

Lessons From Characters In Old Testament
Jehoiachin & Zedekiah
Lesson 52

Jehoiachin: (2 Kings 24:8-15; 25:27-30; 2 Chronicles 36:9-10)

Intro:

- A. From the 13 verses mentioning Jehoiachin here's what we know about him:
1. He followed his father, Jehoiakim, to the throne of Judah.
 2. He became king when he was 18 years old.
 3. The only reigned 3 months and 10 days.
 4. **(24:9)**
- B. Jehoiachin is stated to have been 8 years old when he began to reign in **2 Chron. 36:9**, but in **2 Kings 24:8** it is stated he was 18 years old. Contradiction?
1. A possible and reasonable explanation is that Jehoiachin was 8-years old when he began to reign as a co-regent king with his father and he was 18-years old when he reigned alone as king.
 2. If that be the case, then **2 Chronicles 36:9** is referring to when Jehoiachin began to reign with his father as co-regent and **2 Kings 24:8** refers to when Jehoiachin became king.
- (NOTE: During ancient times, there were occasions when a king would allow his young son to become a co-regent, meaning that the son would also be king while his father continued to be king, so that the young son could learn how to rule from his father.)**
3. His beginning to reign at 18 years of age harmonizes better with **2 Kings 24:15** which makes mention of his wives.

I. God's Judgement Upon Judah:

- A. There is now no hope for Judah!
1. God's message to Jehoiachin: **(Jeremiah 22:24-30)**
 2. Nebuchadnezzar's army invaded Jerusalem and captured it.
 - a. Then Nebuchadnezzar, himself, came to Jerusalem.
 - b. However, at this point, the city was not destroyed nor the temple.
 - c. Upon Jehoiachin's surrender, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasure of the house of the Lord and the king's house.
 - d. He cut in pieces all the articles of God that Solomon had made in the temple.
 - e. He took into captivity 10,000.
 - f. He took Jehoiachin prisoner, his mother, his wives, his officers, and the mighty men.
 3. Ezekiel, the prophet, was among the captives. **(Ezekiel 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 40:1)**
 - a. Daniel was yet another prophet who was taken captive.

II. Jehoiachin Is Released From Prison (2 Kings 25:27-30):

- A. Thirty-seven years after he was captured, he is released from prison by the then ruler of Babylon, Evil-Merodach.
- B. He was released on the 27th day of the 12th month.
1. He was given a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon.
 2. He pulled off his prison clothes and ate daily before the king for the rest of his life.

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- C. Jeremiah made mention of this in **Jeremiah 52:31-34**.
- D. Christ was a descendant of Jehoiachin (Jeconiah). **Matthew 1:11-12**

III. Lessons From Jehoiachin: (While it's somewhat difficult to end our study of Jehoiachin giving the lessons which can be learn, let it suffice to make these comments for us to consider)...

- 1. **God Does Not Forget His People!**
 - a. All hope was not gone because God was going to bring His people back from captivity when the time was right.
 - b. The ending of the book of 2 Kings brings hope to the people of Judah.
 - c. A remnant will return to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple; this is the story that told in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.
 - d. We can be assured that God will not forget us today: **Hebrews 13:5**
- 2. **God Always Seeks To Give Us Hope!**
 - a. Notice the promises God gives to His people:
 - (**Jeremiah 29:10-11**)
 - (**Romans 15:13**)
 - (**1 Pet. 1:3**)
 - (**Col. 1:5**)

(NOTE: A quote worth mentioning:

“Hope is one of the theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do. It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next.” ~ C.S. Lewis)

ZEDEKIAH (Mattaniah) - Reigned 11 years and was wicked. (2 Kings 24:17-25:7; 2 Chronicles 36:10-21)

INTRO:

- A. Nebuchadnezzar made Mattaniah king.
 - 1. Mattaniah was the third son of Josiah and uncle to Jehoiachin the king he succeeded.
 - 2. Nebuchadnezzar changed Mattaniah name to Zekekiah.
 - 3. Zekekiah was 21 years old when he became king and reigned 11 years.
 - 4. His mother was the same mother of Jehoahaz and she was exiled to Egypt by Pharaoh Necho (**2 Kings 23:31; 24:18**).
 - 5. Zedekiah was a wicked king and rebelled against Babylon.
- I. **Jeremiah's Prophecy About Zedekiah. (Jeremiah 24:1-10)**
 - A. At this point Nebuchadnezzar has carried way captives into Babylon and the Lord asked Jeremiah what he saw. (**v. 3**)
 - 1. Jeremiah replied that he saw two baskets of figs; one good figs very good figs and the other bad figs, figs so bad they could not be eaten.
 - 2. Of the good figs the Lord said, (**vs. 5-7**)
 - 3. Of the bad figs the Lord said, (**vs. 8-10**)

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- B. From this prophecy we can see the Lord has caused the best of the people to be taken into captivity so he could bring them back to Jerusalem as a remnant.
1. Those who are left will see disaster and tragedy.

II. The Lord's Promise Through Jeremiah To Those Who Were In Captivity (Jeremiah 29:1-32):

1. (vs. 4-7)
2. They are warned not to listen to the false prophets and diviners who would only deceive them nor to listen to their own dreams. (v. 8)
3. Here is another promise from the Lord: (v. 10)

III. The Fall Of Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:20-25:21; 2 Chronicles 36:13-21):

1. (Jeremiah 39:1)
2. As Ezekiel was already taken captive into Babylon, the Lord made this declaration to him: (Ezekiel 24:1-2)

IV. Things Which Took Place During The Siege (Jeremiah 38:1-28):

1. Jeremiah continues to warn the people of their fate if they remained in Jerusalem. (v. 2)
2. With his warning, the princes begged Zedekiah to kill Jeremiah. (v. 4)
3. Zedekiah, as weak and wicked as he was, essentially told them to do as they please. (v. 5)
4. Jeremiah was put prison into a pit with no water but mire and Jeremiah sunk up in the mire. (v. 6)
5. However, at the pleading of Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs, who was in the king's house, Zedekiah is persuaded to release Jeremiah from prison.
6. Zedekiah summons Jeremiah to come to him and says, (v. 14)
7. (v. 15)
8. Zedekiah secretly tells Jeremiah he would not kill him or allow someone else to kill him.
9. Jeremiah hides nothing from Zedekiah and tells him: (vs. 17-18)
10. But Zedekiah was afraid and would not surrender even after Jeremiah continues to reassure him. (vs. 19-20)

V. Jerusalem Falls!

1. And the weeping prophet (Jeremiah) declares: (Lamentations 1:1)

VI. The Fate Of Zedekiah! (2 Kings 25:6-7)

VII. Lessons From Jehoiakim:

1. **God's Word Is True!**
 - A. He always means what He says, and says what He means!
 - B. For hundreds of years God had told Israel and the people of Judah, if they would not obey Him but serve idols and live in disobedience before Him, He would bring judgement upon them.

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- C. Don't we live in times today where people scoff at the idea of God coming in judgment upon sin and evil?
 - D. How many dismiss the Bible's clear teaching that unless we hear the gospel, believe, repent, and obey we will die in our sins and be lost eternally in hell?
 - E. How many dismiss even the thought of a final judgment day and only one of two places where we will be in eternity, either heaven or hell?
 - F. As Jeremiah was not tolerated in his day, neither are God's servants listened to and appreciated today, as well.
- 2. How Dangerous It Is To Go 'Back And Forth' In Response To God's Word!**
- A. Zedekiah at different times asked for Jeremiah to tell him God's word, but again and again he wouldn't listen to what he was told.
 - B. Instead, he listened to others.
 - C. He would rather listen to his peers or to what the false prophets were saying than to listen to what God was saying through the prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
 - D. Zedekiah was one of the Bible's most indecisive characters.
 - E. And look where that got him: he was in a trap he made for himself and eventually the time came when there was no way out.
 - F. If we wait in doing God's will until we leave this world and are in the hades world, it will be too late. (**2 Corinthians 6:2**)
- 3. Each And Every Day Counts, Either For Good Or Bad In Our Lives!**
- A. Each day Zedekiah was indifferent and indecisive about God's will resulted in him becoming harder and harder in sin and more and more blinded.
 - B. Does not God state this for us in the Scriptures: (**Hebrews 3:8,15;4:7**) (**Hebrews 3:13**)
 - C. Allowing any sin in our lives we open ourselves to becoming numb to sin and to its control over us instead of our control over it.
 - D. Sin is dabbled in, excused, given 'pretty' names, given respectful status, and becomes fashionable.
 - E. The devil and the world are masters at minimizing the sinfulness of sin and its seriousness.
 - F. Jeremiah pleaded with Zedekiah to turn from his sins and listen to God and His word but Zedekiah would not and did not listen.
 - G. Is that the case with us?
- 4. Be Careful Who Our Friends Are!**
- A. Zedekiah had too many ungodly people in his life.
 - B. Instead of associating with the godly, he befriended the worldly and made them his companions and they helped him not for good but for evil.
 - C. We need to **ALWAYS** remind ourselves of what Paul said in **1 Corinthians 15:33**.
 - D. Choose upright friends if we want to walk in the right way and avoid evil and worldly companions so we will not be tempted and persuaded away from God's ways.
 - E. This command cannot be stressed enough.

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CONCLUSION:

The book of Jeremiah receives far less attention than it deserves!

NOTE: The Three (3) Waves Of Nebuchadnezzar's Attack In Conquering Judah: [597 to 581 B.C.]

1. Jehoiakim, also called Eliakim, was put into power by Pharaoh Necho who had killed his brother. Babylon attacked Judah and Jehoiakim surrendered to Babylon for three years, but he rebelled and Judah suffered its first devastating blow by Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar took away many in the ruling class and the young men. This is the wave that took Daniel and his friends into captivity (**2 Kings 23:34-24:6; Daniel 1:1-4**).
2. Jehoiachin, also called Coniah or Jeconiah, only managed to reign three months under Babylon. He was carted away in the second attack by Nebuchadnezzar along with the middle class, craftsmen, and the remainder of the upper class. In this wave the treasures of Israel were removed from Judah to Babylon. This was the wave that took Ezekiel into captivity (**2 Kings 24:6-16**).
3. Zedekiah, also called Mattaniah, managed to reign eleven years before rebelling and the third wave destroyed what was left of Judah. (**2 Kings 24:17-25:21**).

Lesson 53
Daniel
(The Book of Daniel)