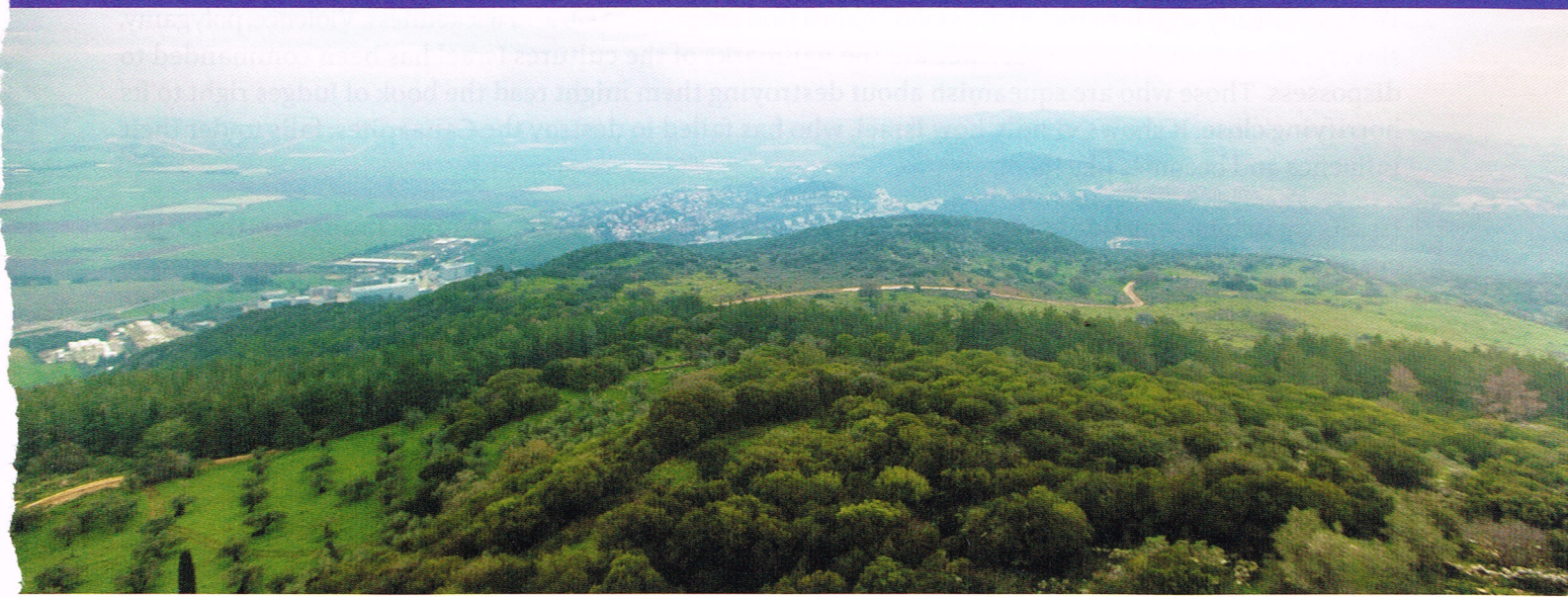


### and ROYAL KINGDOM



Hill country of Judea

1. *Before he dies, Moses tells Israel how to live in order to receive God's blessing in the Promised Land. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (see the green box on page 35). Observant Jews today pray this passage, known as the Shema, every morning and evening. In Israel's conquest of the land, do they follow Moses' instructions? What happens?*

With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the generation that entered the Promised Land consists of the children of those who crossed the Red Sea. The original generation has died out during forty years of wandering in the desert. Even though this new generation has spent their entire lives experiencing God's providence, they will be tempted in the Promised Land to forget the LORD and follow pagan gods instead. Remembering the true God and obeying his commands is crucial to their success and well-being. Unfortunately, they do not teach their children to obey God, and an entire generation grows up not knowing the LORD or what he has done for Israel. They abandon worship of God, do evil in his sight, and serve other gods. As a result, God delivers them over to their enemies.

2. *How well does Israel follow God's command to possess the land of Canaan?*

Under Joshua, Israel does as the LORD has commanded Moses and successfully conquers the majority of the land. At the death of Joshua, all that remains for Israel is to force out the remaining native inhabitants, cleanse the land of pagan altars, and occupy its inheritance. But the new generation do not obey God's command. They not only allow the Canaanites to remain but begin worshiping pagan gods and doing evil in the sight of the LORD.

**Note:** It may be hard to understand and accept the story of the Canaan conquest. You might wonder how a good God could command his people to entirely destroy the Canaanites. As with the entire Bible, this narrative needs to be read in the context of the larger story. In the period of Egypt and the Exodus, God showed himself greater than the false gods of the world. Now he commands his Chosen People to claim for him territory that has been taken over by the enemy. In turn, the LORD will establish Israel as his people and they will live as witnesses of his righteous rule. The necessary prerequisite to this is a cleansing of the land. If they fail to follow God's ways, they will lose their place in God's land (which, in fact, does happen later in the story).

**3.** *Explain the sevenfold cycle Israel experiences during the time of Conquest and Judges.*

We have already seen how those who stand against God are prone to sin and wickedness. Violence, polygamy, slavery, sorcery, and human sacrifice are the hallmarks of the cultures Israel has been commanded to dispossess. Those who are squeamish about destroying them might read the book of Judges right to its horrifying close. It shows vividly how Israel, who has failed to destroy the Canaanites, falls under their influence and becomes like them.

Israel's sin in forsaking God leads to defeat at the hands of its enemies and servitude. In anguish, the people cry out to God (supplication), and he raises up judges to deliver them (salvation). A period of peace (silence) is soon followed once again by sin, and the cycle begins again. This happens seven times during the time of the Judges.

**4.** *At the close of the period of Conquest and Judges, what plea does Israel make?*

Tired of the endless cycle of subjection to other nations, Israel cries out for a king "like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5).

**5.** *Who is the first king of Israel? How does he fare?*

Saul is the first king of Israel. God tells Saul that he is not to be like other kings but is to be subject to God. Saul's greatest contribution is to unite the kingdom. He does well to begin with, but ultimately fails to trust God. He is disobedient on two occasions: He sacrifices when he is not supposed to, and he spares the life of an evil king God tells him to destroy. As a result, the kingdom is torn away from Saul, and it will be given to David, a man "with a heart after God."

**6.** *Read 2 Samuel 7:1-16. How does the Davidic covenant fulfill and expand upon God's second promise to Abraham?*

God's second promise to Abraham was one of kingdom. God reiterates this promise to David and makes a covenant with him, promising to build a royal dynasty upon him that will last forever. (A *dynasty* is a succession of kings in the same bloodline.)

**7.** *King Solomon is the wisest man who ever lived. What causes him to turn away from God? (1 Kings 11:4-6.)*

Solomon makes the mistake of taking seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, who ultimately turn his heart away from God. He follows other gods and builds altars to Chemosh and Molech so his wives can worship them.

**8.** *God says David is "a man after his own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Based on this description, what qualities do you think David has?*

People will have varying answers to this question. Saul lost the kingdom for his sins, while David sins with Bathsheba yet receives an everlasting promise because he repents (see Psalm 51).

## Home Preparation: Review

The answers to the Home Preparation questions are listed below:

	Period Name	Color	Color Meaning	Phrase
1.	Early World	Turquoise	The color of the earth viewed from space	God created heaven and earth and tested Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.
2.	Patriarchs	Burgundy	God's blood covenant with Abraham	God called Abraham and promised his children land, a royal kingdom, and worldwide blessing.
3.	Egypt and Exodus	Red	The Red Sea	God freed his people from slavery in Egypt so they could worship him.
4.	Desert Wanderings	Tan	The color of the desert	God taught Israel to walk in faith through forty years of wandering in the desert.
5.	Conquest and Judges	Green	The green hills of Canaan	God led Israel into the Promised Land. They failed to teach their children and instead did what was right in their own eyes.
6.	Royal Kingdom	Purple	The color of royalty	God established a kingdom on his servant David and promised him an eternal home.

## Home Preparation: Looking Ahead

The answers to the Home Preparation questions about this time period are listed below:

Period name: **DIVIDED KINGDOM** Approximate dates: 930–722 BC

Period color: Black Color meaning: Israel's darkest period

The two kingdoms are represented on the Timeline Chart by two horizontal bars: the Northern Kingdom of Israel, its capital at Samaria; and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, its capital at Jerusalem.

Period name: **EXILE** Approximate dates: 722–538 BC

Period color: Baby blue Color meaning: Judah "singing the blues" in Babylon

New world power: Babylon

List three events found in the gray-colored boxes during the Exile period on your Chart:

- 1) Israel goes into exile
- 2) Judah goes into exile
- 3) Babylonian captivity (70 years of exile)

Period name: **RETURN** Approximate dates: 538–167 BC

Period color: Yellow Color meaning: Judah returning home to brighter days

Apart from the actual return to the land itself, what important events characterize this time? (Read events 49, 50, and 52.)

Zerubbabel rebuilds the Temple, Ezra returns and teaches,

and Nehemiah returns and rebuilds the Jerusalem walls

Prophets during this time (hint: look at Supplemental Books): Haggai, Zechariah,

and Malachi

Two new world powers: Persia Greece