

Lesson 23: 2 Kings 24:1 to 25:30 Nebuchadnezzar Captures Jerusalem

In our last lesson we learned that **the sons of very good and devout kings** did not necessarily become good God-fearing kings themselves. The failure of just one generation can have devastating consequences. **Manasseh** was the son of **King Hezekiah**, a faithful king, and he turned out to be one of the vilest Kings of Judah. His son, King Amon also did evil in the eyes of the LORD. Then came King **Josiah**, son of Amon. Josiah was one of Judah's **most faithful kings**. The reign of **King Josiah**, and his sons, **Jehoahaz** and **Jehoiakim**, spanned a period of time from approximately 640 BC to 597 BC.

1. Read 2 Kings 24:1-9 and footnotes. Share any helpful footnotes.

a. Jehoiakim was the 18th king of Judah. His father was King Josiah, he reigned from 609-598 BC. **Jehoahaz** was the half-brother of Jehoiakim. What is the relationship of King Jehoiakim and the King of Babylon in 2 Kings 24:1?

b. Why is the LORD angry with King Jehoiakim?

c. How does the LORD show his anger in these verses? (2 Kings 24:1-9)

2. Read 2 Kings 23:31-34 below and 2 Kings 24:7 in your bible.

2 Kings 23:31-34 ³¹ Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah. ³² He did what was evil in the Lord's sight, just as his ancestors had done. ³³ Pharaoh Neco took him prisoner at Riblah in the land of Hamath, thus ending his reign in Jerusalem. He imposed a fine upon the land of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. ³⁴ Pharaoh Neco then made Eliakim, son of Josiah, king in place of Josiah his father; he changed his name to Jehoiakim. He took Jehoahaz away with him to Egypt, where he died.

a. How was Pharaoh Neco responsible for King Jehoahaz being removed from the throne? (23:31-34)

b. Look again at 2 Kings 24:7. Why was the Pharaoh no longer in the picture?

c. Jehoiachin was the son of King Jehoiakim. How long was his reign in Judah?

3. Read 2 Kings 24:10-17 and footnotes. Share any helpful footnotes.

a. Compare translations of 24:10.

b. Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon attacked Jerusalem. Did Jehoiachin put up a fight in these verses? (See 24:12)

c. What items were removed from the Temple as booty?

d. Who was sent into exile in Babylon in these verses? (See 24:14-16)

e. Who is the new king in Judah in these verses?

4. Read 2 Kings 24:18-19 and footnotes.

What do we know about this new king?

5. Read 2 Kings 25:1-7 and footnotes.

a. The king of Judah is still in Jerusalem. The Babylonians are back again.

What strategy did they use to conquer Jerusalem in these verses?

b. What does King Zedekiah seem to be doing in 25:4-6?

c. How does the King of Babylon repay Zedekiah for his actions in 25:6-7?

6. Read 2 Kings 25:8- 17 and footnotes. Share any helpful footnotes.

The city of Jerusalem is under siege again. Describe the activity of the Chaldean troops and the captain of the guard in the following verses.

25:9

25:10

25:11

25:13

25:14-15

25:16

Who was left behind and *not* taken into exile in verses 25:8-17?

7. What happened to the Ark of the Covenant? Read 2 Maccabees 2:4-7 here:

It was also in the same document that the prophet, having received an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should follow with him, and that he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God. ⁵ Jeremiah came and found a cave-dwelling, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense; then he sealed up the entrance. ⁶ Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the way, but could not find it. ⁷ When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: 'The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy.

8. Read 2 Kings 25:18-21 and footnotes.

A number of notable citizens of Jerusalem were still in the city when all this destruction was going on. Who were these people and what was their fate?

9. Read 2 Kings 25:22-26. Compare translations of 25:22.

a. Gedaliah is a man from Judah who was collaborating with the Babylonians. What is the job or title he was given?

b. Of what does Gedaliah try to convince the people who were left behind in 25:24?

c. What happened to the people who assassinated Gedaliah?

10. Read 2 Kings 25:27-30. What were the final days of King Jehoiachin (*2 Kings 24:8*) like?

Questions for Reflection:

1. What did we learn about the customs of ancient Israel from studying the Book of Ruth?

2. Ruth was a Gentile, but converted and followed the LORD. What does this say about the role of Gentiles in the LORD's plan for salvation?

3. There were only few very good kings in the Books of Kings. What do these stories say about human nature?

4. *Is it hopeful* that a few faithful leaders *did* arise *in spite* of all the cultural pressures and norms of the day?