

Week 8: The United Monarchy

*“Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways.
Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.”*
1 Samuel 8:4



The dramatic period of the Judges is over and the Israelites find themselves once more faced with enemy encroachment. The elders of the tribes, observing the nations around them, demand of Samuel, “Appoint for us a king to judge us.” Their decision results in what is known as Israel’s Monarchial Period, stretching from the anointing of Saul (c. 1025 BC) to the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles (722 and 607 BC, respectively) some three-hundred years later. Under the kingships of Saul, David, and Solomon, the early years of this period see Israel flourish and succeed, conquer and drive back their enemies, and construct one of the most magnificent temples in the known world. But no kingdom lasts forever, and the united monarchy holding Israel and Judah together is ready to break.

Readings:

- 1 Samuel 3; 7-18; 2 Samuel 5:1-10; 7-8, 15-18; 1 Kings 1-2, 11.
- **Optional readings:** https://www.ancient.eu/King_David/; <https://www.ancient.eu/solomon/>