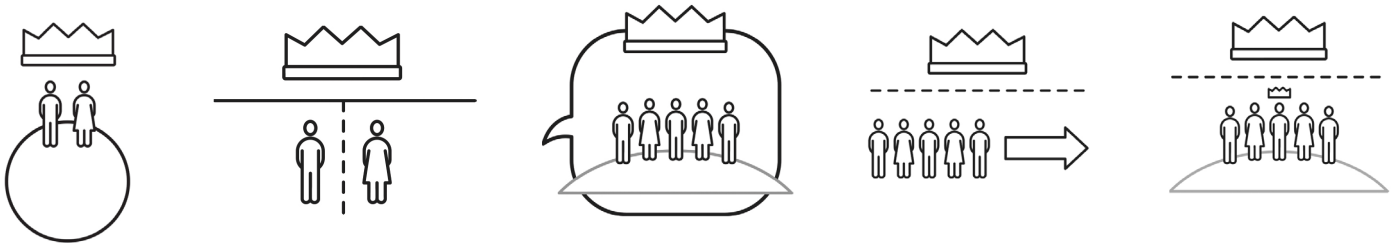


PROMISES KEPT BIBLE OVERVIEW, WEEK SIX (1 KINGS 11 – MALACHI)

THE STORY SO FAR... (2 MINS)



Remind your group what you've seen so far:

1. In Genesis 1-2, we saw that God created people to know the happiness of life lived in his presence, under his rule, in perfect relationship with each other, in a perfect place. This is the world we were created to enjoy.
2. In Genesis 3-11, we saw that people listened to Satan and chose not to live under God's good rule. They were therefore unable to live in his presence, experienced strained relationships with each other, and the world itself was spoiled. This is the world we live in today.
3. In Genesis 12-50, we saw God making a covenant—a binding promise—to Abraham, of a people, living in his land, under his rule and blessing. Through one of Abraham's descendants, God has promised to bring blessing to people living throughout the world.
4. In Exodus – Numbers, we saw God revealing himself as Yahweh (I AM WHO I AM) and rescuing Abraham's descendants, Israel, from slavery in Egypt and (supremely) from his judgment. He did it by giving them a lamb to die in their place—a substitute. He gave them his law to show them how to live as his people, and dwelled among them in the tabernacle-tent, leading them towards the land he promised Abraham.
5. In Deuteronomy – 1 Kings 10, we saw God's people enter God's land; but once there, God's people kept rebelling, and so kept being invaded instead of enjoying blessing. God gave them judges to rescue them, and appointed King David and King Solomon, who have led the people into obedience and blessing.

OPENING QUESTION (3 MINS)

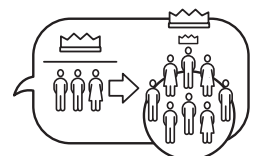
What do you most look forward to in life? Funny and serious answers welcome, but make sure there are a few of the latter! Answers will range from more immediate events, such as a holiday or the weekend, to those further off—for some, it may be retirement, for others having a family.

How does that affect your feelings and actions in the present? Allow people to spend time working this out. The point is that if we really do look forward to something, it makes us feel different (hopeful, excited, satisfied in advance), and we even act differently (eg: if we're on holiday next week, it will spur us to work hard now, keeping going on our tasks till we get there).

VIDEO TALK (18 MINS)

RECAP (1 MIN)

God warns through the prophets that one day there will be fewer people, without a land, king or relationship with God—but one coming day, God promises through the prophets, there will be many people in a wonderful world under the perfect rule of God's King.



APPLY TIME... (7 MINS)

1. How might the attitudes shown in 8 v 4-6 look in your church and your life today?

The religion of "Sunday worship" is still alive and well, where we do and say the right things in church one day a week, and forget about God from Monday to Saturday. Often we cut corners, undermining what is right in order to do what will increase profits, getting away with what we can in order to make a living. And how often do we ignore those less fortunate than ourselves, in our own country and others, because we are too busy getting even more for ourselves?

2. What would the opposite (true godliness) look like? You could get your group to rewrite v 4-6 but as the opposite:

"Hear this, you who help the needy and make sure the poor of the land are not forgotten about, saying: 'Let us focus on celebrating the New Moon festival and trust in God for providing what we need, and keep the Sabbath without worrying about missing out on work hours—making sure we are scrupulously honest even at cost to ourselves, and that we care more about doing what is right than doing what is profitable, giving our silver to the poor and valuing them as people, not products.'"

Talk about specific ways your group do this, struggle with this, and need to change to obey God in this.

A QUESTION FOR OUR HEARTS AND LIVES (3 MINS)

Amos 8 shows us how seriously God takes people's sin. How seriously do you take your sin? Is there anything you're excusing or ignoring that you need to confront, own up to and deal with?

Your answers here might prompt you to pause for a time of confession.

PROMISE KEPT (15 MINS)

Read Luke 23 v 38-46

1. Why is the mocking sign above Jesus' head both ironic and tragic?

Because he was King of the Jews! He was the perfect Jew, who always lived God's way; and the chosen Jew, God's Messiah. Yet tragically, God's people decided to kill the Messiah.

2. How does Amos' prophecy help us understand what's happening in v 44-45a?

The sixth hour is (in our timings) midday. This is exactly what Amos 8 v 9 foretold. It is a sign that God's judgment has come. A time of hopelessness, withdrawal of his presence (or word) and death has arrived. And the shock is that it is God's Messiah, Jesus, dying under this judgment.

3. Look at verse 45. What does this show Jesus' death has achieved?

Everything that was blocking relationship between God and people—our sin—has been dealt with.

4. What does the second criminal dying next to Jesus recognise about him, and ask him to do?

That Jesus (unlike him) is innocent, and not deserving of death (neither Roman crucifixion, nor the judgment of God). And he asks Jesus to remember him when he comes into his kingdom. It's worth teasing out what else the thief is recognising about Jesus here—that he is a King, and that his kingdom lies beyond death. You may need to add that for God, or his King, to "remember" is not only to remember, but also to act. So the criminal is not just saying: "Please remember me" but "Please act to bring me into your kingdom".

5. What does Jesus promise him about his future?

That he will do what the criminal has asked: bring him into his kingdom, paradise, with him.

6. How can someone experience the ultimate fulfilment of God's promises in the prophets, such as Amos 9 v 11-15?

By recognising that Jesus is the King of God's kingdom, the ultimate descendant of David, and by asking him for a place in that kingdom. All that God has promised throughout the OT is fulfilled in the kingdom-beyond-death of Jesus Christ, so all God has promised can be experienced and enjoyed by anyone who trusts Jesus to take them there to be with him.

You might point out the promises of Amos 9 are very "earthy"—life here, on this earth. And that is where all Jesus' subjects are destined for, though they wait with him in "paradise" beyond death for the time when God remakes this world. Bear in mind this is the subject of Session Nine!

APPLY TIME... (10 MINS)

1. Imagine that someone had (for some reason!) read Amos 8 – 9, and wanted to know what it all means for us today. How would you explain to them what Amos tells us about...

A chance to check each others' understanding, and talk about how the OT points to Jesus.

- **what the Lord Jesus' death saves people *from*?**

It saves people who trust in him from the horrific judgment of God on those who rebel against him, including rebelling by doing the right thing on a Sunday (=Sabbath) and at Christmas and Easter (=New Moon) but who don't live God's way the rest of the time (that is, to a greater or lesser extent, all of us!) We face hopelessness, exile from God's presence, and death—and Jesus takes all of that from his people as he dies.

- **what the Lord Jesus' death saves people *for*?**

It opens up a wonderful future for anyone who knows and trusts Jesus, because in taking our death, Jesus gives us a place in his kingdom with him. A future which will never end, a future of great plenty, a future which is totally secure, a future in this world experiencing better than anything we've known so far.

2. What should we be looking forward to most?

Life in Jesus' kingdom, enjoying being with him and experiencing life in God's place, as his people, blessed by him! It's where all Jesus' people are headed.

If we do, how will it affect our feelings and actions now? In many ways, including:

Feelings: Joy even when life is tough, because we know what lies ahead for us.

Peace even when life doesn't go as we hoped, because we know that one day life will be everything we could ever hope for.

Not worrying, because we know Jesus has secured our future. *Gratitude* each day to Jesus for what he's given us, and a desire to serve him. *Determination* to keep living with Jesus as our King and Saviour.

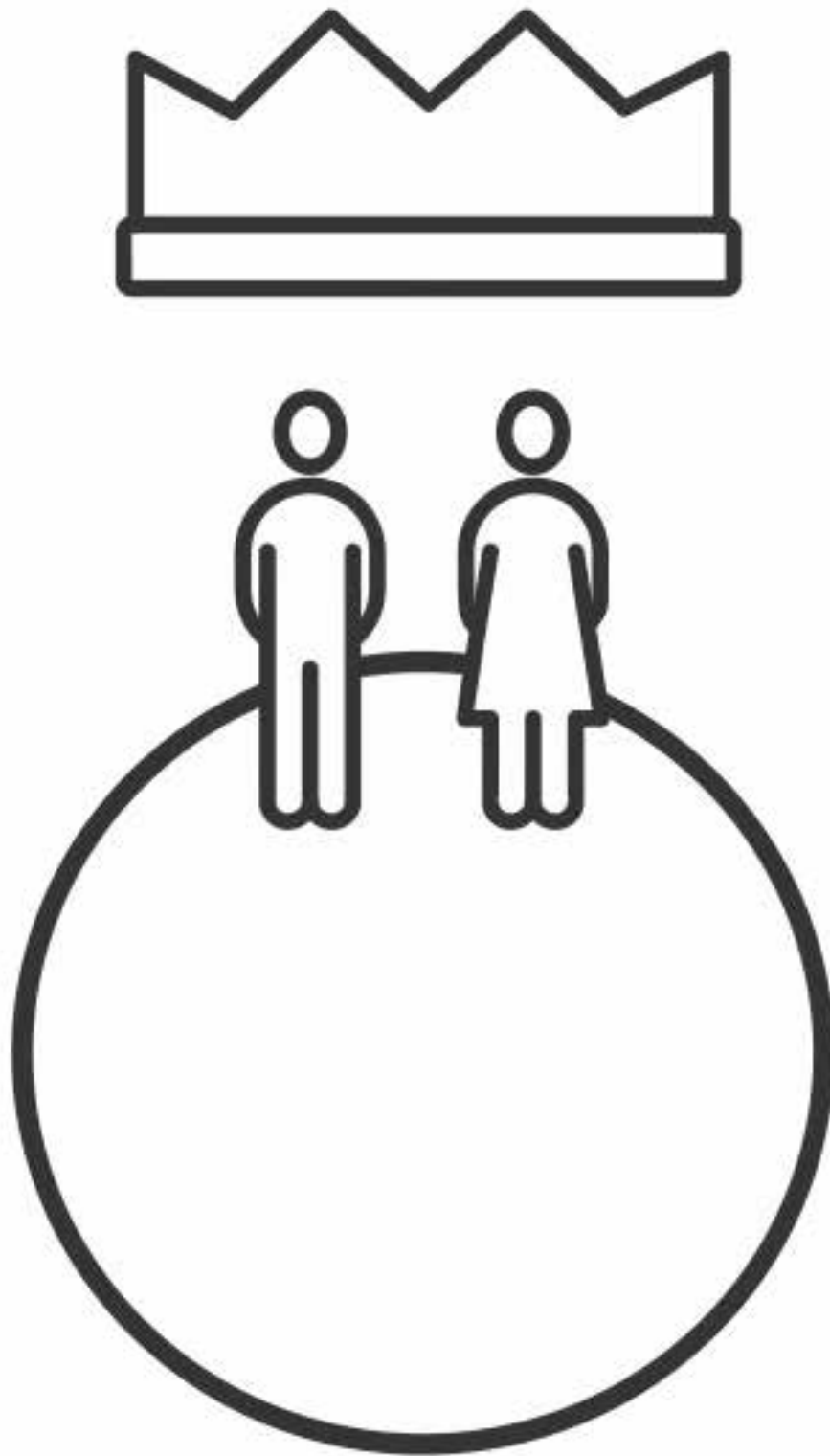
Actions: *Telling others* how they can avoid judgment and enjoy the future we're headed for. *Living obediently* as part of King Jesus' kingdom now. *Giving up/away* things people look to now in order to make them secure eg: promotion, possessions, popularity, because we know Jesus has already bought an amazing future with his blood.

PRAY (4 MINS)

Thank God for...

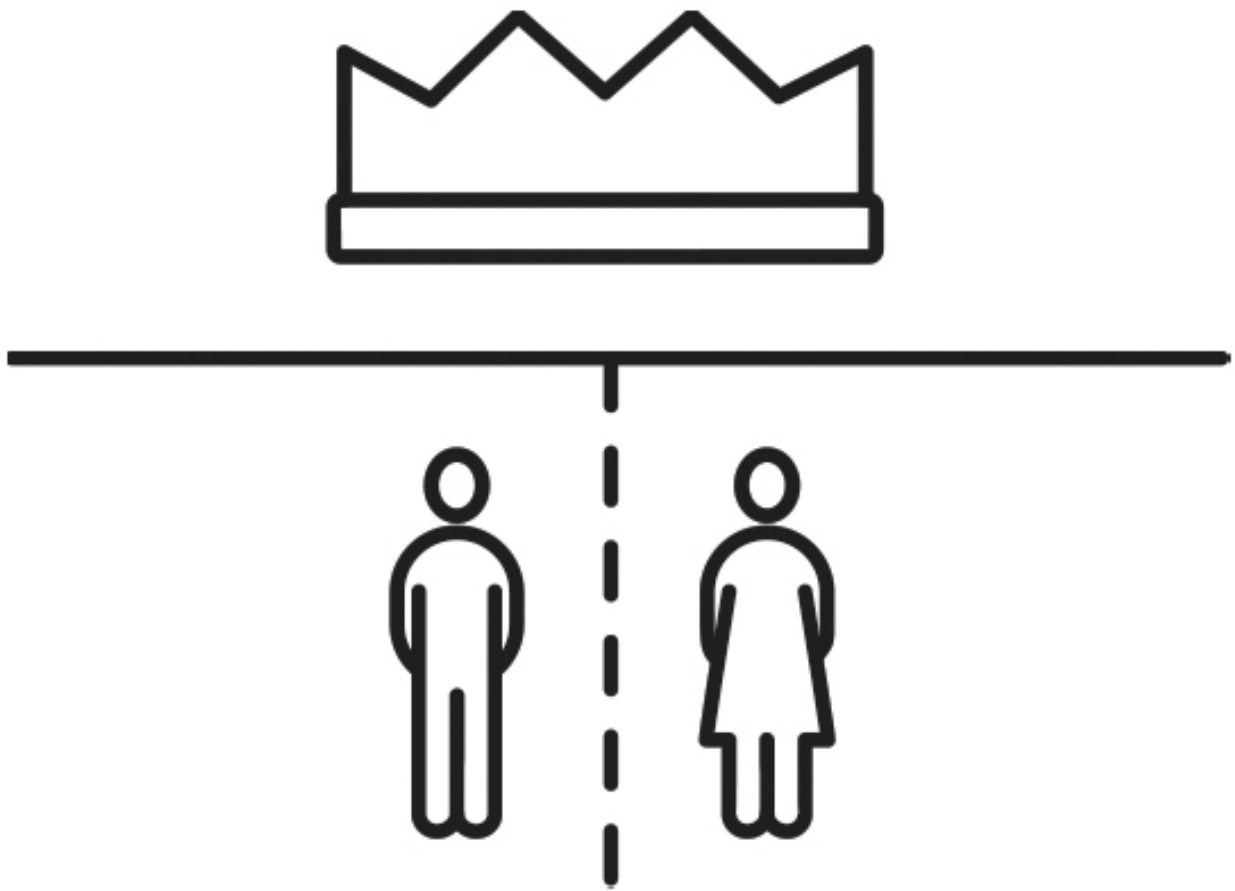
Confess to God that...

Ask God for his help with...



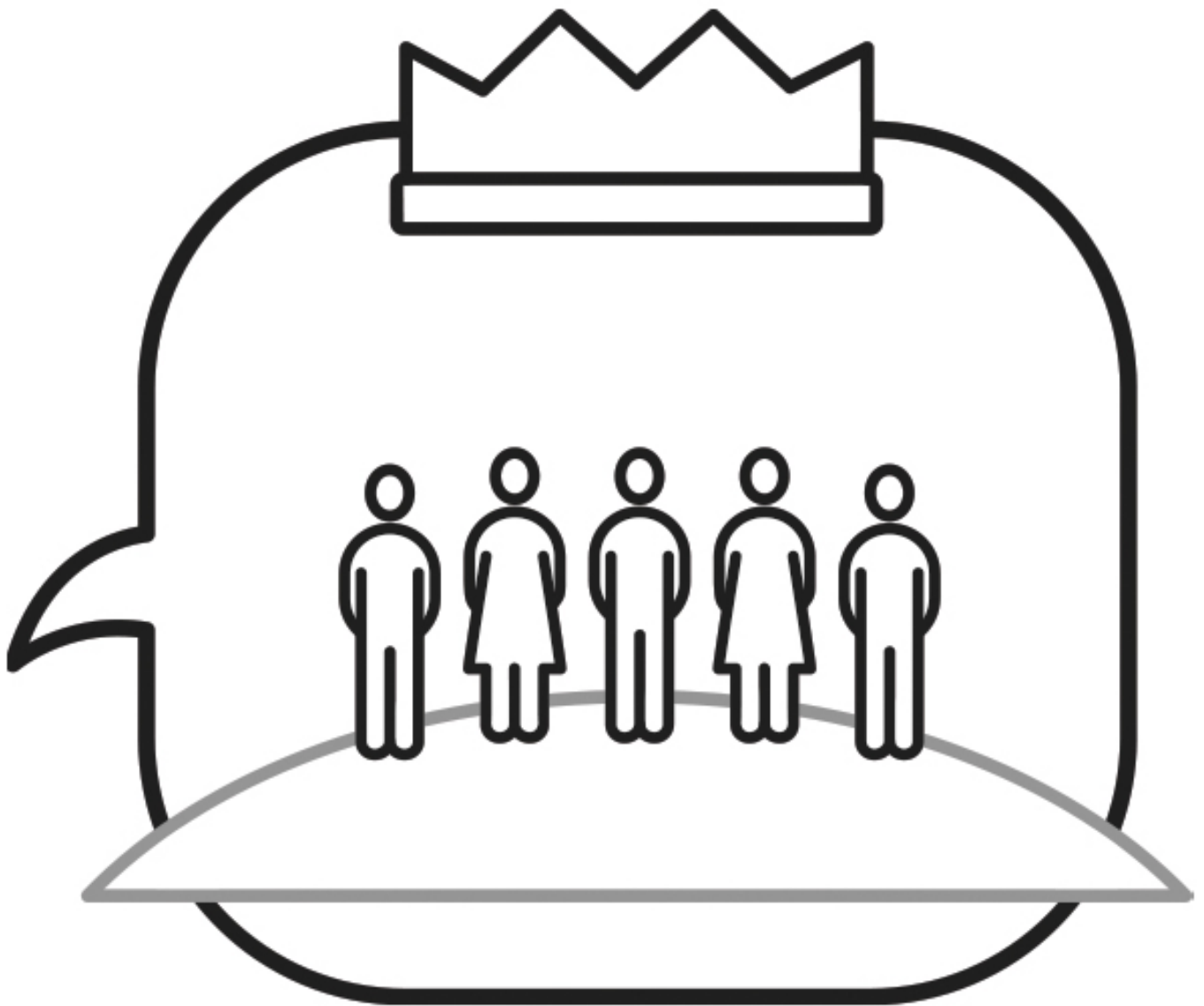
The Promise:

A very good world of blessing in God's presence



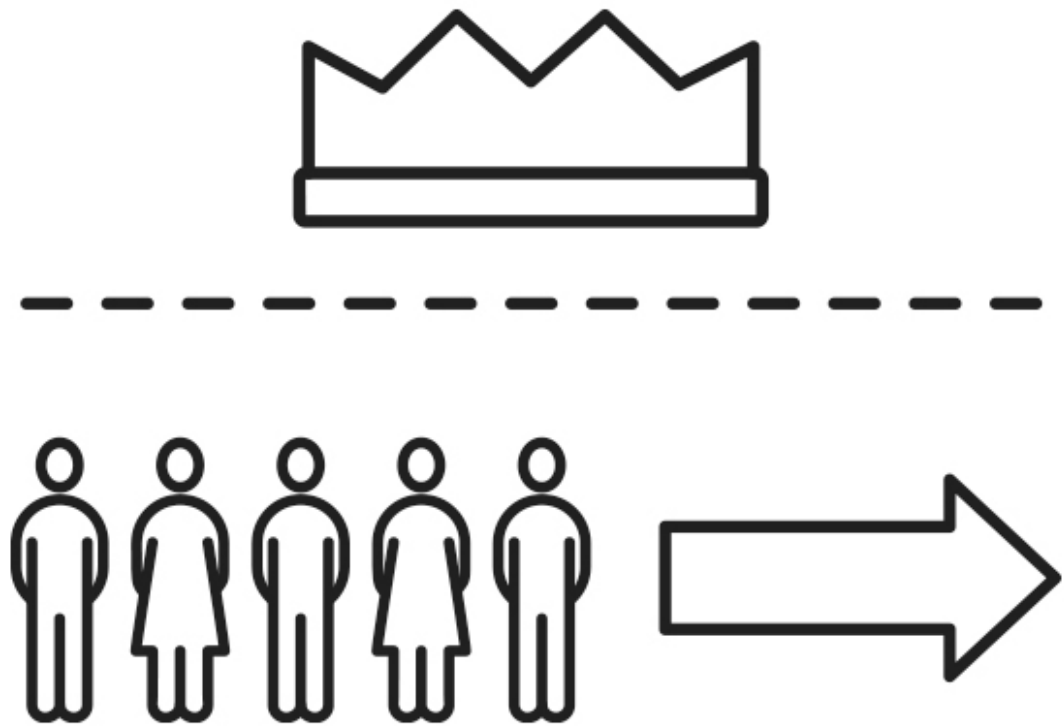
The Promise:

A serpent-crusher, descended from Eve, to undo the ruin of the fall



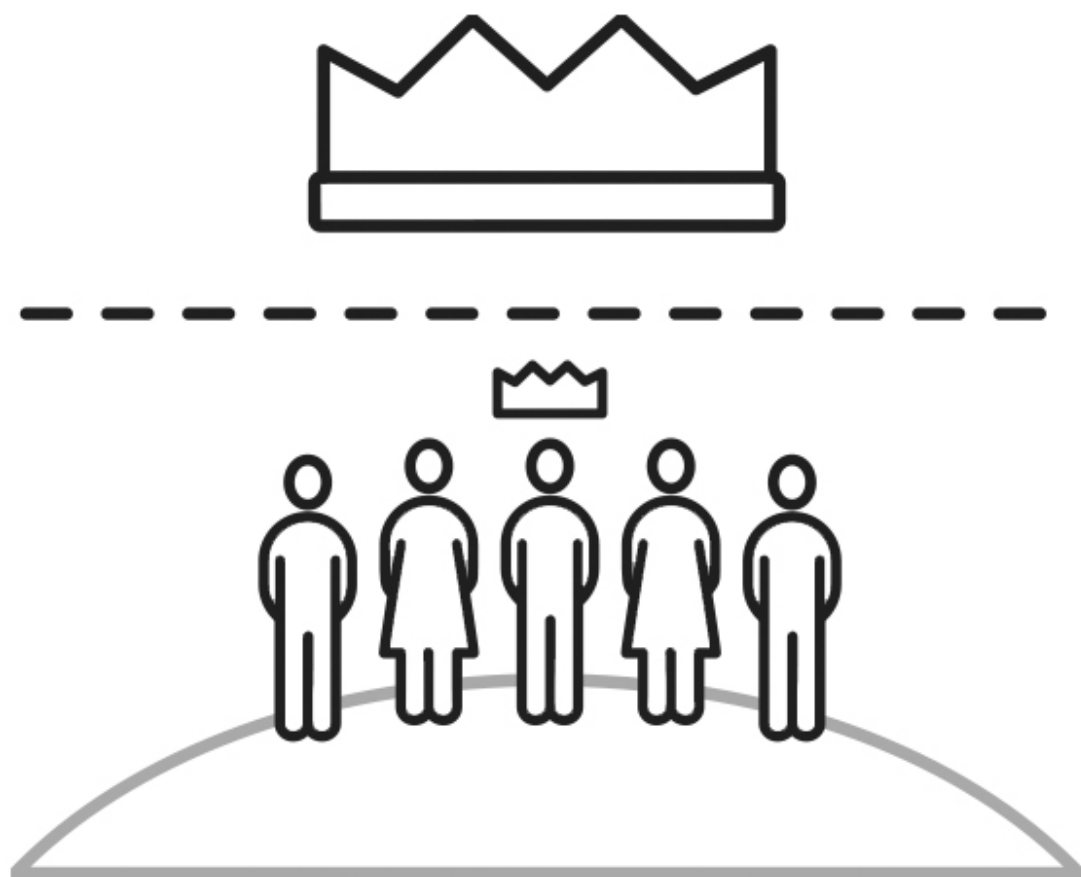
The Promise:

God's people in God's land – a blessing brought to all peoples through Abraham's descendant



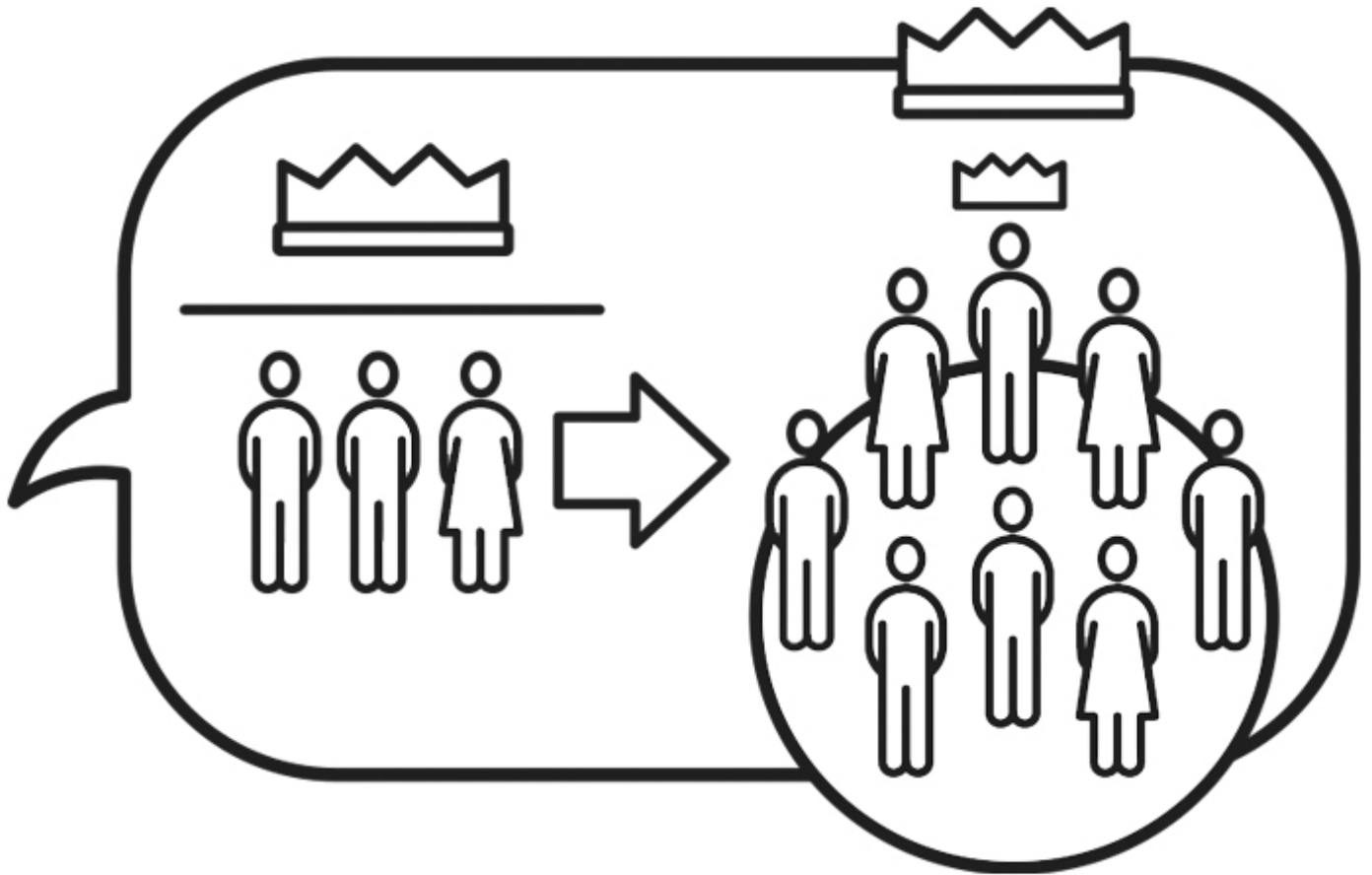
The Promise:

A substitute to die in the place of sinners, taking God's judgment so they can be God's people



The Promise:

A perfect King, descended from David, who will rule God's people for ever

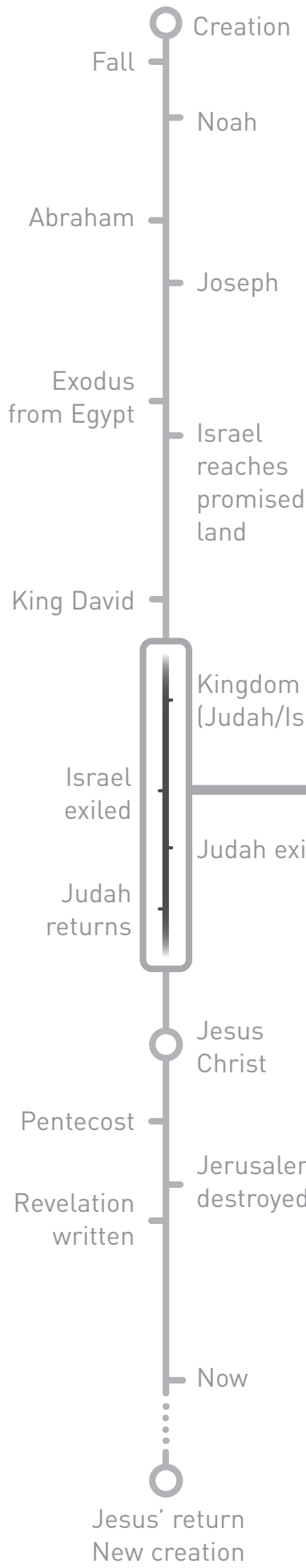


The Promise:

A future world of God's people enjoying God's blessing, under God's king, for eternity

BIBLE TIMELINE

Where are we in the whole story of God's word?



SESSION SIX PROPHETS

BIBLE SECTION

2 Chronicles 10 – 36

1 Kings 11 – 22

Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Psalms

Isaiah, Jeremiah

Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah

Jonah, Micah, Nahum

Habakkuk, Zephaniah

Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

MAIN CHARACTERS

Elijah, Elisha, Ahab and

Jezebel, Hezekiah, Josiah

Nebuchadnezzar

All the prophets listed above!

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

