

Taking It Home

The simple message of 1st & 2nd Kings is that God once again set His people up for success because He loves people. But once again Israel failed. It was their disobedience to God that knocked them off the hill. Spend some time this week thinking about how God sets us on top of the hill and how obedience to Him is how we stay there.



Small Group Lesson - 1 Kings February 2, 2014

Quick Review:

What insight, principle or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye opening or troubling?

My Story:

Did you ever play King of the Hill when growing up? (If not, what other games did you play?) Who usually won?

Pastor Bob likened Solomon's fall to being thrown off the hill. Discuss modern leaders who seemed to be on top of the hill but have fallen. (Unfortunately there are plenty.) What caused their downfall?

Digging Deeper:

The context of 1 & 2 Kings is the monarchy (kingdom). After 430 years as a theocracy (a governmental system where God is king; known as the era of the Judges 1450BC – 1000BC) Israel became a monarchy (a kingdom having a king; 1000BC – 586BC). Again we see the pattern of potential (set up as king of the hill), failure, and redemption. Israel had failed during the theocracy and now God was redeeming that failure by establishing a monarchy (kingdom with a king). During the monarchy era when Israel was obedient to God they were united and blessed, but when they sinned and were disobedient they were divided into the Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah). God sent His prophets to try and get the people to turn back to Him but they refused. After many years we see in both of these kingdoms the pattern of potential, failure, and redemption occur again. Both kingdoms were destroyed because of their continual disobedience to God.

1. Under King Solomon, David's son, the kingdom of Israel reached its peak. Solomon started well. 1 Kings 3:4-10 tells us why he did so well. What did Solomon ask for and what did it reveal about Solomon? According to 1 Kings 3:11-15 the Lord gave Solomon what he did not ask for. Why do you think the Lord did that and what does that say about God?

2. 1 Kings 10:1-10 records how the queen of Sheba came to test Solomon's wisdom. Read the story and discuss why she did that, what she learned, and why the writer of Kings may have included this story. (To show how God fulfilled his word to Solomon.) Discuss how God always fulfills his end of the bargain, but how we are the ones who don't.

3. Solomon didn't end well. 1 Kings 11:1-11 records his demise. What caused Solomon's downfall? What did God say He would do to Solomon because of his disobedience (vs. 11)? What does Solomon's story teach us? (The Lord is no respecter of persons. If we obey Him he will bless us and if we disobey he will punish us. The blessing of God is found in obedience.)

4. The book of kings records the destruction of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms. But this was not God's desire. According to 2 Kings 17:13-19 God kept sending them prophets to turn them from their destructive ways. Read this portion of scripture and discuss how these practices were destructive to Israel. Talk about how God tried to stop them from destroying themselves.

5. 2 Kings 17:11 & 15 both say that the root of Israel's problem was that they were like the nations of the world. Israel was to be holy (different). Discuss how holiness is intended to protect us, not just keep us from having fun.

6. It seems that the same things keep popping up over and over again in the Bible. Why do you think God keeps telling us about the same mistakes over and over again? Do you think God accepts those things now? Could some of the problems we face as a nation today be the consequences of making the same mistakes that Israel made? How so?

7. According to 1 John 4:8 "God is love". God's love is revealed in the fact that He warns us over and over again. Talk about how loving that really is.