

2 Kings 24:20b-25:30**The Fall of Jerusalem**

Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25 So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. ² The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

³ By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. ⁴ Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah, ⁵ but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, ⁶ and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him. ⁷ They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

⁸ On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, an official of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building, he burned down. ¹⁰ The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹ Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile the people who remained in the city, along with the rest of the populace and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon. ¹² But the

commander left behind some of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

¹³ The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁴ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service. ¹⁵ The commander of the imperial guard took away the censers and sprinkling bowls—all that were made of pure gold or silver.

¹⁶ The bronze from the two pillars, the Sea and the movable stands, which Solomon had made for the temple of the LORD, was more than could be weighed. ¹⁷ Each pillar was eighteen cubits high. The bronze capital on top of one pillar was three cubits high and was decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze all around. The other pillar, with its network, was similar.

¹⁸ The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers. ¹⁹ Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men, and five royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land and sixty of the conscripts who were found in the city. ²⁰ Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹ There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed.

So, Judah went into captivity, away from her land.

²² Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, to be over the people he had left behind in Judah. ²³ When all the army officers and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, Jaazaniah the son of the Maakathite, and their men. ²⁴ Gedaliah took an oath to reassure them and their men. "Do not be

afraid of the Babylonian officials," he said. "Settle down in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you."

²⁵ In the seventh month, however, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, who was of royal blood, came with ten men and assassinated Gedaliah and also the men of Judah and the Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶ At this, all the people from the least to the greatest, together with the army officers, fled to Egypt for fear of the Babylonians.

Jehoiachin Released

²⁷ In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. He did this on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month. ²⁸ He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of Honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table. ³⁰ Day by day the king gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived.

Matthew 1:1-17

The Genealogy of Jesus the Messiah

1 This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

² Abraham was the father of Isaac,

Isaac the father of Jacob,

Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

³ Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar,

Perez the father of Hezron,

Hezron the father of Ram,

⁴ Ram the father of Amminadab,

Amminadab the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon the father of Salmon,

⁵ Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab,
 Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth,
 Obed the father of Jesse,

⁶ and Jesse the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah's wife,

⁷ Solomon the father of Rehoboam,
 Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
 Abijah the father of Asa,

⁸ Asa the father of Jehoshaphat,
 Jehoshaphat the father of Jehoram,
 Jehoram the father of Uzziah,

⁹ Uzziah the father of Jotham,
 Jotham the father of Ahaz,
 Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,

¹⁰ Hezekiah the father of Manasseh,
 Manasseh the father of Amon,
 Amon the father of Josiah,

¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the
 exile to Babylon.

¹² After the exile to Babylon:

Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel,
 Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

¹³ Zerubbabel the father of Abihud,
 Abihud the father of Eliakim,
 Eliakim the father of Azor,

¹⁴ Azor the father of Zadok,
 Zadok the father of Akim,
 Akim the father of Elihud,

¹⁵ Elihud the father of Eleazar,
 Eleazar the father of Matthan,
 Matthan the father of Jacob,

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

¹⁷ Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

Sermon: A Whisper of Hope

It would be great to have your **Bibles opened** at **2 Kings chapter 25** – then we'll look at Matthew chapter 1

You have an **outline** – if you'd like to take notes. Let me **pray**...

Context/Recap

This is our final look at our journey through the book of **2 Kings**

We've looked at most of the **Kings of Israel and Judah** over the past few months

So, I thought it would be good to do a very brief recap of where we're at...

[Slide 1 – Recap]

The first King of Israel was **King Saul** (1050 BC)

God replaced King Saul with **King David** (1010 BC)

[Slide 1a-Recap]

David is described as *'a man after God's own heart'* (1 Samuel 13:14)

And **God made a promise** to **David** in 2 Samuel 7:16

¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.'"

David's son, Solomon (970 BC) **built God's temple** in Jerusalem – symbolic of God's presence with His people!

[Slide 2 – Temple]

The years of David and Solomon were **stellar years for Israel**

But with Solomon having so many wives from foreign countries – the **worship of false gods** began to creep into Israel

[Slide 3 – Kingdom Map]

After Solomon there was a **huge fall-out** – and the **12 tribes of Israel** split

10 tribes in the **North** – formed the **Northern Kingdom** – known as Israel [green]

And 2 tribes in the **South** – the tribes of **Judah and Benjamin** formed the **Southern Kingdom** – known as Judah [orange]

There were **19 kings of the Northern Kingdom** – and we looked at many of them – and they were **ALL bad** – **worshipping false gods and idols.**

God kept warning them about their sin and rebellion – but they didn't listen

[Slide 3a-Exile of North – Click]

So – we learnt 2 weeks ago that the **Northern Kingdom – Israel** – was kicked out of their own country and **exiled to Assyria** (Assyria is modern day Iraq as well as parts of Iran, Kuwait, Syria and Turkey)

But what about God's promise to King David – that there would be a forever King in David's Kingdom?

[Slide 3b-David from Judah – Click]

Well – at this stage – it's **still ok** – because David is not from the 10 tribes of the North – **David is from Judah in the South**

Now in the **Southern Kingdom** of Judah – there were **20 Kings** – and we've looked at a lot of them too – **some were bad** – and some were good – but the pattern we saw was **a pattern of false worship** – with the last 7 kings of Judah - **all being bad except one**.

The false worship that was happening in the North – **was now in Judah as well** – and **God kept warning Judah about it** – but they didn't listen either.

Some kings attempted to get back to worshipping God alone – but the **next King** came along and undid it again!

[Slide 4-Last 3 Kings of Judah]

The **last 3 kings of Judah** were:

Jehoiakim – he was an **evil king** – and during his reign **King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded Judah**. Jehoiakim died and was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin

Jehoiachin – he was just like his father Jehoiakim – and was **taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar and taken to Babylon** [remember Jehoiachin for later]

Nebuchadnezzar then made Jehoiachin's uncle - King of Judah – the uncle's name was Mattaniah but Nebuchadnezzar changed it to **Zedekiah**.

Zedekiah was also an **evil king**!

Zedekiah's Rebellion (2 Kings 24:20b-25:2)

And that brings us to today's reading

Verse 20b of chapter 24

And we see that **Zedekiah rebelled** against the King of Babylon

Probably **not the wisest move** on Zedekiah's part

And so, **King Nebuchadnezzar laid siege** on Jerusalem – chapter 25 verses 1 and 2
- for 2 years

Now remember Babylon is invading Judah – because - **God has allowed Babylon to be His instrument of judgment** on Judah – because - king after king after king of Judah had continually rebelled against God

God will not - and - cannot - stand by and watch sin go unpunished

Why? Because **He is a holy holy holy God** and **He cannot** look at sin (Hab 1:13)

Even when God forgives us of our sin **there are consequences**

If we steal and repent – **we may still go to jail for stealing!**

If we lie and repent – **the lies we've told might have affected lots of people and this might affect our trustworthiness in the future!**

There are always consequences for our wrong choices!

Consequences of Zedekiah's Rebellion (2 Kings 25:3-7)

Likewise, there are **consequences for Zedekiah's Rebellion** – in verses 3 to 7

[Slide 5-Consequences]

There's a **famine in the city** and **no food for the people**

Even though the **remaining army broke through the city walls** and **escaped** – they were **chased down by the Babylonians and captured**

The **sons of Zedekiah were killed before his eyes** and then **Zedekiah was blinded and taken to Babylon in chains**

The fact that Zedekiah's sons were killed – also prevents any possibility of Zedekiah's sons becoming kings of Judah in the future

God's promise to King David **is looking like it's going to fail!**

And notice that Zedekiah's rebellion has not only affected himself but the **people of Jerusalem and Judah – and his sons!**

OUR bad choices can sometimes not **only affect ourselves** but **others** around us

Perhaps we can sometimes be **“blind”** to the consequences of our bad choices?

(pause)

The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (2 Kings 25:8-21)

The **consequences continue** in verses 8 to 21

[Slide 6 – Destruction]

God's temple that Solomon built **was burned down (587-586BC)**

Along with the **King's palace, houses and important buildings**

The **walls of Jerusalem** were **demolished**

And the **people** were **exiled to Babylon**

The Temple being demolished and the people being exiled is **symbolic of God removing them from His presence**

God is still their God – but there are consequences for their continued sin and rebellion.

Sin exiles people from God.

Even we are in spiritual exile from God because of our sin and rebellion.

Just like the people of Israel and Judah – we need to repent – and come back to God – and **make Him our number one priority** – not our last resort!

With the last King of Judah exiled – **God's promise to King David is looking seriously in jeopardy!**

Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians haven't finished with Jerusalem – yet!

Look at verses 13 to 16

[Slide 7 – Bronze taken]

The **Babylonians took all the bronze** [The Sea and the Pillars] – plus anything made of silver and gold.

The whole place was **ransacked**

Then in verses 17 to 21 - those who remained in the city who still hadn't been exiled to Babylon

Like **Seraiah** the high priest, **Zephaniah** the priest and **doorkeepers** plus the **officer in charge of fighting men** and **royal advisers** and **60 conscripts** hiding in the city – they were all taken to the King of Babylon in the Jordan Valley and executed.

[Slide 8 – Exiled!]

There we have it – **Judah suffers the same fate as Israel** – and is also exiled!

How can God's promise to King David – of a forever Kingdom - still happen now?

Hope Amidst the Desolation (2 Kings 25:22-30)

In verses 22 to 26, we have a whisper of hope

[Slide 9 – Hope amidst the desolation]

Nebuchadnezzar appoints Gedaliah as governor over the people left behind in Judah.

The idea was to give some stability to Judah – and **Gedaliah is basically a puppet governor for Babylon.**

Gedaliah advises those people remaining to settle down and serve the King of Babylon and it will go well for them

But Gedaliah is met with opposition by those opposing Babylonian rule – and **a guy called Ishmael (v25) who is of royal blood** – assassinates Gedaliah and the men of Judah and the Babylonians who were with Gedaliah

This allows the remaining people to flee to safety in Egypt.

What we have is a remnant of people from Judah fleeing to Egypt

As well as those from Judah who have been exiled to Babylon!

Perhaps God's promise to David of a forever Kingdom - is still alive?

There is a whisper of hope!

(pause)

Some time passes

[Slide 10 – Hope amidst the desolation]

And we find in v27 – another whisper of hope!

After 37 years of exile – remember King Jehoiachin – I told you to remember him earlier!

Well - there's now a new King of Babylon called **Awel-Marduk**

And **King Awel-Marduk** releases Jehoiachin from prison

And **gives Jehoiachin a seat of honour** – higher than any of the other kings held in Babylon

Jehoiachin no longer **has to wear prison clothes** – instead he is allowed to dine at the King of Babylon's table – and he is **given a regular allowance!**

This is an **amazing turnaround!**

And the writer of 2 Kings **includes this little end story** to show that

God is in control – and **does things in His own perfect way** – and in His own perfect timing.

It took 37 years for this turnaround – so don't be surprised - **when God makes us wait. He KNOWS what He's doing!**

The fact that Jehoiachin is still alive and thriving – means David's family line is still going – and God's promise to David is still in play – and there is still a whisper of hope

We fast forward now from 587BC to the time of our Lord Jesus (about 4BC)

The Hope We Have (Matthew 1:1-17)

And we pick up our NT reading from **Matthew 1:1-17**

[\[Please turn there now\]](#)

And here we have a family tree that goes from Abraham to Jesus' earthly Father Joseph

[Slide 11 – Family Tree]

And importantly – in our reading from Matthew 1 – verses 11 to 16 – show that David's family line continued even though Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) was exiled to Babylon – Here in Matthew 1 - we have a list of descendants that continued from Jehoiachin in Exile - all the way to Joseph

God DID keep His promise to King David

Because - Jesus is no ordinary descendant of David – Jesus is the Son of God – He is the Promised Messiah/Christ – and He is alive and lives forever!

And UNLIKE all those Kings of Israel and Judah we looked at – JESUS ALWAYS DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN THE EYES OF THE LORD.

And because Jesus is perfect in every way – and **SINLESS**

This whisper of hope – becomes more than a whisper!

Here's **3 reasons why Jesus is more than a whisper of hope**

[Slide 12-3 reasons]

1st – Jesus gives us a way out of the spiritual exile we are in - because of our sin.

Jesus came to die on a cruel cross to take away the punishment for sin –and to offer forgiveness to all who believe in Him. And then He rose 3 days after his death – to offer all who believe in Him eternal life in a Promised Land called Heaven. As the Apostle Paul puts it in Colossians 1:13-14:

¹³ God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son [Jesus] he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

2nd – When Jehoiachin was released from prison **he took off his prison clothes and put on royal clothes.** Because of Jesus – we too – can take off our sinful prison clothes and put on Jesus' clothes of righteousness – so that when God looks at us – He doesn't see us as sinful – but He sees Jesus standing in front of us. Here's how the Apostle Paul puts it in Galatians 3:26-27

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

3rd – The physical temple of Jerusalem was destroyed. But according to the Apostle Peter – when we believe in Jesus – we are part of a **spiritual temple** that can **never be destroyed** – where WE are living stones attached to Jesus the cornerstone.

Here's how Peter describes it and we'll finish with that – 1 Peter 2:4-5

*⁴ As you come to him, the living **Stone** [Jesus]—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— ⁵ you also, like living **stones**, are being built into a **spiritual house** to be a **holy priesthood**, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

What Peter is telling us is – by being part of this spiritual house/temple – **we are meant to be priests** – offering **spiritual sacrifices** (rather than animal sacrifices like

the Old Testament priests did) **we offer spiritual sacrifices that are pleasing to God.** What are these spiritual sacrifices? Well certainly – things like - **acts of worship, obedience, prayer and serving God and His people.**

But one other thing that will please God is for us **to tell those who don't know Jesus about the hope we have in Jesus!**

More about **this hope** next week.

Let's pray...

Father God, we thank you that you always keep your promises

We thank you that Jesus gives us a way out of the spiritual exile we are in because of our sin, through His death and resurrection.

We thank you that we can take off our sinful prison clothes and clothe ourselves in Jesus' righteousness.

And thank you that we are part of a spiritual temple that can never be destroyed, where we are living stones attached to Jesus, the cornerstone.

Help us to be diligent in pleasing you by telling people who don't know Jesus – about the hope we have in Him! In His name we pray, Amen.