

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

God as King and Man as King

Students could compare the functions of YHWH and the human king in the life of ancient Israel. The sorts of questions that could be raised are: What does it mean to apply a term drawn from human politics to a god? What areas of life does each 'king' have authority over? Do their functions overlap at all? If so, is this overlap problematic?

Texts: Exodus 15; I Samuel 8; I Kings 23; Psalms 72, 74, 89.

Kingship as a Form of Government

Students could reflect on monarchy as a political system, compared with the system they live under. Questions for consideration: Would you yourself be happy to live as a subject of an Israelite king? Do citizens of a monarchy have any say in government? Does it matter if they do not? Where does the king draw his authority from: the benefits he brings for the people (safety, security, etc.)? The people's will? God's will? What would a king of Israel think about our modern conception of human rights and civil liberties?

Texts: Ps 2, 72; I Sam 8; II Sam 15; II Kings 11.

FURTHER READING

Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1997).

Gösta W. Ahlström, "Administration of the State in Canaan and Ancient Israel" in Jack Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995), pp. 587-603.

John Day (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1998).