

RE-24 THE BIBLE

The United Kingdom

Divine & Human Kings

- Tension between:
 - God is king (Moses, prophet Samuel)
 - No king in Israel (end of Judges)
- Problem of politics and religion:
issues of
 - Authority of ruler
 - Loyalty of subjects

Samuel's position

- Request for a king is disloyal to God
- Kings will oppress Israel
- Ambiguous resolution (1 Samuel 8):
 - Samuel is right
 - Must provide a king anyway
- So Samuel anoints Saul, and later David, as kings over Israel

Saul

- A successful general
- Tried and failed to follow rules of holy war
- Death in battle left Israel divided
- *1 Samuel*: God rejected Saul



David



"David" by Michelangelo

- Personal army
- Conquered Israel's enemies
- Brought ark of God to Jerusalem
- *1&2 Samuel*: God loved David

Solomon



Model of Solomon's Temple

- Diplomacy (marriages)
- Centralized government
- Built temple in Jerusalem
- *1 Kings*: wise, but apostate

Narrative Art in Samuel

- **Example: 2 Samuel 12:16-23**
- **Characteristics:**
 - Realistic plots
 - Complex (ambiguous?) characterizations
- **Is this religious literature?**
- **Bracket psalms (1 Sam 2; 2 Sam 22-23) make the point: God supported David**

The Covenant with David

- **2 Sam 7: building “house”**
- **God promises David**
 - Eternal dynasty
 - Eternal kingdom
- **This covenant is**
 - Individual
 - Unilateral
 - Unconditional



David with ark (12th c. CE)

Royal Theology



David & Goliath, 7th c. CE

- **Best expressed in Psalms 2, 110**
- **Main features (like other ANE cultures):**
 - God supports the Davidic king
 - God’s rule = king’s rule
 - Rebellion against king = rebellion against God

Consequences



1. **Conflict between prophets (Mosaic covenant) and kings (royal theology)**
2. **After destruction of kingdoms:**
 - Absorption of royal theology into Deuteronomistic History
 - Mutation of royal theology into hope for a *future* king (Messiah)
3. **Royal capital (Jerusalem/Zion) becomes chief religious shrine**
