

Day 43 – Mar. 29

Reading through the Old Testament histories is a difficult thing. Not because the story is dry – it is not. Not because the readings are long – they are not. Not because we are too busy to read the bible for any extended length of time – we are not. Reading this is difficult because we find in the stories of Joshua, the Judges, and even the Kings a description of a God we have a hard time recognizing. Having focused rightly on Jesus and His teachings of peace and submission, of mercy and grace, it is hard for us to read about our God who sends His people to war, to conquest, to kill and maim. It is less hard for us to read about our God sending His own people into exile than it is to read about our God commanding the slaughter of villages and entire cities-full of people.

Yet this is the natural outcome of the Old Testament theology of God's sovereignty. If God is completely in control of this world, then anything that happens, from a man throwing stones and dirt clods to armies marching to war must have been God's will. This is David's worldview, and so when Saul attacks or a man hurls insults and rocks, David acts according to God's sovereignty. "The Lord told him to do it," David reasons based on his beliefs, and so the taunting continues unabated.

How do you reconcile God's sovereignty with the reality of evil in this world? There aren't easy answers, and wars have been fought over this debate. So maybe we simply have to sit with God in the tension of these two things and humbly submit to our own ignorance. It is a difficult thing to do in our culture that demands answers to every question, maybe even more difficult than reading through the Old Testament histories.