

Core issues in the Genesis/Exodus and 2 Samuel/1 Kings transitional chapters

Famine:

where do we turn for food?

Warrior/family list:

who are “the people” who bind us (*religio*) together?

Threshing floor:

where, with whom and what forms does worship take?

Disputes among the brothers over power:

what authority do we have over each other? How are disputes to be resolved?

Death of a king:

how does authority pass across generations? How do divine and human authority intersect?

Enslavement:

what do we do in the face of oppression and injustice?

How the transitional chapters challenge the theology of the larger book

Genesis:

It is nonviolent and anti-city throughout, calling for complete dependence on the Creator for provision. It is also focused on the land of Canaan as the place of YHWH’s promise.

In the end, it raises the challenge of Joseph as provider, claiming divine authority for dominating authority and the question of “the land” as Canaan or Egypt.

2 Samuel:

It is violent and nationalistic throughout most of the text. It presents the “house of David” as eternal holder of the office of king in Jerusalem

In the end, it raises the challenge of whether David’s “sin” is being too violent and whether worship can be established on the land of a “foreigner.” In doing so, it reminds readers of 1 Samuel 8, the cost of having a king.