

Journey through Jeremiah Part 24

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney, Th.D. – Wednesday, May 31, 2017

† Jeremiah 22:1-30

(1) Thus saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, (2) And say, Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates:

Last week we covered chapter 21 which took us to a later time, during the reign of the last King of Judah, Zedekiah. The King had sent two men to inquire of Jeremiah about the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar on the City of Jerusalem. As we read about Zedekiah from **2 Chronicles 36:12** *And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD.*

So, while Zedekiah would not come and personally speak with Jeremiah, the LORD instructs Jeremiah to go to the King and speak directly to him. There would be no mistaking the Word of the LORD by coming from a second party, the King would hear it directly from God's Prophet.

This prophecy is not only intended for Zedekiah but also for his three predecessors. Remember, the last good King of Judah was Josiah. He would have 3 sons and 1 grandson follow in his steps as King of Judah:

Josiah: Jeremiah began prophesying in the 13th year of his reign and he reigned for 31-years before he was shot by an arrow while in battle against Pharaoh Neco King of Egypt in Megiddo and he died from his injuries.

Jehoahaz (Shallum): Then the people of Judah appointed Josiah's son, Jehoahaz (Also known as Shallum), as King and he reigned for 3 months before Pharaoh Neco dethroned him and carried him off to Egypt as a prisoner where he eventually died. - **2 Kings 23:31-32** *Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (32) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.*

Jehoiakim (Eliakim): Then Josiah's son, Eliakim, who Pharaoh changed his name to Jehoiakim, became King and he reigned for 11-years until he died from an apparent violent death according to Jer. 22:18-19. – **2 Kings 23:36-37** *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. (37) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.*

Johoiachin: (Coniah or Jeconiah) Then Jehoiakim's son (Josiah's grandson), Johoiachin, became King and he reigned for 3-months until Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem and took him, his mother, and his family as captive. - **2 Kings 24:8-9** *Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. (9) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.*

Zedekiah: Then Nebuchadnezzar placed another of Josiah's sons on the throne as King, his name was Mattaniah but Nebuchadnezzar changed it to Zedekiah. Zedekiah lasted for 11-years as King until he rebelled and was blinded and drug off into Babylonian captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. He would be the very last of the 23-kings of

Judah (or 20th if you start when the Kingdoms divided with the first King being Rehoboam). - **2 Kings 24:18-20** *Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (19) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. (20) For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.*

So, all of the last 4 kings of Judah did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. They refused to take the counsel of Jeremiah.

(3) Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. (4) For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

Here the Word of the LORD is for the Kings of Judah to execute judgement and righteousness on the people of the Land of Judah. If they will do what the LORD says then he will bless them.

But, like we just discussed, none of these last 4 kings would listen or obey the Word of the LORD. They will have to suffer the repercussions as given in the prophecy because they each did all of these things. For 22 ½ years after the death of Josiah there was continual bad and ungodly leadership:

1. Did not execute judgement and righteousness – instead they continued allowing idol worship and ungodly living.
2. Did not take care of the fatherless and widows.
3. Allowed innocent blood to be shed in Judah, specifically the child sacrifices that were going on in the Valley of the son of Hinnom.

(5) But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. (6) For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah; Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon: yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, and cities which are not inhabited. (7) And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down thy choice cedars, and cast them into the fire.

Just like in all of the other prophecies, the repercussions for not obeying the LORD are severe. They will lose their throne, their palaces, their splendor and grandeur. Those symbols of "Gilead" and "Lebanon" were well known as blessings from God. Gilead was the best land in the entire country. It was well known for its fertile lands and green pastures that were good for growing and grazing. Lebanon was known as the highest mountain in Israel and for its great Cedar trees that were good for building, it was the finest wood around. Both of these things were known to be connected to the Royal family as part of the blessings of God. But the LORD said if they would not do what he says then he will destroy it all. He will take these blessings from them.

(8) And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city?

The people of Israel are very proud people. They pride themselves in being the chosen ones. They pride themselves in having the best of everything. These rich blessings from God were abundant. But because of their wickedness and refusal to

obey God's Word, they will lose it all and when that happens everyone that passes by what used to be the great and powerful City of Jerusalem and Land of Israel, will see nothing but waste and carnage. They will shake their head in wonder how such a thing could happen. Why would the LORD allow all of this to happen?

(9) Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

There is the answer to why the LORD allowed this to happen; because they forsook His covenant and worshipped other gods and served them. Oh how tragic to think of the opportunities they had to turn things around, but they loved their sin more than they loved the Savior. The same with people today.

(10) Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him: *but weep sore for him that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.*

They are told not to weep the dead, they had plenty of chances to repent, but if you are going to weep, weep for those that have taken into Babylonian captivity for they will never see their land again, they will die in Babylon.

(11) For thus saith the LORD touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more: (12) But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

As we mentioned in the beginning in the chronology of the Kings of Judah, Shallum was the given name for Jehoahaz. It was most likely changed to Jehoahaz when he began reigning as King. -- Just as we see here in Jeremiah's prophecy, the exact thing that God said would happen to him, happened. We read about it in **2 Kings 23:31-33**: Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (32) And he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. (33) And Pharaohnechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

(13) Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; *that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work*; (14) That saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers, and cutteth him out windows; and *it is cieled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.*

This prophecy is against King Jehoiakim because he had taxed the people of Judah and forced them to build his splendid palace without getting paid. **2 Kings 23:35** And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give *it* unto Pharaohnechoh. -- This was a direct violation of the Law **Leviticus 19:13**: Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob *him*: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

(15) Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, *and then it was well with him*? (16) He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then *it was well with him*: was not this to know me? saith the LORD.

Jeremiah reminds Jehoiakim of how his father, Josiah, lived and the LORD blessed him for the way that he lived. All was well with his father because he obeyed God's

commandments and exercised judgment and righteousness, neither of which Jehoiakim has done.

(17) But thine eyes and thine heart *are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it.* (18) Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, *saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister!* they shall not lament for him, *saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!* (19) He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

Because of Jehoiakim's disobedience and wickedness, the LORD brought judgment upon him. He stripped him of his dignity, his pride, and his wealth. No one even cried for him when he died. He was dragged out of the way and left the same as a dead ass, cast beyond the gates and left to rot. Jehoiakim is the only King of Judah whose burial is not recorded.

(20) Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed. (21) I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; *but thou saidst, I will not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.* (22) The wind shall eat up all thy pastors, and thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness. (23) O inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail!

Jehoiakim is told to go and cry out to his "lovers," meaning those that he has stuck up relationships with and made alliances with such as Egypt and Assyria. None of them can do anything for him because Nebuchadnezzar has defeated them as well and taken them into captivity. Surely when all of this happens he will be ashamed of his wickedness.

(24) As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; (25) And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of *them whose face thou fearest*, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. (26) And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. (27) But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return. (28) *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure?* wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? (29) O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. (30) Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that shall not prosper in his days*: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

Then the sentence upon Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim. He is called here, "Coniah." He is also called Jeconiah in other parts of the Scripture. Of course, as we read last week from 2 Kings 24, this certainly did happen to him when Nebuchadnezzar overthrew Jerusalem and removed him from power and placed his Uncle Mattaniah, in as King. Jehoiachin was taken along with his mother and his servants, princes, and officers. Never to return to Judah again. He would die in Babylon and would have no offspring follow in his footsteps as King of Judah.

† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible