

## 9.18.16 Prophet and Kings

### Discussion Questions

#### Leader Prep Section

Take time before your small group meeting to prepare by reading through the questions and scripture passage so that you can select 4-5 questions that are best suited to your group.

Try to work through at least one question from each of the sections - Hook, Book, Look, Took in order to move from observation to application.

When possible spend time in prayer for each member of your group.

#### Questions

**Hook - Ice breaker type questions to help make the transition into the study time.**

1. Share a story you know, or have lived, that ends on a note of hopefulness.
2. Why do you think we love stories with happy endings?

#### Background

It has been a tale filled with highs and lows and the climax is the two part exile of all 12 tribes of Israel from the land promised to them by the LORD. The final downward spiral for the Southern Kingdom began when Josiah died. His son Jehoahaz became king and all we really know is that he did evil in the sight of God and was taken to Egypt by Pharaoh Necho and died there. Then Jehoahaz's brother Jehoiakim was made king and he too did evil in the sight of God. It was during Jehoiakim's reign that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, invaded the Southern Kingdom and made Jehoiakim a puppet king. Jehoiakim was not content in that role and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and God sent Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite and Ammonite raiders against him. At that point Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, became king and we are told that he too did evil in the sight of God. He was king for only three months before Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem. Jehoiachin, and his family, were taken to Babylon as captives. In addition to Jehoiachin's family all the fighting men, skilled artisans and educated in the Southern Kingdom were taken to Babylon. Only the poorest people in the land remained. His uncle, Zedekiah, was made king and he too did evil in the sight of God. Zedekiah also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and that was the final blow for the Southern Kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar came and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and burned the temple. At that point there was no longer a king in Israel rather a governor was appointed and he too was assassinated by others who remained in the land.

All of that brings us to the verses we are going to read. These verses mark the end of the story of Israel and Judah as told by this author. This book, written to people who were living in exile, provided them with the story of how they ended up there and how to make their way back. At the close of it all, the story ends with hope. There is hope for the Davidic line and through that hope for the world.

Read 2 Kings 25:27-30

**Book - These questions are designed to get you into the text itself.**

1. How long did Jehoiachin end up in prison?
2. How was Jehoiachin treated when he was released from prison?
3. How did Jehoiachin respond to his new position?

**Look - These questions will take you on a deeper look at what the passage means for us today.**

1. Why is it good news for the world that the book of 2 Kings ends with a Davidic king still alive?
2. What can we learn about how God interacts with his people from the story of the kings and prophets?
3. How can we pick up the role given to Abraham to be a blessing to the nations?

**Took - These questions are focused on applying the big idea from the text to our lives.**

1. God made specific promises to Abraham and to David that required the Davidic line to survive, the most important being that Jesus would be a descendant of David. How do we live into the reality that we have a part to play in introducing people to Jesus?
2. What lessons have you learned from the kings of Israel and Judah? How do you put those lessons into practice?
3. Even after all of Jerusalem is destroyed the story ends with hope. What elements of your story have given you hope even in the darkest moments?

Closing

Take time to pray together for the clarity to see the moments that God puts before you to share the truth about who Jesus is and what he has done in your life. Also, spend a few minutes praising Jesus for the hope he has given us even in the bleak moments of life.

Reminder: We are called to live in such a way that those around us recognize that we are patterning our lives after someone who is different. When we choose the world over our compassionate God we are on a path that leads us nowhere good. Even then, our God chooses to pursue us with love and call us back to relationship with him.