

Thoughts on the Daily Word

5th Week of Year. Friday 13th February. Readings: 1 Kings 11:29-32, 12:19; Psalm: 80; Gospel: Mark 7:31-37.

Solomon has now accomplished in his kingship just what Samuel had predicted when the Israelites demanded a kingship like the other nations rather than being obedient to their Covenant. Solomon exploited the northern tribes who had been loyal to Saul and reduced them to almost slavery on his many projects.

Something that did not happen to Judah or Jerusalem. In today's first reading we hear of what will become the long history of prophetic challenges to first Solomon and then what will become the two kingdoms of Israel of and Judah. Division and exploitation will cripple the kingdoms until the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The symbolism of the healing of the deaf and dumb by Jesus is much more than a physical healing, important as that is. The power of speech and the ability to listen underlies the whole ministry of the Word and Covenant. Hence Jesus as the Word who makes it possible to heal the divisions created by a lack of hearing, essentially obedience, and a lack of speaking, which is a response of faith, the Word in Dialogue, or Catechesis as we often call it.