

SESSION 2: UNITED MONARCHY (SAUL TO SOLOMON)

PREPARATION FOR THE SESSION

Read 1 Samuel 8, 10, 15; 2 Samuel 7, 11; Psalm 51, 63; 1 Kings 1-2.

Summary of the Video: Module 2, Episode 2

For a brief period, northern and southern Israel (including all twelve tribes) were ruled by one king. But before this time and after this time, Israel was divided. Before, it had been in twelve distinct tribes. After Solomon the north and south become distinct “nations” (though they didn’t use that term back then in the same way we do now).

The content of this section comes from the books of Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel and 1 Kings. The story of these books overlap in various ways. We’re doing the history more than the “books” of the Bible, following the story rather than making each book’s theological points at this time.

Andrew Wilson begins by showing how leadership had changed from patriarchs to kings. “King” is an elastic term in the ancient world. It could mean “local ruler of a community/city” (of 1000 people) or “national ruler” (which covers an ethnic people) or “imperial ruler” (which has a massive scale covering multiple ethnicities).

Israel demanded a king (1 Sam 8-10) and God expected this to be the case (Deut 17). God wasn’t opposed in principle to his people having a king, but he communicated quite a different vision of what his ideal king would be like. God was opposed to Israel’s reasoning for having a king, “to be like the other nations.”

God gives the people their first king, Saul, and the opposite of God’s ideal becomes a reality. Andrew Wilson provides a handy chart to see the rise and fall of Saul.

Just as Saul started out well and ended badly, so also did the other two kings (David and Solomon) of the United Monarchy. Saul’s good beginning might spark hope in the reader that he’ll further God’s vision for a united kingdom. But such hopes are dashed when Saul caves into sin.

Once Saul has been rejected by God, David comes into view and, after a long time of struggle with Saul, is anointed as the new king. For a season, David is “anointed as king” but doesn’t get to rule as king because the evil king (his predecessor) continues to reign. Andrew Wilson draws a connection to the situation of Christians today because Jesus has risen to be our King and yet there are evil kings all around us who seem to rule the world.

In some ways, David sins in worse ways than Saul. So, why is God so displeased with Saul and pleased with David? It would seem that it is David’s capacity to repent and to return to worship that distinguishes him from Saul. “The gravity of the sin is perhaps not the key issue.”

Q&A No. 1 (31:18)

What is happening when the witch of Endor “raises” Samuel from sheol? Andrew Wilson doesn’t know. We’re intended to see it as a legitimate spirit rather than a trick. It is used by God to bring condemnation on Saul (even though the practice isn’t commended by God).

Saul receives a new heart but, after his sin, the spirit leaves him. What are the implications of this for our assurance of salvation? Andrew Wilson doesn’t think this is something we should fear. The language of Paul about the seal of the Spirit removes the possibility of a Christian losing the Spirit. Perhaps in part this is because the Spirit was “with” OT believers but is “in” NT believers.

Next we talk about **David’s reign**. Andrew Wilson launches a discussion of the Psalms as a window into the life, history and theology of David. We need to realize that the headings of the Psalms are actually part of the biblical texts; they give us historical context for understanding how David responds. We go through several Psalms in light of their historical context in order to see David’s lifestyle of responding to any situation with worship and a returning to God.

Finally, we address **Solomon** (1 Kings 1-11). For the first time a “dynasty” begins when David anoints his son as the king. After his dedication, Solomon “wobbles” into a marriage alliance with Egypt and this signals his future compromises in these ways. Solomon builds the kingdom, builds the temple, increases Israel’s military and economic power, and builds his own palace. His downfall was marrying hundreds of foreign wives in order to build foreign alliances (and thus compromising exclusive allegiance to Yahweh).

Andrew Wilson makes several connections between Solomon and our faith in Christ. But ultimately Solomon is an antitype (contrasting picture) of Jesus because of how he falls into sin and doesn’t match up to the grandeur of Christ.

The video ends by showing the purpose of 1 Chronicles. It’s filled with genealogies and lists. It looks at the kings from a “post-exilic” view. Almost exclusively it focuses on the southern kingdom (which tended to be more faithful and less idolatrous).

Q&A No. 2 (1:20:40)

What’s the relationship between the law and the people of this time? We don’t know exactly. The writer of Kings deliberately shows how the kings neglected and rejected the law. It appears that though the law wasn’t really used much at the beginning of 1 Samuel, it is used even less as the years go on. When Josiah finds “the law” he appears to have found Deuteronomy and brings it in. Many of the important laws (Passover and Jubilee) were rarely if ever practiced. But a lot of the sin appears to be apathy (whether or not they knew the law). The law seems to have been lost because people didn’t care about it.

What implication does God’s desire for Israel’s government have for modern governments? Does the prophet, priest, king structure have any implication for us today? The easiest answer, which some Christians profess, would be “no, none at all, it’s all for the church.” But Andrew Wilson thinks the answer is more complex than that. We have at least a prophetic role to proclaim God’s ideal to our culture.

Terms You'll Need to Know:

The Godfather—a movie about an Italian family in the mafia.

Sheol—Hebrew word for the place of the dead.

Antitype—a type is a character in the OT who gives a positive comparison to Jesus (e.g. Melchizedek). In the comparison, we call the better side the “type” and the less godly side the “antitype”. See this article for a fuller explanation: www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/type/.

Panzer tank—a certain type of military tank that was primarily used by Nazi Germans in World War II.

Post-exilic view—the people of Israel were exiled to Babylon and Assyria around 600 BC. They came back to the land of Israel around 400 BC. A post-exilic view means that someone who lived after returning from the exile has written a perspective on events that happened before the exile.

Constantinian—Constantine was a Roman emperor who “converted” to Christ and then attempted to make the Roman Empire a “Christian” nation; someone who is Constantinian desires to see the church highly involved in the hierarchy of government, etc.

Watch Video

Watch Module 2, Episode 2 (1hr 29 minutes).

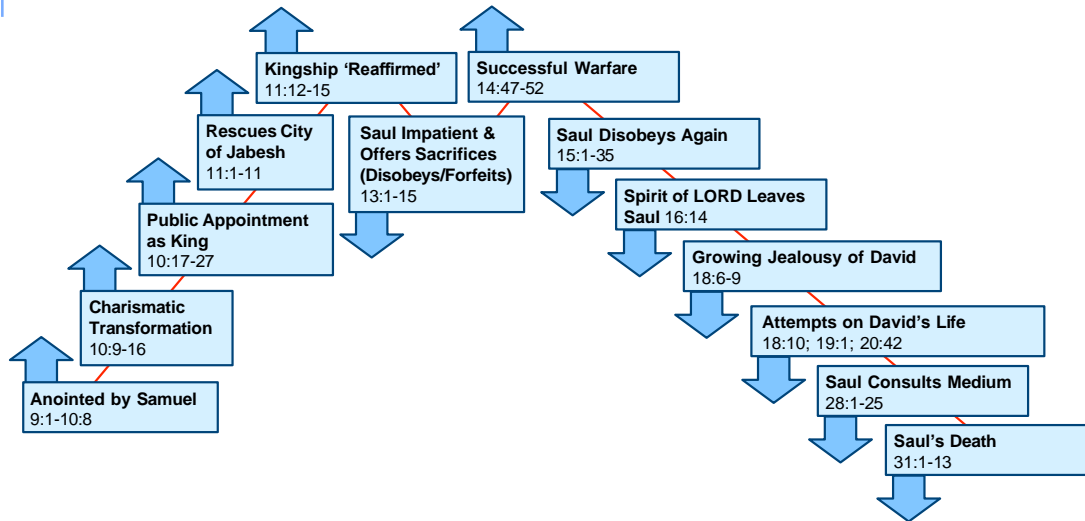
Conquest to Monarchy

- I. The Story So Far
- II. Tribal Federation: Joshua to Judges
- III. United Monarchy: Saul to Solomon**
- IV. God
- V. Gospel
- VI. People
- VII. Mission

Israel Demands a King (1 Samuel 8)

- Previous leadership in Israel had been of various kinds. Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) → theocracy via Moses → Joshua the prophet → tribal elders locally → military judges regionally or nationally → Eli the priest → Samuel the prophet (who travels on a "judging circuit")
 - In other nations, kings range from local rulers of small towns or city-states (e.g. the king of Salem, the king of Sodom, etc. in Gen 14), to national rulers (e.g. Sihon, king of the Amorites in Num 24), to empire rulers (e.g. Pharaoh in Gen 40)
- God knew that Israel would demand a king, and gave regulations for what to do when they did (Deut 17:14-20)
 - v15 He cannot be a non-Israelite
 - v16 He cannot amass military power (horses, esp. from Egypt)
 - v17a He cannot have many wives, since they will lead his heart astray
 - v17b He cannot amass great wealth (gold, silver, etc)
 - v18,19 He must not depart from God's law
 - v20 He must not become proud
 - v20 If he rules like this, according to the law, he and his descendants will reign a long time
- God sees their demand for a king both positively and negatively
 - They want strong and godly leadership (8:4-5a, 20b), which in principle is good ...
 - ... but they also want to be like other nations (8:5b, 20a), which is not so good
 - God regards them as rejecting the LORD, rejecting Samuel, and choosing their own king (8:7; 12:17-19)
 - Yet at the same time, he identifies Saul as the man he has chosen (9:16-17; 10:1, 24)

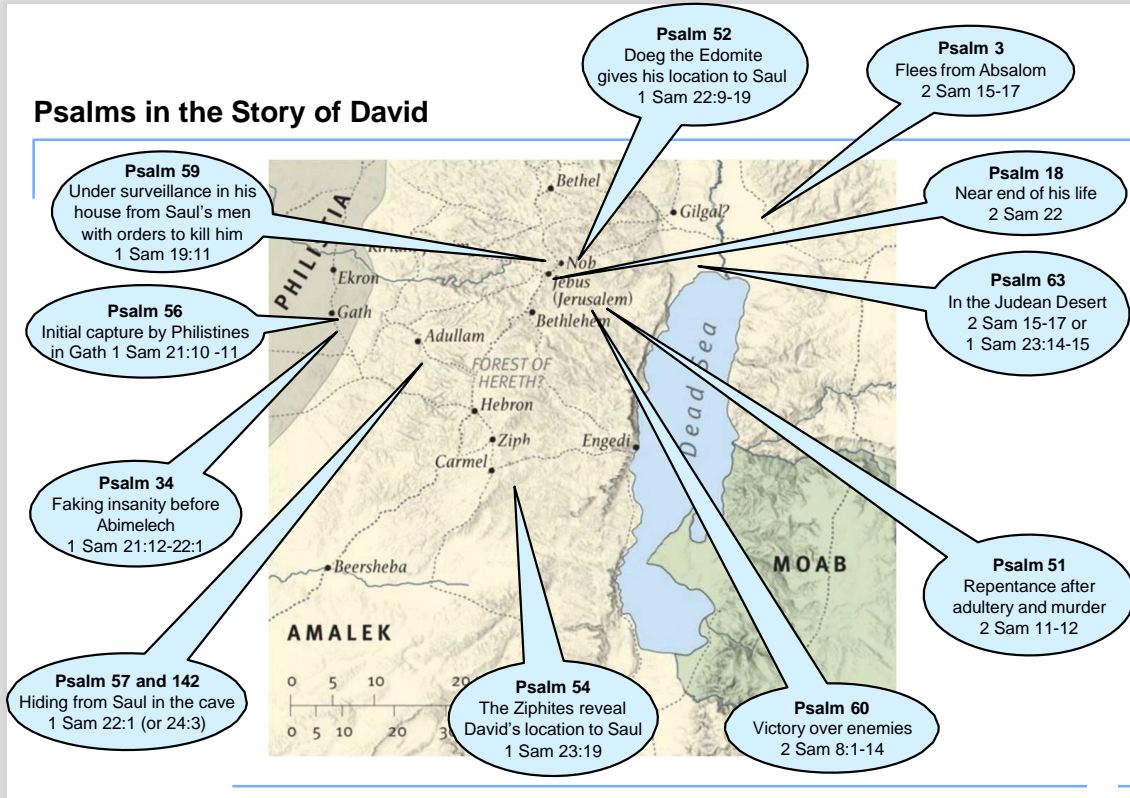
The Rise and Fall of King Saul (1 Samuel 9-31)



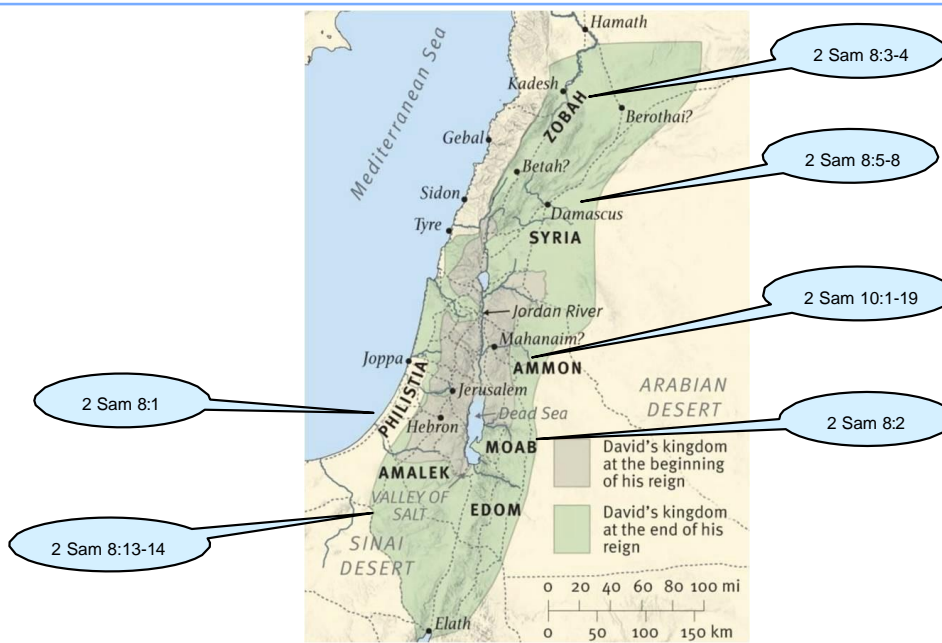
Obedience is Better than Sacrifice

- In chapters 8-12 Samuel has appointed and re-confirmed Saul as King over Israel. Samuel is not in favour of a king but appoints Saul in response to God's instruction. This section ends with Samuel's abdication speech, and the warning in 12:25: "Yet if you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will be swept away"
- In chapters 13-16 Saul is rejected as King and David chosen in his place. Two incidents are key to Saul's forfeiture of the kingship
 - In 13:1-15, impatient Saul offers burnt offerings (*olah*) and fellowship offerings (*shelem*) instead of waiting for Samuel. v14: "But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command"
 - In 15:1-35, greedy Saul keeps the best of the *herem* instead of destroying them as instructed. v23b: "Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king"
 - Thus, Saul will be replaced by David. "The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler" (13:14)
- In 16:1-13, David is chosen by the LORD, despite being the youngest and least significant of the sons of Jesse. Samuel is clear that "the LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (16:7)
- David goes on to become the archetypal king of Israel, despite sinning in seemingly worse ways than Saul. 16:13-14 formalise this switch of kingship, although for several years there is an overlap of kingdoms, with Saul still reigning and persecuting David
 - Why is God so displeased with Saul in these incidents? What evidence is there that Saul's heart is far from God?
 - Why does God favour David over Saul despite his 'worse sins' later?
 - How does chapter 13 help us correctly understand the nature of sacrifices and offerings under the Old Covenant?
 - What about Christ's sacrifice in the New Covenant? What about evidence of true salvation in the New Covenant?
 - How might the concept of overlapping kingdoms feature in both our understanding of Jesus' life and our life in "the present evil age" (Gal 1:4)?

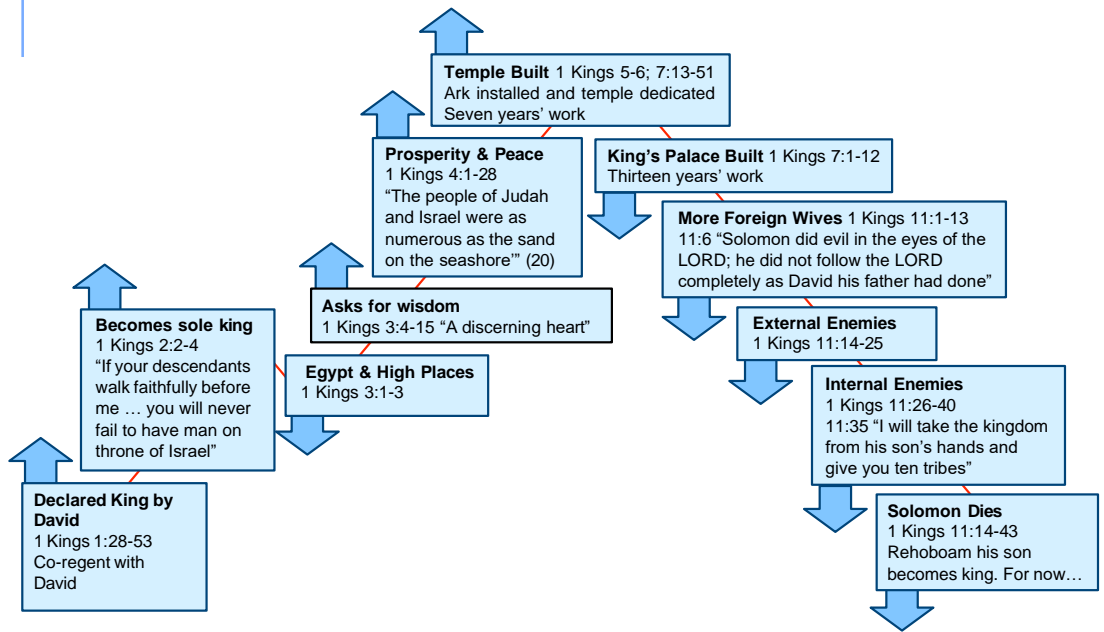
Psalms in the Story of David



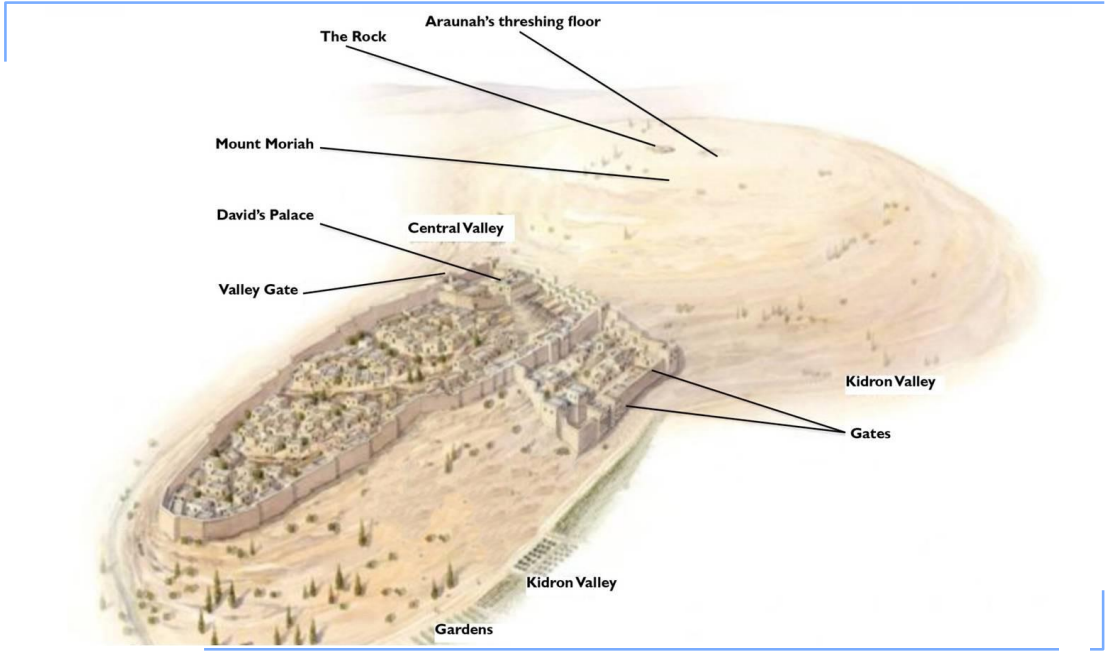
The Extent of David's Kingdom



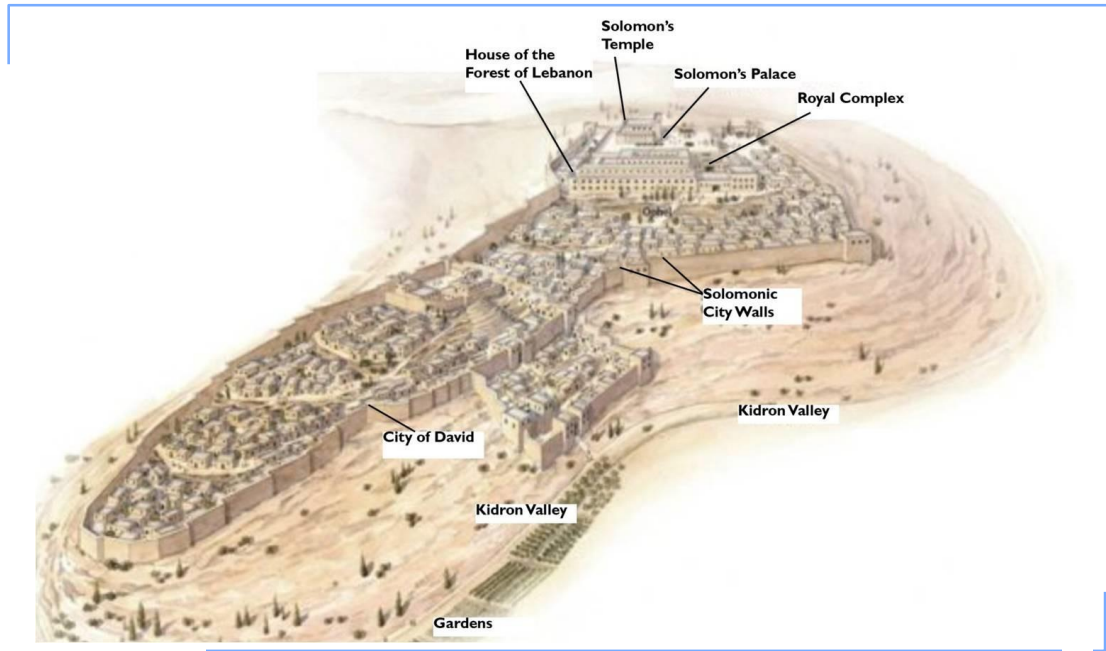
The Kingdom of Solomon (1 Kings 1–11)



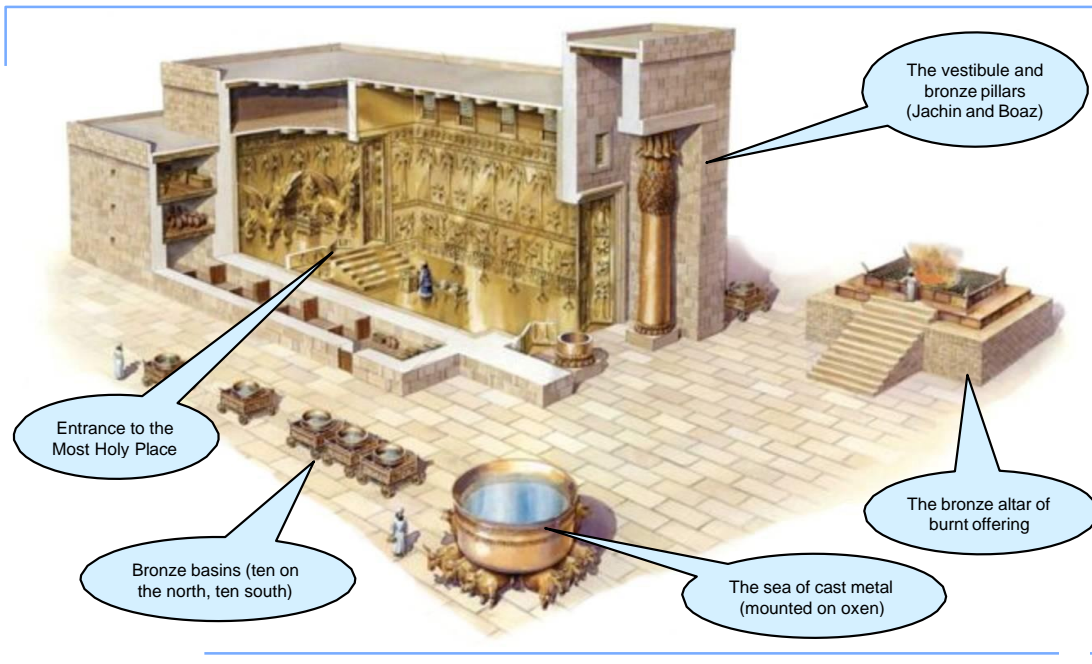
Jerusalem in the Time of David (c.1010–970 BC)



Jerusalem in the Time of Solomon (c.970–930 BC)



Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6-7)



The Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10)

- Solomon's reign raised Jewish expectations that finally God was going to establish them as a significant nation. "The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his" (Gen 49:10)
- Solomon, David's son from the tribe of Judah ruled and reigned from Jerusalem having built the temple and having established peace and prosperity in the land and exercising rule beyond Israel itself
 - In the Queen of Sheba's visit, the Biblical authors see a foretaste of ultimate Jewish eschatological and messianic expectation (later developed further by the prophets e.g. in Isaiah 2:2-5)
 - In Matt 12:42 Jesus refers to this event, but declares that now, "one greater than Solomon is here"

Solomon	Jesus
□ Son of David but lesser than David	□ Son of David but greater than David (Matt 22:41-46)
□ Great wealth	□ Became poor to make others rich (2 Cor 8:9)
□ Micro-empire	□ World-wide kingdom
□ Built temple	□ Replaced temple and "rebuilt" it in 3 days
□ Wisdom to rule	□ Wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24)
□ National peace and security	□ Universal peace with God (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14)
□ Kingdom didn't last	□ Eternal kingdom
□ Queen of Sheba visits	□ Gospel to ends of the earth (Matt 28; Acts 1)

Solomon's Failure: 1 Kings 10:14–11:8

Prohibitions in Deuteronomy 17

- "One from among your brothers you shall set a king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother" (15)
- "Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never return that way again'" (16)
- "And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away ..." (17a)
- "... nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold" (17b)
- "And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers ... so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel" (18-20)

Solomon's "Prosperity" in 1 Kings 10-11

- Solomon received 666 talents of gold in a year, which he used to make 500 gold shields in the House of the Forest of Lebanon (10:14-17)
- He made an ivory throne overlaid with gold (10:18-20), and made so much of gold that "silver was considered as nothing" (10:18-25)
- He gathered 1400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, importing specifically from Egypt and Kue, and exporting on to Syria (10:26-29). This is not the last time that Middle Eastern regimes would be armed by their future enemies by mistake ...
- "He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart" (11:3)
- "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites ... Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, 'Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant' (11:5, 11)

What's the Point of 1 Chronicles?

- Chronicles covers much of the same period and many of the same events as Samuel and Kings. Why do we have a seeming duplication of accounts?
 - Chronicles was written much later, looking back on events in Samuel and Kings from a post-exile view point (e.g. 3:17-24). Samuel and Kings (and other OT books) were probably used as source material
 - Chronicles is almost exclusively interested in the Southern Kingdom of Judah vs the "apostate" Northern Kingdom
 - The Chronicler's main interest appears to be with the temple priesthood and the kingship
 - Much of the negative material concerning David and Solomon is omitted (e.g. his adultery with Bathsheba, Absalom's coup, Solomon's apostasy, etc)
 - Samuel and Kings focus more on the establishing of the Kingdom and self-revelation of God as he relates to his flawed people
 - Chronicles focuses more on God continuing to work his purposes out for his glory
 - Chronicles aims to bolster confidence in Israel's national identity as the people of God, and emphasise the continuity between the glory of David's throne and Solomon's temple
- Chronicles appears to start with a long and tedious collection of genealogies (chapters 1-9) before finally beginning the narrative with the death of Saul. Why does the author begin his work this way?
 - Genealogies in chs. 1-9 stress that, despite Israel's sin and exile, they have not lost their place in God's purposes
 - There is continuity with God's original plan to have a people for himself from Genesis 2 onwards. Even after the exile the line of David still continues and God's promises still stand
 - There is still an expectation for an ultimate Davidic King to arise and fully bring in the Messianic kingdom

GROUP MEETING:

Discussion Questions

Before getting into these specific questions, spend a few minutes discussing what struck you or stuck with you from the video. What were some of the main points? Did any of Andrew's comments or questions open up the Bible in a profound way to you? Also, ask if anything was confusing or needs clarification.

1. Andrew Wilson often draws comparisons between the kings of the united monarchy and Christ. Identify and describe as many as you can (think: 'type' and 'antitype').

TYPES AND ANTITYPES OF CHRIST		
Saul	David	Solomon

2. Andrew Wilson suggests that if Saul had responded well to God's warning of judgment, things would have turned entirely. He indicates that this pattern in Scripture should inform our views of how "God speaks" and acts with us. What implications does this have for our approach to prophetic ministry?

3. Andrew Wilson comments on the gravity of sin and the softness of the heart. Describe your understanding of his comments and then apply this teaching to the present day.

4. In view of the previous question and Andrew Wilson's comments about how the Psalms give us their historical context, why should we read the Psalms?

5. In what ways does the scenario of David being anointed as king and yet Saul being in fact the king run parallel with our experience of Jesus as the anointed and exalted King?

6. What insights about the character and ways of God can we draw from this portion of Scripture?

Meditation on Scripture

1 Samuel 15:22-23

2 Samuel 7:11-16

Psalms 51

Putting This Session into Practice

All three kings sinned terribly. But David gained a reputation as “a man after God’s own heart.” This garnered him praise from God and a place in the halls of Israel’s great leaders. In essence, he simply responded to sin quickly with repentance and returned to the Lord in worship. Let’s ask the Lord this week to speed up our response to sin with genuine repentance and to draw us quickly into worship.