CHAPTER 7

PERIOD OF THE MONARCHY – SAUL TO SOLOMON

DATES AND BIBLICAL MATERIAL

- Dates – c. 1100 - 931/922 BC
- Biblical material
  - 1 Samuel – 1 Kings 11
  - 1 Chron. 10 - 2 Chron. 9:31
- Related biblical material studied in this section
  - Psalms – see page 15
  - Proverbs – see page 16
  - Ecclesiastes – see page 17
  - Song of Songs – see page 17

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

- Authorship
  - Anonymous – but tradition attributes these books to Samuel
  - Other sources
    - Book of Jashar (see 2 Sam. 1:18 and Josh. 10:12-13)
- Unity
  - The one book of Samuel was divided into two books by the translators of the Septuagint – probably because of its length
  - The books retain the name of the major character in the first division (i.e. Samuel)
- Organization of the books of Samuel
  - Israel in transition from judges to monarchy (Samuel, Eli, the Ark, and the Tabernacle) – 1 Sam. 1:1-7:17
  - The reign of Saul – 1 Sam. 8:1-15:35
  - Decline and death of Saul, and the anointing and rise of David – 1 Samuel 16:1-31:13
  - Transition of the monarchy from Saul to David – 2 Sam. 1-4
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- Reign of David – 2 Sam. 5-24 (note God’s covenant with David in 2 Sam. 7)

**The Books of Kings**

- Authorship – anonymous
- Purpose
  - Probably to provide the historical record of Israel/Judah for those in the Babylonian exile
  - The focus in Kings is how the nation came to destroy
- Source documents
  - Annals of Solomon – 1 Kings 11:41
  - Annals of the kings of Israel – 1 Kings 14:19
  - Annals of the kings of Judah – 1 Kings 14:29
- Date
  - The people of Israel (i.e. the Northern Kingdom) as said to still be in Assyria after 722 BC (2 Kings 17:23) – while we know that the Northern Kingdom was not restored, the author reflects back on that period
  - 1 Kings 8:8 – says that the poles used to carry the Ark of the Covenant could still be seen in the Temple “to this day”
  - The author’s perspective appears to be pre-exilic (2 Kings 8:22; 10:27; 16:6; 20:17)
- Organization of the books of Kings
  - Reign of Solomon – 1 Kings 1-11
  - Division of the kingdom – 1 Kings 12:1 – 14:20
  - Reigns of the kings of the Divided Kingdom and the rise of the prophets – 1 Kings:14:21 – 2 Kings 17:6
  - The fall and deportation of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) – 2 Kings 17:7-41
  - From Hezekiah to the exile of Judah – 2 Kings 18-25

**The Books of Chronicles**

- Authorship – anonymous
  - Traditionally attributed to Ezra (so, Ezra probably wrote the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah)
  - But note the last place given to the books of Chronicles in the Hebrew canon – see the Canonical Division on page Error! Bookmark not defined. – some question why Chronicles is last in the
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

Hebrew canon if it was written by Ezra (but note that Chronicles comes last ONLY AFTER Ezra and Nehemiah)

❖ Purpose
   ➢ Probably to provide an historical record for those who returned from the Babylonian exile
   ➢ The focus in Chronicles is on Judah as the true people of God

❖ Date – style and perspective are all consistent with the fifth century BC (see the discussion of “Date” for Ezra on page Error! Bookmark not defined.)

❖ Historical setting at the time the Chronicles were written
   ➢ All that was left of Israel was a struggling province called Judah
   ➢ Persia ruled almost the entire world surrounding Judah
   ➢ A small temple had been rebuilt around 516 BC (Ezra 6:14-15)
   ➢ Haggai the prophet began preaching about rebuilding the temple (August 20, 520 BC) – see Ezra 5:1ff and Haggai 1:1ff
   ➢ Zechariah began preaching “return to Me and I will return to you (Zech. 1:3) just weeks after Haggai (Zech. 1:1ff)
   ➢ No descendant of David was ruling as king, but a descendant of David was governing – Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel – grandson of Jehoiachin (1 Chron. 3:17)
   ➢ Ezra and the other religious leaders were trying to restore a religious tradition that did not depend upon a temple – the problem was how to remain God’s people if the traditions, institutions, offices, etc. that God outlined at Sinai were lost

❖ Themes
   ➢ Chronicles is more of a religious commentary on Israel’s religious tradition – it is not great for chronology or for historical detail
     ➢ No discussion of tensions between Saul and David
     ➢ No mention of David’s sin with Bathsheba
     ➢ No discussion of David’s family troubles or rebellions against him
     ➢ Omission of Solomon’s apostasy as recorded in 1 Kings 11:9-13
   ➢ Its late date (mid 5th century BC) and its focus on religious commentary gives us great insight into how the Jews understood God’s plan for them
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- How wayward Israel can find renewal as God’s people
  
  If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chron. 7:14)

- Source materials

  - Book of the annals of King David (1 Chron. 27:24)
  - Records of Samuel the seer (1 Chron. 29:29)
  - Records of Nathan the prophet (1 Chron. 29:29)
  - Records of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29:29)
  - Records of Iddo the seer (2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22)
  - Records of Ahijah the Shilonite (2 Chron. 9:29)
  - Records of Shemaiah the prophet (2 Chron. 12:15)
  - Book of the kings of Judah and Israel (2 Chron. 16:11; 25:26; 27:7)
  - Annals of Jehu, son of Hanani (2 Chron. 20:34)
  - Annotations of the book of the kings (2 Chron. 24:27)
  - Annals of the kings of Israel (meaning Judah) (2 Chron. 33:18)
  - Annals of the seers (2 Chron. 33:19)
  - References are found to material in other Old Testament books: Samuel, Kings, the Pentateuch, Judges, Ruth, Psalms, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Zechariah (see NIV Study Bible, Introduction to 1 Chronicles; Author, Dates and Sources)

- Organization of the books of Chronicles

  - Genealogies from creation to the return from Babylonian exile – 1 Chron. 1:9
  - Reign of David – 1 Chron. 10-29
  - Reign of Solomon, with special attention given to the temple – 2 Chron. 1-9
  - Division of the kingdom and the histories of the kings of Judah – 2 Chron. 10-36
TRANSITION FROM THEOCRACY TO MONARCHY

- Theocracy – ruled by God (had been the form of government for Israel since the Exodus)
- Monarchy – ruled by an individual
  - Desired by Israel’s tribal leaders - following a long period of decentralized rule and trouble (Judges)
  - Thought to be the best response to the growing threat of the Philistines
  - Perhaps thought to be the best way to present Israel as a legitimate nation to her enemies
- Samuel vs. Saul
  - Samuel – last representative of theocracy
  - Saul – first representative of monarchy

THE MONARCHY

SAUL

- Textual problem relating to Saul’s reign – 1 Samuel 13:1
  - The NIV guesses 42 years
  - The NASV 1977 guesses 32 years
  - The NASV 1995 guesses 42 years
  - The RSV says, “Saul was __ years old when he began to reign, and he reigned __ two years”
  - TANAK says, “Saul was _ years old when he became king, and reigned over Israel two years”
  - Acts 13:21 uses the round number “40 years”
  - Many scholars accept 22 years
- A warrior-king
- No strong centralization of power
- Threatened by
  - Philistines
  - Amalekites
- Assisted in battles
  - By his son, Jonathan
  - By his cousin, Abner (1 Sam. 14:50-51)

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1 This is one place where the Hebrew text is not helpful. The numbers are simply missing. The years given in the various translations are guesses made by the translators based on their understanding of the chronology of this period.
Two initial victories
- Michmash
  - Victory over Philistines
  - Philistines approached the conflict overconfident and careless
  - Jonathan executed a reckless maneuver against the Philistines that proved successful
- Amalekites
  - Decisive victory over the Amalekites
  - Allowed Agag, king of the Amalekites, to live (1 Sam. 15:8)

Two serious mistakes - costing Saul a royal legacy
- Failed to wait for Samuel at Michmash - sacrificed a burnt offering (1 Samuel 13)
- Failed to kill Agag (1 Samuel 15)

Decline
Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel (1 Samuel 15:35)

Jealousy over David
- Pride
  And the women sang to one another as they made merry, “Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands.” (1 Samuel 18:7)
- His daughter
  Now Saul’s daughter Michal loved David. Saul was told, and the thing pleased him. Saul thought, “Let me give her to him that she may be a snare for him and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.” Therefore Saul said to David a second time, “You shall now be my son-in-law.” (1 Samuel 18:20-21)

- Jealousy over Jonathan’s relationship with David
  Then Saul’s anger was kindled against Jonathan. He said to him, “You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother’s nakedness? (1 Samuel 20:30)

Saul’s Death
- Saul died at the Battle of Gilboa
- Against the Philistines
- Saul consulted a medium in order to have a dialog with Samuel (1 Sam. 28:5-18)

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2 Saul’s failure to kill Agag will haunt Israel during the Exile. The story of Esther tells how Israel finally overcame the threat that lingered from Agag. See the discussion of Esther on page 155.
Three of Saul’s sons died with him on Mt. Gilboa – Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua (1 Sam. 31:2-6)

The Philistines decapitated Saul’s body and hung it in a humiliating manner on the walls of a temple in Beth-shan (1 Sam. 31:10)

Some men of Jabesh-Gilead heard of this, they recovered the bodies of Saul and his sons and buried them in their city (1 Sam. 31:11-13)

Suicide on Mt. Gilboa (1 Sam. 31: 4)

The Philistines

At Saul’s death

The problem of succession had not become part of Israel’s tradition or law

Some of his army escaped to Transjordan and declared the new King to be Saul’s son, Ishbosheith (mean’s “man of shame”) - a.k.a Ishbaal - means “Baal’s man”

Abner had Ishbosheith crowned in Mahanaim (see Figure 16 – Saul’s death) (2 Sam. 2:8)

At this time, David was with the Philistines in Ziklag (1 Sam. 30)
DIVISION OF ISRAEL AT SAUL’S DEATH

- Dual kings
  - Ishbosheth ruled over the northern tribes of Israel for 2 years (2 Sam. 2:8-10)
  - David ruled over Judah in Hebron for 7 ½ years (2 Sam. 2:11)
  - The 5-year difference is accounted for by Philistine control west of the Jordan

DAVID

- Background
  - Great grandson of Ruth (Ruth 4:21-22)
  - From Bethlehem in Judah
  - A shepherd
  - Killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
    - Giant warrior of the Philistines
    - Battle in the Valley of Elah
    - Problems with the story
      - 2 Samuel 21:19 says that it was Elhanan who killed Goliath
      - 1 Chronicles 20:5 says that Elhanan killed the brother of Goliath
      - The identity “Elhanan” (perhaps more than one person) is unknown
      - What is clear is that both Goliath and his brother were killed by two men from Bethlehem: David and someone named Elhanan
  - NOTE:
    - The contexts of these passages are well into the established reign of David.
    - The original story of David killing Goliath occurred before David was King
    - These stories (at best) tell us that there was more than one giant in Palestine during the days of David!
  - Anointed to be the king of Israel by Samuel
  - Served King Saul by playing his lyre
  - Served in the army of Saul

Figure 3 -- Genealogy: Ruth to David
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- Fled when Saul tried to kill him
- Took refuge with the Philistines to hide from Saul

Jerusalem

- Source material on David’s conquest of the Jebusite fortress - Compare 2 Sam. 5:1ff with 1 Chron. 11:1ff
- Was occupied by the Jebusites
- Strategic location for a fortified city and capital
- Joab, David’s cousin, found a way into the city via the water shaft from the Gihon Spring. Because of this victory Joab was promoted to military chief-of-staff
- Jerusalem became known as “The City of David”

David’s Jerusalem

- Ophel - the brow of the hill immediately south of Mt. Moriah, the Temple mound
- Kidron Valley - valley running along the east side of Jerusalem
- Valley of Hinnom - valley running along the south side of Jerusalem intersecting the Kidron Valley
- Gihon Spring - source of water for the city
- Ark of the Covenant moved to Jerusalem by David from Kiriath-jearim
- No Temple - David was not allowed to build the Temple in Jerusalem

Prosperity

- Philistine’s threat lessened
- Iron production and use shifted from Philistines to Israel
- Conquest and control to the Gulf of Aqaba

This is a photo of a topographical map on display at the Tower of David Museum in Jerusalem. The valley between the Mt. of Olives and the City of David runs north-to-south. In this image, south is at the top of the photo. The Jebusites occupied the hill that was surrounded on three sides by deep valleys (visible in this image). The City of David is the area of that narrow hill indicated by the arrow. Modern Jerusalem occupies everything in this image to the right of the Mt. of Olives. The original City of David was relatively small compared to...
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- Conquest and control north to Damascus
- Personal Sin
  - Polygamy
    - Not specifically forbidden in the Old Testament
      
      *When you have come into the land . . . you may indeed set over you a king . . . And he must not acquire many wives for himself; or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself.*  (Deuteronomy 17:14-17)

### David’s Wives and Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>David’s Wife</th>
<th>Prominent Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michal</td>
<td>No children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahinoam</td>
<td>Amnon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>Kileab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maacah</td>
<td>Absalom and Tamar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggith</td>
<td>Adonijah (killed by Solomon – 1 Kings 2:25f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abital</td>
<td>Shephatiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eglah</td>
<td>Ithream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathsheba</td>
<td>Solomon (and 3 others)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

- Bathsheba
  - Wife of Uriah, a Hittite
    - Uriah was ordered to fight on the front lines in a battle and was killed
    - Nathan, a prophet, disclosed to David that his guilt was not unknown
    - David repented (Psalm 32 and 51)
    - David married Bathsheba
    - Their first child died a few days after his birth - 2 Samuel 12
    - Their next son was Solomon

- Amnon and Absalom (2 Samuel 13)
  - Amnon and Absalom were sons of David but had different mothers (half-brothers)
  - Amnon raped Tamar, Absalom’s sister (Amnon’s half-sister)
  - Absalom plans for two years and kills Amnon

- Rebellion
  - Absalom declared himself king in Hebron

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3 It is estimated that David had 18 children.
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- David flees to Mahanaim (2 Sam. 15:13ff)
- Joab killed Absalom when Absalom’s long hair was caught in a tree, leaving him hanging and vulnerable
  - Sheba
    - 2 Samuel 20
    - A Benjaminite
    - Killed by the citizens of a village to keep Joab from destroying it
    - Shown the continuing division between Israel and Judah
    - Sheba was the first to voice the “battle cry” of the northern tribes against David
      \[
      \text{We have no share in David, no part in Jesse's son!}
      \text{Every man to his tent, O Israel!} \quad (2 \text{Sam. 20:1})^4
      \]
- Unity and Disunity
  - It seems that David had succeeded in subjugating the areas not conquered by Joshua (2 Samuel 24)
  - The distrust of the northern tribes of Judah continued

**SOLOMON**

- Early moves to secure his rule
  - Execution of others (family) who threatened his rule (1 Kings 2:25ff)
  - Execution of Joab for crimes committed during David’s rule (1 Kings 2:5f - David’s deathbed demands)
  - Petition for wisdom from God (1 Kings 3)
- Expansion and consolidation of power
- Peace and prosperity
- Building projects
  - Royal palace for himself – 13 years to complete
  - Palaces for his wives
  - Temple
    - Approximately one-half of the biblical material related to Solomon is devoted to the building of the Temple

\(^4\) See this “battle cry” again when the kingdom divided after Solomon’s death (1 Kings 12:16)
• Built on Mt. Moriah
• Took seven years to complete (1 Kings 6:38)
• Corvée
  • 30,000 Israelites prepared the cedars from Lebanon
  • 10,000 of these worked each month – with two months off
  • 150,000 “aliens” living in Israel were employed
  • 70,000 as burden bearers
  • 80,000 as stone cutters
  • Supervised by 3,850 Israelites
• Twice as large as the Mosaic Tabernacle
• Phoenician in architectural style
• Dedication of the Temple
  • Completed in the eighth month of Solomon’s eleventh year
  • Dedicated in the seventh month of Solomon’s twelfth year
  • Two week ceremony probably coinciding with the Feast of Tabernacles
  ➢ Increasing threat from Damascus (Syrians) – led by Rezon
• Personal issues relating to Solomon
  ➢ Wisdom and proverbs
    • Prayer for Wisdom
      • 1 Kings 3:5-15
      • Occurred in a dream (see page 14 for discussion of dreams in the Bible)
    • Wrote parts of Proverbs
    • Believed to have written Ecclesiastes
    • Wrote Song of Songs
  ➢ Polygamy - 1 Kings 11:3
    • 700 wives
    • 300 concubines
    • These from: Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Egyptians
  ➢ Idolatry
    • Tolerated in Israel/Judah by Solomon
    • Practiced in Israel/Judah by Solomon’s foreign wives
Solomon built a “high place” on a mountain east of Jerusalem for the worship of the Moabite god, Chemosh, and the Ammonite god, Molech (these remained for 350 years)\(^5\)

- Ahijah, a prophet, told Solomon that these violations of the first commandment would be the reason that his kingdom would be divided after his death (1 Kings 11)

God’s disfavor

Then the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this matter, that he should not follow other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD commanded. (1 Kings 11:9)

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\(^5\) The Hill of Abomination is located immediately south of the Mt. of Olives.
Dream Sequences in the Bible

There are 15 different persons named in this list who are said to have had dreams - some that needed interpretation, and some that were connected with communication from God. Note the warnings against false prophets and false dreamers of dreams.

- Genesis 20:3-8 (Abimelech told not to violate Sarah)
- Genesis 28:12-16 (Jacob at Bethel)
- Genesis 31:10-23 (Jacob at Laban's)
- Genesis 31:24 (Laban when Jacob fled with Rachel and Leah)
- Genesis 37:5-10 (Joseph's two dreams of ruling over his family)
- Genesis 40:5-23 (Joseph's cell mates, the cupbearer and the baker)
- Genesis 41:1-7 (Pharaoh's two dreams of the famine)
- Numbers 12:6 (God told Miriam and Aaron that He might speak to a prophet in a dream - but that He would speak "mouth to mouth" with Moses)
- Deuteronomy 13:1-5 (Warning against false dreamers of dreams)
- Judges 7:9 (a probable dream for Gideon)
- Judges 7:13-15 (Gideon's dream confirmed by an anonymous Israelite)
- 1 Samuel 28:6, 15 (Saul disappointed that God would not speak to him "either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets")
- 1 Kings 3:5-15 (Solomon's prayer for wisdom)
- Jeremiah 23:25-32 (False prophets claimed to have dreams, too)
- Jeremiah 29:8 (False dreams of false prophets)
- Daniel 2 (Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue)
- Daniel 4 (Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the tree)
- Daniel 7 (Daniel's dream)
- Matthew 1:20 (Joseph's dream when Mary was pregnant)
- Matthew 2:12 (The Magi at Bethlehem)
- Matthew 2:13 (Joseph's second dream - told to flee to Egypt)
- Matthew 2:19 (Joseph's third dream - told to return from Egypt)
- Matthew 2:22 (Joseph's fourth dream - told to settle in Galilee)
- Matthew 27:19 (Pilate's wife)
RELATED BIBLICAL MATERIAL

PSALMS

❖ Title
  ➢ “Psalm” comes from the Greek word psalmos meaning song or hymn
  ➢ The Hebrew word of this book means “praises”

❖ Dates
  ➢ The dates for each Psalm relate to the author of that Psalm – so they are all different
  ➢ In general, the Psalms date from Moses (late 15th century BC) to perhaps as late as the late 5th century BC

❖ Authors
  ➢ Moses – Psalm 90
  ➢ David – 73 Psalms begin with “Psalms of David”
  ➢ Asaph – David’s chief musician – wrote Psalm 50, and Psalms 73-83
  ➢ Sons of Korah – perhaps a guild of temple singers (see 2 Chron. 20:19) – probably wrote Psalms 42, 44-49, 84-85, and 87-88
  ➢ Solomon – Psalms 72 and 127
  ➢ About 50 of the Psalms are anonymous

❖ Organization of Psalms
  ➢ Organization of the Psalms is subjective. However, one trend found in the Psalms divides the collection into five books. The last verse in each division (except for Psalm 150) is a closing doxology. Some scholars see the doxology as a clue to the editor’s composition.6
  ➢ Book 1 – Psalms 1-41
  ➢ Book 2 – Psalms 42-72
  ➢ Book 3 – Psalms 73-89
  ➢ Book 4 – Psalms 90-106
  ➢ Book 5 – Psalms 107-150

❖ Various types of Psalms (with examples)
  ➢ Hymns – Praises to God set to music (Ps. 8)
  ➢ Penitential psalms – Confessions of sin (Ps. 51)

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6 This is the organization structure used in the NIV Study Bible
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- Wisdom psalms – General observations about life, ethics, and godly living (Ps. 1)
- Royal psalms – Psalms that relate to the king, particularly those in the lineage of David (Ps. 45)
- Messianic psalms – Psalms that demonstrate some characteristic of the Messiah (Ps. 22)
- Imprecatory psalms – Calls for judgment against enemies of God or His people (Ps. 35)
- Laments – Expressions of grief that usually include statements of trust in God (Ps. 3)

PROVERBS

- Date
  - Most of the material in Proverbs can be attributed to Solomon (c. 970-930 BC)
  - Other passages in Proverbs cannot be dated since the authors are unknown

- Authors
  - See the organizational structure below

- Organization
  - Introduction – Prov. 1:1-7 – each of the verses in this section begin with the word “for” and establishes the purpose of the collection of wisdom literature that follows
  - The rest of the book is organized into seven selections of wisdom literature
    - In Praise of Wisdom – Prov. 1:8-9:18
    - Proverbs of Solomon – Prov. 10:1-22:16
    - Sayings of the Wise Men – Prov. 22:17-24:34
      - These “wise men” were probably associates of Solomon
      - Many scholars point to the similarities between these “30 sayings” and similar material in the Egyptian “Instruction of Amenemope” (written about 200 years before Solomon)
    - Solomonic Proverbs from Hezekiah’s Collection – Prov. 25:1-19:27
    - Sayings of Agur – Prov. 30:1-33
      - Agur is not known outside of this reference
      - These passages are characterized by references to numerical expressions (Prov. 30:18)
    - Sayings of Lemuel – Prov. 31:1-9
      - Lemuel is not known outside of this reference
    - The passage called “The Wife of Noble Character” – Prov. 31:10-31
      - This entire passage is an acrostic poem
      - The traditional canonical arrangement of books loses an important point that is apparent in the Hebrew canonical order – i.e. the book of Ruth follows Proverbs in
canonical order. This may suggest that the Jews associated Ruth with the virtuous woman.

**Ecclesiastes**

- **Title**
  - The title, Ecclesiastes, is a transliteration of the Greek.\(^7\) In Greek, this term refers to an “assembly.” Since the speaker in Eccl. 1:1 is a person (rather than an assembly), it would be best to translate this term as teacher or leader of the assembly.
  - The Hebrew title for this book is qôhelet, meaning “teacher”\(^8\)

- **Date**
  - If Solomon is the author, the author dates to the 10\(^{th}\) century BC

- **Author**
  - Traditionally, Solomon is recognized as the author
    - Solomon fits the descriptions found in Eccl. 1:1
    - But Solomon does not fit the description found in Eccl. 1:12 – “was king over Israel in Jerusalem”
    - Further, the misery described in Ecclesiastes is not descriptive of the Solomonic era
  - However, Eccl. 1:1 identifies the author only as “the Teacher”

- **Theme**
  - *Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.* (Eccl. 12:13-14)

**Song of Songs**

- **Title**
  - “Song of Songs” means “the greatest of songs”
  - Sometimes called “Canticles” (derived from the Latin title for the book)

- **Date**
  - Probably after the time of Solomon
  - Perhaps as late as the mid-9\(^{th}\) century BC (see Son. 6:4)

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\(^7\) Transliteration is simply using the letters of one language to make a word in another language. Transliteration is not translation. Transliterated words do not convey meaning.

\(^8\) This term appears 7 times in Ecclesiastes, but is not found in the rest of the Old Testament.
Period of the Monarchy – Saul to Solomon

- **Author**
  - Son. 1:1 attributes the collection of songs to Solomon\(^9\)
  - The language used probably requires that the author lived after the time of Solomon

- **Theme**
  - This book is a collection of love poems
  - Some Christians have tried to interpret the book as an allegory of Christ and the church
  - Some Jews see the book as an allegory of God’s love for Israel
  - Other do not try to interpret the book theologically, and see the book as descriptive of a godly relationship between one man and his wife (note the absence of polygamy or immorality

\(^9\) Translation of the Hebrew text for Son. 1:1 does not require that Solomon wrote, commissioned, or otherwise had anything to do with the songs.