

Jewish civilization: change essay samples

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Based on the biblical account, the kingdom of Israel emerged around 1020 B. C. this was when the Israelites asked Samuel the prophet to choose a king for them. Before this time, Israel was ruled by judges. After the death of Joshua, the Israelites looked up to the judges for leadership. A judge was a military leader who had command over two tribes of Israel. According to the Hebrew bible, Barak, Eli, Gideon, Samson, Samuel and Deborah were recognized as judges. In this paper, I will discuss on the emergence of the first Israelite kingdom, leadership transition and the structure of the kingdom.

When the Israelites settled in Canaan, they found a strong community of the philistines around 1000B. C (Matthews, 34). The Philistines had knowledge on making tools and weapons and they began to influence the Israelites to a point of some copying their religion. When the Philistines way of life influenced the Israelites, they began to think of the importance of a king who would lead them and protect them against the philistines. The call for a king by the Israelites prompted Samuel, a judge and a prophet, to anoint Saul as their king.

Before Israel became a kingdom, the country was ruled by judges. Under the regime of judges, Israel became weak compared to its earlier ruling system where the leaders like Moses were ordered and directed by God. The country was unified by the Torah and governed through tribal federation. After the death of Joshua, there was no successor and, therefore, between the reign of Joshua and Samuel, there was no recognized federal leader. The societies were organized in tribal divisions and practiced agriculture (Matthews, 56). They had no any form of class division. During invasion and war, charismatic

judges rose to the occasion and led the army of warriors as needed on a regional base. However, the twelve tribes were still united by the Ark of the Covenant. The tribal governments were led by elders in a township system. All eligible males were part of the township militia and members of a local court that was led by elders and held their meetings at the city gates.

The establishment of a king in Israel made the country more organized in terms of leadership and association. The kingship unified the twelve tribes and created an army that would fight together to protect the country. The reign of the first king, King Saul, was crucial as the army joined together to fight the greatest community of the time, Philistines. After King Saul, King David took over and later his son king Solomon (Daniel, n. p). These entire kings ensured the success of their kingdom in trade, agriculture, army and worship. However, as prophet Samuel had declared in his speech after anointing Saul as the king, the kingship system drew the people of Israel far from God. This is because the kings did not follow the command from God and often did what pleased them. They were lustful and even contaminated the holy alter.

The kingdom of Israel between 920 BC and 1120 BC experienced a leadership transition from the rule of judges to that of kings. It was a period from the last judge, Joshua- according to the biblical account, to the last federal king of the united monarchy of the kingdom of Israel- king Solomon. This is because, after the death of King Solomon, the kingdom divided and ten tribes broke from the kingdom of Israel to form the kingdom of Judah whose capital was Jerusalem and its people were called the Jews.

The leadership transition marked by the emergence of the kingdom of Israel

influenced their governance pattern. Before the transition, Israel was ruled by judges and prophets. These leaders were succeeded and chosen from God as well as they had a direct link with God (Daniel, n. p). The transition changed their governance system from a tribal township to a federal kingdom. The kingdom was a large scale compared with the judge leadership that was based on tribal composition. The kingdom system was secular compared to the religious judges. When the kings were appointed, they failed to follow the Torah as they were told by God. For example, King Saul failed to destroy all the living things of the Amalekites as instructed by God. Judges, unlike kings, did not make a government per say (Matthews, 176). They were raised by God for a particular reason during crisis and once the crisis was settled, they went back to their normal lives. Kings, on the other hand, formed a hereditary government that was bureaucratic and could cause a blessing or a curse to the land. The transition of governance meant a transition from rule by God to human rule. It also means a transition from worshipping the true God to worship other Gods.

In the history of the Israelites, this was a turning point as the transition changed their life in all aspects. First, their religious purity was contaminated and they began to worship other gods. They forsake the God who had delivered them from the land of bondage. Their leadership changed to be secular and the kings became corrupt and greedy as well as lustful. They disobeyed God in many instances and soon caused their conquest by the Assyrians.

Works Cited

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