

Dear Sojourners in Faith,

First of all, thank you for your warm welcome since my return to campus and for your asking about my mother. I thank you for your prayers and fellowship in faith. You are what make Wednesdays my favorite day at Ann's Choice. I thank God for you and commend you for following the scriptures thus far. The story of God and his salvation has been one of the most amazing things I have had the privilege and pleasure of studying and teaching, and your attendance and attentiveness as well as patience with me are much appreciated.

As I wrote last week, having survived the desert and having kind of survived and surviving the settlement—whether in the manner recorded in Joshua or Judges—the Israelites have now finally unpacked their bags to settle down in the promised land after decades of wandering in the wilderness. But what will they do with their tents when all their Canaanite neighbors have houses and farms (and gods aplenty to worship, especially for farming success)? Peer pressure gets to the Israelites and they want to become “like the nations/Gentiles,” and one of the first things they want is what everyone else seems to have, a king to lead and unify them—yes even after Gideon in Judges 8. They appear to be done with judges anointed by the LORD and are ready to live like the native Canaanites. But what to do with their tents and the covenant laws? You can take the Israelites out of the wilderness, but it seems impossible to take the wilderness out of the Israelites. Join us to see what happens when kings happen to a nomadic people:

2 Sam 2–12

2 Sam 7: YHWH's deal with David—the beginning of the Davidic covenant / tradition
2 Sam 11.1–12.23 (cf. 1Kgs 15.4–5): monarchic & theocratic issues? David falls

We will linger with David a while for various reasons, significant among which is that with him a new and different covenant begins in Israel, one which includes the Davidic dynasty. The northern tribes and traditions will become more noticeably different from those in the south, and a new configuration becomes part of Israelite history and memory, viz., the figures of king and prophet and the sometimes challenging relationship between them, often comparable to the relationship between the southerners and northerners, Davidic and Mosaic, etc. Consider the differences between a corporate structure and shared governance, between a corporate meeting table and King Arthur's table, between central planning and local autonomy, between episcopacy (e.g., Roman Catholicism) and Presbyterianism.

As before, please do not hesitate to **suggest any biblical, theological, or life topics** along the way. We can be flexible to take detours on our journey through the Bible. Please see the “syllabus” online for where we are headed: [Bible study 2021-04](#) (printed copies also available in my mailbox in front of my office in Resident Life, Liberty Commons).

And also as before, here are the Zoom instructions:

Zoom (online or using an app):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82395191045?pwd=TTRiQklwR2RhRzZkNFNxU2RRbGRoUT09>

Meeting ID: 823 9519 1045

Meeting Password: annschoice

Dial in by telephone: nearest phone access in New York City

Dial 1 (929) 205 6099

Enter Meeting ID: 823 9519 1045, followed by “#”

Enter Passcode: 394871 if requested

Have a restful night, and see you tomorrow in class or via Zoom. As always, I look forward to your observations and questions.

Faithfully and gratefully,

