It is sometimes hard for us to tangle with the realm of politics as people of faith. I cannot as a religious leader of a church advocate for candidates, or tell anyone how to vote... but people of faith can speak to immorality, injustice and corruption. The Prophets and Jesus show us that. And much like the United Church of Christ has fought for Marriage Equality for GLTB folks, we as people of faith may have to raise our voices here in Manatee and Sarasota Counties and say, "enough is enough." It is time to challenge our political leaders to play by the rules. It is time to insist they stop waving the flag of patriotism with one hand while closing Florida's checkbook saying there is no money to support the brave men and women veterans who have offered their very lives in defense of our freedoms. And we are well within our moral authority to say their hypocrisy turns absolutely evil when under the cover dark midnight, they quietly sneak 2 million dollars to part of a company that was sold for \$2.3 billion in 2013.

We do not seek to make enemies, and I am not suggesting the leaders who did these things are evil, but their actions are. They need to be reminded that one can lead with integrity. King David makes that clear. He shows us the model of the Servant-Leader- one who can say, "I will be abased in my own eyes but (by the people)...I shall be held in honor." This is the we do seek to follow King David, and in the words of Samuel to make sure all the people, "the whole multitude of Manatee and Sarasota County Veterans, both men and women, go home with at least a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. AMEN