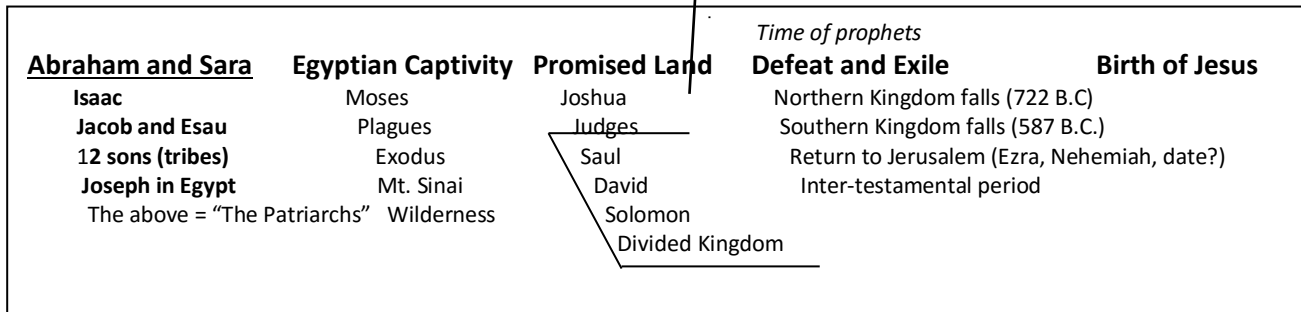


**The True Story of the Whole World pp. 69-83**  
**Act 3 --- The King Chooses Israel. Redemption initiated**  
**Scene 3 --- “The time of the Kings”**  
**I Samuel 8:5-22, I Chronicles 17:1-15; I Kings 12**



In a nutshell.....

“Give us a king!” Kingship in Israel was a concession by God to the chaos and demands of the people. But the prophets provide a ‘check and balance’ on the emerging kingship in Israel. Whether a bad King (Saul), a good king (David), a king who succumbs to pride (Solomon), or the corrupted kings of the divided kingdom following the civil war after Solomon’s death ---the prophets call Israel to live by the terms of God’s covenant.

**Sound familiar?**

1. *David and Goliath (I Samuel 17)*
2. *David and Jonathan (I Samuel 18)*
3. *David and Bathsheba (II Samuel 18)*
4. *Solomon’s Temple (I Kings 6-8)*
5. *The queen of Sheba visits Solomon (I Kings 10)*
6. *Elijah and the Widow’s Cruse (I Kings 17)*
7. *Naboth’s Vineyard -Ahab and Jezebel (I Kings 21)*
8. *An axehead floats –Elisha (II Kings 6)*
9. *Elijah contesting with prophets of Baal (I Kings 18)*

**Main Themes of “The Time of the Kings” (I Samuel – II Chronicles)**

1. Kingship is instituted as a concession to the Israelites fearfulness and ‘drift’.
2. Samuel warns and foretells that the kings will prove to not good guides for Israel.
3. Israel and Judah believe they are ‘special and chosen’, and need only go through the motions of worship because of a promise of someone on ‘the throne of David’ forever.
4. The reign of [most] of the kings was characterized by succumbing to the temptation of idolatrous practices of the surrounding Canaanites.
5. A major reform figure was King Josiah. During his reign the “Book of the Law” (what we know as Deuteronomy) was rediscovered and attempts at reform were initiated.
6. Threats from the empires ‘to the north’, such as Assyria, were an increasing reality.

**Other Biblical references**

Luke 2:4  
 Acts 13:16-23  
 Romans 11:1-10  
 Psalms of David (numerous)

[note...the Kings are absent from the ‘cloud of witnesses in Hebrews!, and otherwise largely absent from the NT.]

**Hymns**

HWB 70 Immortal, invisible, God only wise

HWB 157 Lord, our Lord, your glorious name

HWB 112 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic

HWB 62 Who is so great a God

### **General questions for Biblical reflection**

1. What do you notice about God in these texts?
2. Is there any part of the texts that are surprising? Why?
3. What in these texts encourages, troubles, surprises, or confuses you?
4. Is there anything in these texts you had never noted before? Why do you think it stood out to you this time?
5. How does the action in these passages fit into God's salvation plan?

### **Specific to the texts for this Sunday**

1. What might have been so attractive about the other nations that Israel wished for a king, to be 'like the other nations'?
2. Contrast God's expectation that His people would be a 'light to the nations', with their wish to be 'like the nations'. What is wrong with this picture?
3. Where did Saul go wrong? How about Solomon? For that matter, how about David?
4. Why were the gods of the Canaanites so attractive?
5. During this period, how do those in power react to prophetic critique? (Jeremiah 26 offers a dramatic example!)
6. How close did Israel, under the Kings, ever come to ruling as God intended? Which one came closest?

7. It can be interesting to compare this time of ancient kingship, to “The Kingdom of God” as described by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.