

Judges & Kings

God raised up judges and kings to lead Israel. They were anointed with the Holy Spirit and foreshadowed the coming Messiah.



Session 4

The Bible is precious

'We present you with this book, the most valuable thing the world affords.'

Words spoken to the Queen when presented with a Bible at her coronation in 1953

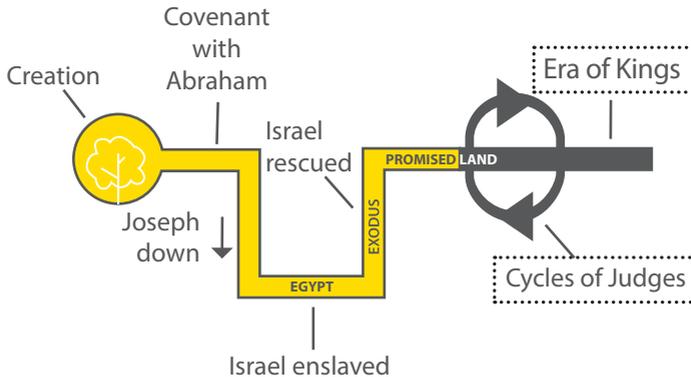
'For me the teachings of Christ ... provide a framework in which I try to lead my life.'

Queen Elizabeth II, Christmas message, 2000



MY NOTES 

The story so far



Promised Land

Israel enters the Promised Land of Canaan and conquers cities like Jericho.

Israel compromises with surrounding nations.

- Canaanite religions – El, Asherah, Baal
- Philistine armies – fierce fighters, including Goliath

The era of the Judges

- The Judges were not law-court officials but charismatic leaders who defended Israel
- They included Deborah, Gideon, Samson, and Samuel

Cycle of the judges

- Repeat offending leads to a downward spiral
- Jesus can deliver us from the negative cycles of guilt, anger, fear, and lust



There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8.1

MY NOTES 

What about all the violence in the Old Testament?

Sinful violence

- Much violence resulted from Israel's disobedience and immorality
- Not everything in the Bible is biblical!

Sanctioned use of force

- Remember: Cities in the Bible were not like ours today
- Remember: God was establishing Israel to be a blessing to all nations
- Remember: Physical actions in the Old Testament often have a spiritual meaning in the New Testament



For our fight is not against flesh and blood but ... against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that you may be able to stand firm.

Ephesians 6.12–13

Israel's first kings

Judge Samuel

- As the last Judge, Samuel anointed the first of the kings of Israel
- 1 & 2 Samuel tell the story from Samuel to the end of King David's reign

*In those days there was no king in Israel.
Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

Judges 21.25

King Saul

- Externally: the biggest man in Israel
- Internally: a dark side of insecurity, pride and anger

King David

- God told Samuel to anoint David to replace Saul
- As the youngest of eight brothers David was only a shepherd boy
- But he was 'a man after God's own heart' (Acts 13.22)

'Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.'

1 Samuel 16.7



Anointing the Messiah

Kings were anointed with oil

'Christ' is the Greek word for Messiah, meaning 'anointed one'.

Christ is not Jesus' surname! It is the Greek equivalent of Messiah, meaning anointed one or King.

Messiah

From the Hebrew word masiach, which means 'anointed one.' It became a way of referring to Israel's King.

'The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.'

Luke 4.18



'I wish to be alive when Jesus Christ returns, that I might be the first monarch to take off my crown and lay it at his feet.'

Queen Victoria (1819-1901)

David

Key References

1 Samuel 16 to 2 Samuel 24; 1 Kings 1—2

Context

- After the Judges, Saul became the first king of Israel c.1050 BC

Bio

- Born in Bethlehem; from tribe of Judah
- Youngest son in household of Jesse
- Killed the giant Philistine, Goliath
- Attacked by Saul and hid in wilderness
- Anointed king over all Israel c. 1000 BC
- Established Jerusalem as the royal capital city
- Committed adultery with Bathsheba
- Author of numerous Psalms



God raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.' Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Saviour, Jesus.

Acts 13.22–23

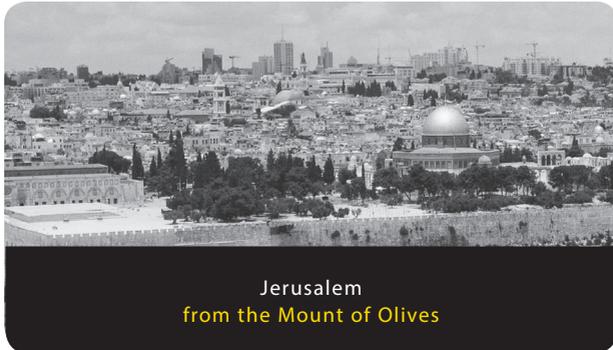


The city of Jerusalem

David established Jerusalem as a new capital city to unite the 12 tribes. It is also referred to as 'Mount Zion' and the 'City of David' in the Bible.

- Jerusalem means 'city of peace' and symbolises God's people
- Conquered in Bible times by King Nebuchadnezzar (sixth century BC), Antiochus IV (second century BC) and the Romans (AD 70)
- Fought over by Greeks, Romans, Turks and Crusaders
- Now a divided city and referred to as Al-Quds in Arabic

The Bible finishes with a vision of a 'new Jerusalem' (Revelation 21—22).



King David's reign

A reign of two halves

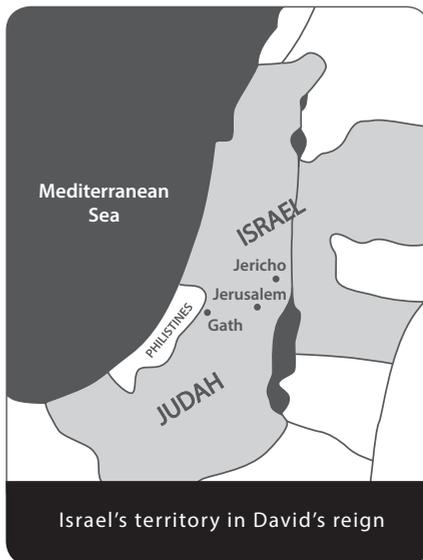
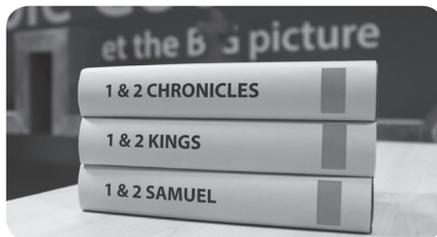
First half: David unites the tribes into one nation and establishes the borders of Israel.

Second half: David and Bathsheba – a tale of adultery and murder.

Solomon was born from this relationship and succeeded David as king.

*Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast
love; according to your
abundant mercy blot out my
transgressions ... Create in
me a clean heart, O God, and
renew a right spirit within me.*

David's psalm of repentance
Psalm 51.1,10



King Solomon

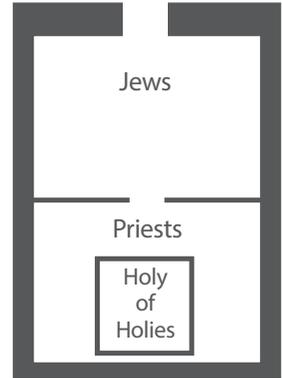
Solomon's reign was Israel's glory days

- Wisdom – the 'wisdom of Solomon'
- Wealth – an era of prosperity
- Worship – the temple is built

Solomon's temple

This vast campus included the national bank, law courts, teaching spaces and priests ministering in the holy place.

The epicentre of the temple was the Holy of Holies, or Most Holy Place – God's dwelling place on earth.



Restrictions within Solomon's Temple

MY NOTES 

Temple in the New Testament

Relocated from bricks to 'living stones'

In the Old Testament, the Temple was a building in Jerusalem.

In the New Testament, the church becomes God's dwelling place or Temple.

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 3.16

Two radical changes:

- Open planned – a temple without walls and restrictions
- Open access – unlimited access to God's presence

Christ's temple

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3.28, NIV

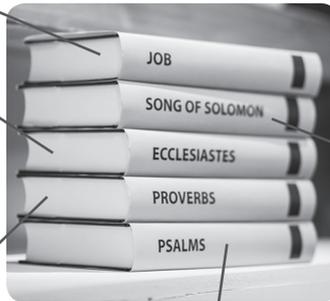
Holy of Holies

Wisdom literature in the Bible

This collection of writings was inspired by the wisdom of Solomon who contributed to several of these books.

- Job – teaches us to trust God through tough times
- Ecclesiastes – reflections on the meaning of life
- Proverbs – practical wisdom for life

Wisdom books in the Bible



- Psalms – Israel's songbook

Genres

A word meaning different communication styles, such as newspapers, websites and social media feeds.

- Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs) – celebrates the gift of sex and marriage

Styles of writing in the Bible

There are different genres of communication in the Bible – stories, laws, prophecies, parables, songs, wise sayings. With a bit of coaching we can learn to interpret each style.

How to interpret wisdom literature

Wisdom in the Bible is practical and involves making good choices.

'Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. But Wisdom is not putting it in the fruit salad'

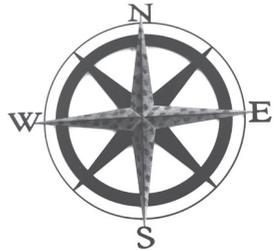
Miles Kington, Journalist

Reading Proverbs

- Proverbs gives general principles but they are not absolute promises
- Proverbs needs to be balanced by other wisdom writings
- To be wise is to centre life on God and to follow his word

'For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.'

Proverbs 2.6





Personal Reflection

Suggested: 10 minutes

Take a moment to reflect on these verses:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3.5–6

Write down something from these verses or the session that has inspired you ...

Write down something that has challenged you ...

Why not share your reflections with others and pray to finish.

MY NOTES 

Daily Bible Readings: Week 4

Read each passage through carefully. Then consider:

WHAT? *What did this passage mean in its context?*

NOW WHAT? *Now what does this passage mean for my life today?*

- Write down a key verse or phrase that stands out.
- Pray it through, asking God to help you live in this truth.

Day 1 1 Kings 18.1–39

Elijah, King Ahab and the fire – it's decision time

Day 2 Hosea 1.1–11 and Hosea 3.1–5

The prophet, adultery and reunion – the faithfulness of God

Day 3 2 Chronicles 29.1–11 and 2 Chronicles 32.1–23

Hezekiah, Isaiah and the siege – God delivers his people

Day 4 2 Chronicles 36.1–23 and Psalm 137.1–9

Defeat, exile and Babylon – when darkness falls

Day 5 Isaiah 52.1–15 and 53.1–12

The servant, suffering and hope – the Messiah is coming

Day 6 Nehemiah 1.1–11 and Nehemiah 2.1–20

Return, rebuild and wait – the best is yet to come

