

Jehoiachin
2 Kings 24:8-17

Slide 1

When someone says the word “history” most people’s eyes glaze over.

They remember that class as their least favorite, because they had to memorize dates, times, and events without being taught the significance of what they were studying, but I love history.

The reason I like history is revealed in the saying, “*Those who do not learn from history’s mistakes are doomed to repeat them.*” That isn’t just true in world events, it’s also true in our personal lives.

Mistakes are life’s teachers, and if you’ve made mistakes, which we all have, they were allowed in our life to teach us valuable lessons.

In basic training, when you were doing something physically difficult and painful, my Drill Sergeant would sympathetically remind me that pain was just weakness leaving your body.

Pain is the negative consequence of a mistake. It’s meant to reinforce the lesson never to do that again.

This is why young children used to get spanked - to reinforce important lessons and to learn to respect for authority.

This same truth we see in our personal lives is also true at the national or international level. Those who ignore the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them.

This is why we’ve been studying these last kings of Judah, and seeing how their actions brought down one of the most powerful nations in history.

It's my hope, through the study of God's word, and the history that's revealed, that we as Bible believing Christians can stem the tide of judgment that's looming on the horizon.

I mentioned at the beginning of this series that we were studying the three last kings of Judah, but not Zedekiah.

Why not Zedekiah. He was appointed by the King of Babylon after the nation had already been stripped of its power and treasure.

So, today we're going to learn about Jehoiachin - the last King of Judah. One commentator wrote, *"He came to the crown, not to have the honor of wearing it, but the shame of losing it."*

2 Kings 24:8-16, "Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan; she was from Jerusalem. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father had done. At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed the treasures from the temple of the Lord and from the royal palace, and cut up the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the Lord. He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left. Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land."

The king of Babylon also deported to Babylon the entire force of seven thousand fighting men, strong and fit for war, and a thousand skilled workers and artisans.”

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There’s a saying that has a lot of truth to it, *“As goes the leader, so go the people.”*

Who the leader is, what they stand for, and how they live is very important to a family, to a company, to a military unit, or to a nation. As the leader goes, so goes the people.

The first thing we see about how God viewed Jehoiachin, and therefore the people of Judah, is seen in Jeremiah 22.

Jeremiah 22:24-30, "As surely as I live, declares the Lord, even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. I will deliver you into the hands of those who want to kill you, those you fear—Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Babylonians. I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. You will never come back to the land you long to return to. Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot, an object no one wants? Why will he and his children be hurled out, cast into a land they do not know? O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Lord says: Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah.”

Have any of you despised someone so much that you wouldn’t kick them into a lake if they were on fire?

That's the language being used here for how much God despised this king, and through him the people that followed him. This is where Judah is at this time in history.

God's hands were beginning to move in ways that would bring disaster upon them. The Bible says it's a "*fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

Some may ask, "*What about God's mercy? Isn't God a god of love? Why won't He just forgive and forget?*"

To answer that question, you just need to go back to when God gave the covenant to Abraham.

In Genesis 15, God gave a promise to Abraham and his descendants that they would come into their own land someday, but it would take 400 years for that promise to be fulfilled.

There's a verse in that chapter that's often read but not understood, it's verse 16. This verse gives a glimpse into the heart of God, and how He exercises His sovereignty here on earth.

In Genesis 15:15-16, God tells Abraham: "*You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.*"

The Amorites were the people, at that time in history, who occupied what is now known as modern Israel. They were a collection of all of the "ite" people - Hizzites, Canaanites, Perizzites, etc.

They were all rotten to the core, but God was giving them time, 400 years in fact, to repent of their evil and return to Him.

What this verse shows us is that somewhere, in the divine scale of justice, there's a point of no return.

There comes a time where an individual's or nation's corruption becomes so bad that God has no other recourse than to rid the earth of them. How that works, or where that line is, I have no idea.

The prophet Habakkuk, seeing all the injustice being done, even questioned God why He hadn't done something.

God's answer was that judgment's coming in the form of the Babylonian kingdom. They were to be an instrument of God's justice to the sinful nation.

As far as giving you a list or criteria that God uses before His mercy runs out and judgment becomes inevitable, again, I don't know. What I do know is that none of us are guaranteed our next breath.

Therefore, keep your accounts short with God and live in such a way that you'll not be ashamed when you appear before Him at that Judgment Seat.

God's Word says that He'll call every deed into judgment, whether good or evil. If your evil isn't covered by the blood of Christ you're doomed.

That's where Jehoiachin is -- under judgment, and, because he's the king, and the people followed their king into depravity, they're under judgment as well.

Again, this is a principle we see throughout Biblical history, "*Where the leader goes, the people follow.*"

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In 1 Samuel 8:10-18, Samuel gave the people a warning about desiring a king to rule over them. Listen to the last words of this passage:

1 Samuel 8:17b-18, "...you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day."

The people were finally seeing that Samuel, when he spoke on God's behalf, was absolutely right. It was true then, and it's true now.

But this isn't just a national problem. It's true in our personal life as well. It's true in our families. If you're living a secret life of sin, it'll come out, especially in the lives of your children.

We forget that every decision we make is a spiritual decision which brings with it spiritual consequences. Our decisions strengthen forces in our life for good or for evil.

If we chose wrongly, there's a spirit that's strengthened and set free in the kingdom of darkness to wreak havoc in our life and the life of those around us.

If we choose wisely, the Holy Spirit's influence will continue to bring blessing and life to us and those around us.

This is the truth as seen over and over again in the Bible. In the spiritual realm, there's no such thing as a secret sin.

The evidence of your sin will eventually be seen in the physical world and in your life, along with the consequences of choosing poorly.

You never want to be in the position where you become a stench to God, causing Him to despise you as He did Jehoiachin.

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The second thing that we learn about this king was that his reign was very brief. He only reigned three months and 10 days.

2 Chronicles 36:9, "Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord."

The Bible is unusually specific about this, so I looked up the significance of this time. 10 days is how long it would take a swift messenger to ride from Judah to Babylon.

Three months is how long it would take to marshal, supply, and march an Army across the desert and attack Judah.

In other words, King Nebuchadnezzar heard about Jehoiachin taking the throne, and immediately said, "Nope" and sent his army as the exclamation point to that nope!

Isn't that something? Jehoiachin was such a poor example of a leader that the world's rising superpower sent an army to immediately remove him.

Not only did God despise Jehoiachin, but apparently the rest of the world did, too. I want to point out that this king was despised mainly because he was in it only for himself.

He knew what God required of the nation because several prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk) told him that he needed to turn back to God to avoid the coming wrath, yet he ignored all the warnings.

But, before we're too hard on this young king, before we shake our heads at his stupidity, how many times has America received those same warnings?

How many times do men like David Wilkerson, Billy Graham, or any of the other well-known and proven prophets have to speak before we'll listen?

But it's not just the nation. It's not just our leaders and politicians. How many times does the Word of God have to speak to us personally before we'll repent and change our ways?

We can thank Jesus for His mercy and intercession for us in heaven, but there'll come a day when the Father's mercy will run out, and then judgment will fall.

In America, we've had our warning. I believe September 11th was a direct warning from God about where we were going.

What did we do after that event? We doubled, then tripled down on our fall into immorality.

Morally, things are so bad right now I've heard many preachers say if God doesn't judge us soon, he owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology for acting too fast.

I'm not going to say that because I know God will move when He chooses, and it'll be the absolute correct time to do it. So, how does God move when His mercy runs out?

Let's read again from our main text:

2 Kings 24:11-14, "And Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the Lord had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed the treasures from the temple of the Lord and from the royal palace, and cut up the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had

made for the temple of the Lord. He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left.”

What happened? The king had to surrender to the invaders along with his entire family. The invaders bankrupted Judah by taking all its valuables away.

They also took all the fighting men, nobles, educated, and the skilled tradesmen back to Babylon with him so there was no chance of them rising up as a nation to be taken seriously again.

On September 11th our wealth and our military, the two things that make America the greatest superpower the world has ever known, were directly attacked, but the attack was partial.

In essence, it was a warning slap in the face to show us that we aren't as invincible as we thought we were. Again, how did we react? We just read a newspaper or watched the news.

Immorality, violence, and sexual deviancy are so rampant we, as God's people, aren't even shocked by it anymore. Just as in Judah, America is on the precipice of a major shaking.

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Conclusion

There was a book published in the late 1800's by a French political philosopher named Alexis de Tocqueville (Alexee de Toke-e-ville) called *Democracy in America*.

In that book he wrote, *“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers—and it was not there... in her fertile fields and boundless forests—and it was not there... in her rich mines and her vast world commerce and it was not*

there... in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution—and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.”

This sermon series was meant to show us exactly where we stand as a nation.

How should we respond? Pray. Pray for this nation that God has blessed beyond any other nation in history.

On the personal side, this series should also teach us the following:

- The way you live your life matters. Do you live what you preach, or is Sunday just a checkmark on the calendar that begins your week?
- Are you willing to stand for righteousness, or are you too afraid of the “woke” mob to make your righteousness known?
- Are you willing to stand in the gap for America? For your family? For your neighbors?

One of the saddest verses in the Bible, one where you can almost hear the sadness in God’s voice is found in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 22:30, “I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.”

Let’s not be that people who let our nation fall without at least fighting for her in prayer.