

THE UNITED KINGDOM

(±1020 – 925 BC)

(1-2 Samuel, 1 Kings 1–11, 1 Chronicles—2 Chronicles 9, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon)

The previous period in Israel's history ended on a note of despair, because there were no judges left in Israel and the people were left to act according to what was right and wrong in their own sight. Idolatry and lawlessness prevailed. The guidance of a king therefore became a matter of urgency. Judges paved the way for the period of the kings.

Samuel anointed the first two kings, namely Saul and David. Initially, Samuel warned the people that they did not need an earthly king because God was their king (1 Sam. 8:5,20). God regarded their request as a rejection of Him as their king (1 Sam. 8:7). However, Israel ignored the warnings about the consequences of having an earthly king (1 Sam. 8:10-19).

The three kings of this period were Saul, David and Solomon. Saul became king in ±1020 BC. He had a lot of potential, but he did not have God at heart. He disobeyed God on three occasions: (1) when he exceeded his powers as king by taking on the function of prophet (1 Sam. 13); (2) when he failed to completely destroy the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15); and (3) when he consulted a medium (1 Sam. 28). Saul also did not interact well with other people.

David became king in ±1000 BC. The name "David" conjures up images of a shepherd, a poet, a brave soldier, a king and the precursor of Jesus. He is one of the great characters in the Old Testament. But David also had a dark side, which the Bible does not hide. He was a deceiver, a liar, an adulterer and a murderer. Yet David is still called a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) because he was prepared to admit and confess his sins. David united Israel and led them during the most blessed time in its history. Through everything, God always kept His promise to Abraham that He would multiply the children of Israel (1 Kings 4:20-21).

Solomon became king in 965 BC and led his people to great heights. The completion of the Temple is a testimony to his reign. But below the surface, things were deteriorating. Solomon's trust in his military power, his many wives and their idols, and his wealth drove a wedge between himself and God. However, God continued to systematically

execute His plan of salvation and His promise to Abraham. God's promise to Abraham manifested in David's line of descent:

Land: Genesis 12:7 2 Samuel 7:10

Offspring: Genesis 12:2 2 Samuel 7:12

God promised that David's kingdom would last forever (2 Sam. 7:14-16).