



◆ Worship Next Week ◆

Today's Old Testament Scripture is God's Call of the young boy, Samuel to be a Prophet. This passage spawned the beautiful hymn, Here I Am Lord. It seems like this has come around quickly since we last looked at this scripture. Samuel, was born to Hannah who prayed to God because she was infertile. In thanksgiving for the answer to her prayer, she dedicated Samuel to the temple under the care of the priest, Eli. Samuel was awakened three times by a voice calling out his name. Each time, he ran to Eli's side, saying, you called me. Eli responded, No I didn't. Go back to sleep. Eli realized it was God calling the boy and he instructed him to answer, "Here I am, speak, for your servant is listening"

We move out of the rotation of reading Mark for John's account of the call of Philip and Nathanael. Jesus first calls Philip who encourages his friend Nathanael to join Jesus as a disciple. Jesus "reads" Nathanael by telling him that he "saw" him under a fig tree. Nathanael is impressed with his other-worldly abilities and Jesus assures him that he will see 'greater things than these.' His closing words "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened up and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." This is the reference back to Mark's three similar incidences of "the tear in the heavens" found in the baptism, the transfiguration and the cross.

I draw your attention to today's Psalm 139 which will not be part of my reflections. The psalmist, emphasizes God's complete knowledge of us. As I began to read "O Lord you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up;" I thought without making the connection, oh that reminds me of my favourite verse - "Where can I flee from your presence?" Then I looked it up and should have realized it is the same Psalm, but this portion was omitted today. This is a psalm of praise, of delight in being completely known and loved by God and the realization that nowhere can we go, or nothing can we do, that will put us outside that incomprehensible love.

As a further point of interest, the words "when I sit down and when I rise up" form part of the wording of my habitual benediction which has been claimed from Dr. Robert Schuller



◆ Annual General Meeting ◆

The date has been set! Plan to join us on February 21 for our ONLINE annual general meeting. Details will be available closer to the date. All notices for reports have been sent out through email. If you require your previous report to be sent again let the office know. Reports for 2020 will be due on **January 15**. If you have any questions let Michelle know.

◆ Donations ◆

The Melrose staff team (and volunteer base) continues to do work behind the scenes even though we cannot use the building to worship together. If you are looking to support the ongoing work of the church you can:

1. Sign up for P.A.R. (preauthorized remittance) through the office.
2. Make a one time or ongoing donation through Canada Helps.Org
3. Send a donation through e-transfer to donations@melroseunited.ca.