

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

Take 5-10 minutes to discuss this week's sermon, *Solomon and the Fall of David's Kingdom*.

READ 1 Kings 11:1-13

INTRO TO THE TEXT:

1 and 2 Kings tell the story of Israel's history from the death of King David (approximately 1000 B.C.) to the sacking of Jerusalem and the deportation of the Jews to captivity in Babylon (586 B.C.) This week's sermon text (1 Kings 11:9-13) represents a major pivot point in this history. We remember that in 1 Samuel 8 God agreed to give the people of Israel a king to rule over them. The first king, Saul, who was chosen by the people (1 Sam 12:13), was a disaster. The second king, who was chosen by God, was David. David was not perfect – he committed some of the most egregious sins recorded in the Bible – but he was a “man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14),” and he was unquestionably Israel's greatest king – indeed perhaps Israel's only great king.

The Books of the Kings pick up the story with the death of David and the ascent of his son Solomon to the throne. One of our pastors has described the narrative of 1 and 2 Kings using the name of the classic movie western, “*The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*.” Solomon was initially a very good – some might say great – king, and he was shown favor by God, who endowed him with extraordinary wisdom and allowed him to accumulate almost indescribable material wealth. In the context of the movie title, this phase of Solomon's rule, described in 1 Kings 1-10, might be considered “*The Good*.”

The chapter that includes our text this week, Chapter 11, is “*The Bad*.” We see this king, who has been blessed in so many ways, turn from the God of Israel, violating His direct instructions (Deut 7:2) by taking wives from other nations, and even condoning the worship of pagan idols. An angry God promises that his kingdom will be stripped from him, and it all goes downhill from that point through the rest of 1 and 2 Kings. In other words, it gets “*Ugly*.”

ANALYZE THE TEXT

1. Some say that sin is sin, and that God hates all sin and doesn't differentiate one sin from another. But do the stories of David and Solomon affirm that view? Several times in Chapter 11 (e.g., in vv. 12-13 of our text passage but also later in vv. 31-39), God refers to David as “my servant” who “observed my statutes,” yet we know David was an adulterer and a murderer. God shows no such mercy to Solomon. Was that just because David repented (see 2 Sam 12:13, Psalm 51), or were Solomon's sins somehow more serious? Discuss.
2. Notice in 1 Kings 11:12-13 how God qualifies His punishment of Solomon by saying that He will wait until Solomon dies before stripping away his kingdom, and that He will preserve part of it in Solomon's line by giving it to his son. Why did He do this? Hint: Look back briefly at the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:12-17.)

APPLY *If your group is willing, break up into separate groups of men and women for the application.*

1. During his rule over Israel Solomon accrued almost unspeakable personal wealth. 1 Kings 10, in which the Queen of Sheba comes to visit Solomon, describes the gold and other things he had accumulated in some detail. Does this reveal anything about Solomon's character? Notice how the narrative transitions almost immediately from the description of his material wealth in Chapter 10 to his downfall in Chapter 11. Are these two things connected? In our church there are many wonderful men and women of God who are part of the “one percent.” Does Solomon's story teach us anything about a proper theology of wealth?
2. Share the story of a time in your life when you were confronted with your own very bad behavior and were called out about it by a brother or sister in the faith. In the stories of Saul, David, and now Solomon, we see a range of responses – from lying, denying, and making excuses to confession and repentance. How did you respond? In retrospect, how might you have responded differently?

MEMORIZE 1 Kings 11:9 (“The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.”)