

---

## **SUNDAY SERMON**

**Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**

**Willow, Alaska**

**Date: September 03, 2017**

**Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 19:1-14**

**Text: Ezekiel 19:1-14**

**Subject: EZEKIEL SERIES – Lamentation for the Princes of Israel**

***1 Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,***

These words are still addressed of the LORD God to Ezekiel. Having assured all in Israel that each person would receive for his own righteousness or wickedness only, now the LORD turns to a lamentation for the princes of Israel. To lament is to express profound sorrow for; to mourn or bewail over the loss or demise of a person. The Hebrew word for prince is nasiy' naw-see' which is translated as "prince, captain, chief, ruler," so we conclude the term speaks of the last kings of Judah. These are Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Especially the first two of these who were true descendants of Israel.

***2 And say, What is thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions.***

***And say, What is thy mother? A lioness: she lay down among lions,*** -- What resemblance shall I use to set out the nature, deportment, and state of the mother of these princes? an unhappy mother of unhappy children! Or, Alas! thy mother, etc.

**Thy Mother?** -- The pronoun "thy" shows that one of these was upon the throne at once, and therefore the prophet speaks to one at a time, in the singular number. Mother speaks of the land of Judea and Jerusalem, the chief city of it, the royal family of David.

**A lioness: she lay down among lions, she nourished her whelps among young lions.** – Jerusalem was like a lioness, not because of her strength and glory, but for her cruelty and taking away the property of others; for her definite lack of humanity, mercy, and justice. **She lay down among lions** – heathen princes of both Egypt and Babylon. The people of the Jews, lay down among these heathen princes, joined with them in leagues and marriages, and learned their manners, and became of the same temper and disposition. **She nourished** – She brought up many princes like whelps of the lioness. Some were good like Josiah who followed the LORD – but the ones who came after him were totally unlike him. They were wicked. She nourished **her whelps among young lions.** – That is among the young heathen rulers about them.

**3 And she brought up one of her whelps: it became a young lion, and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men.**

**And she brought up one of her whelps:** -- Whelps or sons. The Hebrew word for "brought up" is 'alah aw-law.' Literally, it means "made him to ascend," to mount the throne. This was Jehoahaz, whom the people of the land took and anointed, and made him king in the place of Josiah his father.

**2 Kings 23:29-30** *In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of*

*Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. **30** And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.*

***it became a young lion,*** – Became - soon showed his fierce, haughty, cruel, and bloody disposition, as we see from this passage from 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings.

**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.

Jehoahaz continued but three months, and some odd days, wherein he did his evil deeds as a young lion.

***and it learned to catch the prey; it devoured men.*** -- being instructed by evil counsellors, he soon learned to oppress his subjects, to get their substance from them, and do many evil things. Devoured - or a man, Adam, the people of Israel.

***4 The nations also heard of him; he was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt.***

***The nations also heard of him;*** -- Mainly, this speaks of Egypt.

***He was taken in their pit, and they brought him with chains unto the land of Egypt.*** – Their Pit – this alludes to the manner of hunting and taking lions, and such like beasts of prey; which was done by digging pits, and covering the mouths of them with straw. So Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt came out against Jehoahaz, and took him, and put him in bonds at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might reign no more in Jerusalem.

**2 Kings 23:33** *And Pharaoh-nechoh 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.*

***5 Now when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion.***

This speaks of what Judah did when she waited to see how Jehoahaz would fare. When he was taken away, she knew her hope of him was lost, so she took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion. This speaks of Jehoiakim, the brother of Jehoahaz, who before was called Eliakim Pharaoh-necho changed his name to Jehoiakim. Though he is said to make him king, yet it was by the consent of the people of the Jews. (2Ki. 23:34-35.)

***6 And he went up and down among the lions, he became a young lion, and learned to catch the prey, and devoured men.***

Jehoiakim did as his brother had done before him as a young lion. He learned to catch the prey – that is, the people and devour them – their means and possessions.

***7 And he knew their desolate palaces, and he laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.***

And he knew their desolate palaces (Hebrew: 'almanah al-maw-naw') the first meaning of which is widows. Jehoiakim "knew their widows:" or, "his own widows"; whom he made so. He slew the men to get their substance into his hands, and then defiled their widows. Though the record given Ezekiel of the LORD is not found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, this lamentation serves as a commentary on the life of this wicked man.

***And the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, by the noise of his roaring.*** -- By the perpetual violent threats of this cruel king, which are called his roaring,

**Proverbs 19:12** *The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favour is as dew upon the grass.*

His roaring terrified his neighbours in the three years' revolt which is mentioned.

**2 Kings 24:1-2** *In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. 2 And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of*

*the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.*

**8 Then the nations set against him on every side from the provinces, and spread their net over him: he was taken in their pit.**

**The nations** which were in allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar, and were bound to assist him in his wars. Therefore, these nations set against him on every side from the different provinces.

**They spread their net over him** – They soon got him into their traps and snares, called toils, as hunters get a lion, or other wild beast, into their net. **He was taken in their pit.** -- an ordinary way of taking lions. This is, like much of the other language, written in metaphors to describe the means by which this wicked king was taken down.

**9 And they put him in ward in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon: they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.**

**And they put him in ward in chains, and brought him to the king of Babylon:** -- Or "in an enclosure"; or "in a collar with hooks" as lions are secured. A collar of iron, as is said, was put about his neck, which had hooks in it, and to those hooks chains were put, in which he was led a prisoner. It is certain that he was bound in fetters, in order to be carried to Babylon where he was put in holds (Verse 10).

**2 Chronicles 36:5-6** *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years*

*old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. 6 Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.*

***they brought him into holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.*** – Holds - kept him safe that he should not escape. Babylon was a very large city and had so great and many forts about it, that it seemed to be made up of many strong holds. There they kept him that his voice would never again be heard on the mountains of Israel. Here in another metaphor, the kingdom is the mountains of Israel; when the king is the lion that ranges and roars on them. Two more lions of the same temper, and very much alike miserable in their end, are no doubt included in this emblem. By these the Jews might know what would become of Jeconiah, called also Jehoiachin, and of Zedekiah, who was called Mattaniah.

***10 Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters.***

***Thy mother is like a vine in thy blood, planted by the waters:*** -- Thy Mother – Thy indicated the one addressed. O thou prince of Israel: see Eze. 19:2. **Is like a vine;** so frequently compared:

**Psalm 80:8** *Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.*

**Psalm 80:14-15** *Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; 15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath **planted**, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.*

**Isaiah 3:14** *The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: **for ye have eaten up the vineyard**; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.*

**Isaiah 5:1-2** *Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved **touching his vineyard**. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: **2** And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.*

**Isaiah 27:1-2** *In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea. **2** In that day sing ye unto her, **A vineyard of red wine**.*

*Thy mother is like a vine **in thy blood** - still was, like a vine; and especially with respect to his blood, the royal family from which he descended.*

***planted by the waters*** -- in a very fruitful soil because it is by the waters which water it.

***she was fruitful and full of branches by reason of many waters.*** – By the waters, she did thrive, and brought forth much fruit – that is, many children. Though she lost many thousands carried away, yet more were born, bred up, and trained up. The royal family did spring forth like a vine well-watered.

***11 And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule, and her stature was exalted among the thick branches, and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.***

***And she had strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule,*** -- This speaks of how the nation (the mother) had many excellent persons through her history who possessed qualifications given of God which were suitable for kings, that they might rightly hold the sceptre, and rule the people with equity and justice.

***and her stature was exalted among the thick branches,*** -- The grandeur of her kings and kingdom rose above all those round about her. Another way of saying this is: the goodly cedars and their thick branches; i.e. this kingdom equaled, if not excelled, the greatest neighbour kingdoms, and her kings, as David, Solomon, &c. exceeded all their neighbour kings in riches and power. God exalted her and them!

***and she appeared in her height with the multitude of her branches.*** -- like a mighty tree, that overtops all the forest, so did this goodly kingdom over all kingdoms, and it was seen and noted, according to God's promise that it should be the head, and not the tail.

**Deuteronomy 28:12-13** *The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. 13 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:*

***12 But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire consumed them.***

This flourishing vine first degenerated, brought forth fruit to itself, not to God, and grew proud, abused God's mercies to all manner of sin. Then **She was plucked up in fury;** was violently, suddenly, and totally rooted out, tore up by the roots. In this way was the once flourishing kingdom of the Jews overthrown.

***she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit:*** -- She was plucked up and thrown down in shame and by the judgment of God. An east wind, that blasting, piercing wind, blew upon her. [An east wind in scripture is always a punishing and destroying wind – lk] The king of Babylon with all his power, raised of God to pull up this sinful kingdom.

***her strong rods were broken and withered; the fire***

**consumed them.** -- all the choice men, the counsellors, warriors, artificers, all that were likely to be the strength of the kingdom, were broken. By Nebuchadnezzar's hand they were plucked away, and removed into Babylon, where they lay as withered branches. **The fire consumed them;** -- this is called fury in the former part of the verse. God's displeasure for their sins, their adversaries' rage, and their own animosities, burnt them up. Their houses and palaces, their city and temple, all burnt. Some of the persons were with this fire consumed also.

***13 And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground.***

**And now she is planted in the wilderness,** -- In the land of Babylon, which was a very fruitful country. But, because of the hardships and miseries which the Jews were exposed in this land, it was a wilderness to them.

**in a dry and thirsty ground;** -- This is a description of a wilderness, and means the "wilderness" in which the Jews were deprived of their liberties; they no longer had not the opportunities of divine worship, and of God's word as before. They were destitute of the comforts both of civil and religious life. The vine planted in the wilderness signifies the remainder of the people left in it, after this great destruction. It looked like a vine plucked up, thrown down, left on the ground, dried up with the east wind, and burnt with fire! This is the way it was with that remnant which God spared in this alien land.

***14 And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a***

***sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.***

***And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches,*** -- Doubtless, this speaks of the fire of rebellion, kindled by a rod of her branches, by Zedekiah, who is of the blood royal, made king by Nebuchadnezzar, and who swore allegiance to him.

***which hath devoured her fruit,*** -- Hezekiah's fire has brought the land, city, king's palaces, and God's temple to utter desolation. She hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule; the regal dignity is ceased, and shall rise no more; The vine shall never have a crowned head to rule again.

***This is a lamentation;*** -- These are words to express profound sorrow for; to mourn or bewail over the loss or demise of a the lioness and her whelps – and all that was Israel and Jerusalem.

***And shall be for a lamentation;*** -- That part of it which had been already fulfilled brought lamentation. When the rest should be fulfilled, it would be the cause of more sorrow and mourning for that which is lost.

Lamentable was the case of the Jews already, but it would be still more so when all that was foretold of them should be accomplished. It speaks of the continuance of the sad estate of that people; and, in my understanding, may also refer to their present condition, which will continue till they are turned to the Lord.

Let's consider for a brief moment how that God had pre-warned them

of this:

### **READ DEUTERONOMY 28**

This lament is for the princes who had been given so much – and had such great responsibility. Beloved, most of us have been given much and the Lord requires more for those who have been given much.

**Luke 12:48** *But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

Don't despair, beloved. To those of us who have been given little, Ira Stamphill's wonderful song: "Take up thy cross and follow me," encourages us:

"If just a cup of water I place within your hand  
Then just a cup of water Is all that I demand,"  
But if by death to living They can thy glory see,  
I'll take my cross and follow close to thee."