

Devotion, Week of November 12, 2023

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

This past Sunday we looked at the story in 2 Samuel of David becoming king and establishing his royal city in Zion, renamed Jerusalem. Then we looked at David bringing the ark of the covenant into this royal city and establishing it in a special tent. There is only one psalm about the ark of the covenant, and it probably dates from the time of David, before the temple was built later by Solomon. Psalm 132 concludes with the covenant between David and God, which is conditional – David’s son will be king, but only if he keeps the covenant and decrees that God teaches him. If David’s descendants continue to keep this covenant, they will reign on the throne forever. The text says this:

The Lord swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:
“One of the sons of your body
I will set on your throne.
If your sons keep my covenant
and my decrees that I shall teach them,
their sons also, forevermore,
shall sit on your throne.”

For the Lord has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his habitation:
“This is my resting place forever;
here I will reside, for I have desired it.
I will abundantly bless its provisions;
I will satisfy its poor with bread.
Its priests I will clothe with salvation,
and its faithful will shout for joy.
There I will cause David’s strength to thrive;
I will prepare a lamp for my anointed one.
His enemies I will clothe with disgrace,
but on him, his crown will gleam.”

We know that the kings after Solomon began to violate those decrees, with the result that Israel fell to the Assyrians and Babylonians. God chose Zion as a holy place where God would be present, bless the people, and provide food for all. As we pray for peace in this place, let us remember that God’s desire for Jerusalem is blessing and well-being – that is where the word “shalom,” in Hebrew, or “salaam” in Arabic, comes from.

Jeanne