

Introduction

In our last two **BIBLE** studies we have been looking at **THE EVIL REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH** who was **JUDAH'S** final king to reign leading up to the last invasion and the **DESTRUCTION** of **JERUSALEM** at the hands of the **BABYLONIANS!**

We first looked at a **VISION** the **LORD** gave the **PROPHET JEREMIAH** in **JEREMIAH 24** in the early part of **ZEDEKIAH'S** reign — the **PARABLE OF THE FIGS.**

That **PROPHECY** was designed to **ENCOURAGE** the despairing exiles in **BABYLON**, while at the same time **REPROVE ZEDEKIAH** and the people who were still in **JUDAH** who prided themselves as being superior to those who had been carried away into **BABYLON.**

We saw **JEREMIAH 29:1-14** contains the message that **JEREMIAH** sent to the **CAPTIVES** in **BABYLON** from the **LORD** telling them to settle in for a long **CAPTIVITY.**

Then in our last study we saw **GOD'S WARNING TO ZEDEKIAH AND JUDAH AND THE SURROUNDING NATIONS NOT TO REBEL AGAINST THE BABYLONIAN KINGS BUT RATHER TO SUBMIT TO THEM! (JEREMIAH 27)**

We also saw a **CONFLICT BETWEEN HANANIAH THE FALSE PROPHET and JEREMIAH THE TRUE PROPHET! (JEREMIAH 28)**

Let's move forward in the story and see what transpired:

I. WE SEE ZEDEKIAH AND THE NATION OF JUDAH REBELLED AGAINST THE KING OF BABYLON. (2 KINGS 24:20)

In spite of all the **LORD'S** warnings to **ZEDEKIAH** by the mouth of **JEREMIAH** the **PROPHET**, he **REBELLED** against **BABYLON!**

And, as we shall see, it did not go well for **ZEDEKIAH** or **JUDAH!**

II. WE SEE NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S ANSWER TO THE REBELLION! (2 KINGS 25:1-2; JEREMIAH 34:1)

NEBUCHADNEZZAR quickly answered the rebellion by launching a massive campaign against the tiny kingdom of **JUDAH!**

This time **NEBUCHADNEZZAR** brought the full force of his army and the armies in his empire down upon rebellious **JUDAH!**

III. WE SEE ZEDEKIAH'S HOPE FOR HELP FROM THE LORD! Jeremiah 21:1-2

ZEDEKIAH sent messengers to **JEREMIAH** hoping for a miracle. But there would be **no DIVINE** reprieve for **JERUSALEM** as there had been in the days of **HEZEKIAH.**

Jeremiah 21:3-7

Instead, we see that the **LORD** announced that any defense of the city would be useless, because **HE** was the **ONE WHO** fought against **JERUSALEM.**

ZEDEKIAH and the inhabitants of **JERUSALEM** and **JUDAH** would be delivered into the hands of **NEBUCHADNEZZAR!**

Jeremiah 21:8-10

The only hope that was offered to the people here was to those who were **willing to surrender.**

Jeremiah 21:11-14

As for **ZEDEKIAH**, who was seeking for **DIVINE** intervention while he was actively rebelling against the **LORD**, **there would be no help! There would be no escape!**

IV. WE SEE THE LORD'S WORD AGAINST ZEDEKIAH!

Jeremiah 34:2

As **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S** forces were surrounding and besieging **JERUSALEM** and systematically conquering the fortified cities of **JUDAH**, the **LORD** had a **MESSAGE** for **KING ZEDEKIAH!**

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
THE EVIL REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH-PART 3
2 KINGS 24:20; 25:1-2; JEREMIAH 21; 34; 37

JERUSALEM would be given over to the king of **BABYLON** and he would burn it with fire!

Jeremiah 34:3-7

Instead of escaping, **JEREMIAH** told **ZEDEKIAH** that he would have a face-to-face meeting with **NEBUCHADNEZZAR**.

JEREMIAH also told **ZEDEKIAH** that he would not die in the heat of a battle, but in peace.

Jeremiah 34:8-22 (*I'm not going to read these, but summarize them.*)

It seems that during the early days of the siege **ZEDEKIAH** issued a decree to free all the **HEBREW** slaves. All the people initially obeyed the decree and then something happened to make them change their minds and they put them back into bondage.

Maybe that was done in an effort to entreat the **LORD'S** favor. [The **LORD** did say it was the right thing to do. (*Vs. 15*)]

What may have happened to change everyone's mind was a sudden withdrawal of **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S** army. Because according to **Jeremiah 37:5, 11**, the **BABYLONIAN** army left the siege briefly to fight off an **EGYPTIAN** invasion which was probably the result of an alliance forged by **ZEDEKIAH** with the **EGYPTIAN PHARAOH**. (*Cf. Ezekiel 17:11-21*)

Whatever the case, the **LORD** sent **JEREMIAH** with a rebuke for the people for breaking their covenant with the freed slaves.

The **LORD** told them that **NEBUCHADNEZZAR** would be returning soon to burn the city with fire and remove its inhabitants.

V. WE SEE ZEDEKIAH REQUESTED PRAYER OF JEREMIAH!

During that same time, **ZEDEKIAH** sent messengers to **JEREMIAH** asking the **PROPHET** to **PRAY** for **JUDAH**. (*Jeremiah 37:3*)

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The **LORD** had previously told **JEREMIAH** not to bother praying for these people because **HE** would not listen! (*Jeremiah 7:16*)

Jeremiah 7:16—“Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee.”

Instead, **JEREMIAH** sent **ZEDEKIAH** a message of doom!

Jeremiah 37:6-10

NEBUCHADNEZZAR was going to return!

There was no saving the city of **JERUSALEM**!

Even if only the wounded were left among the **BABYLONIANS**, they would rise up and take the city!

VI. WE SEE JEREMIAH'S ARREST AND MISTREATMENT!

Jeremiah 37:11-15

While **NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S** forces were withdrawn, **JEREMIAH** went into the land of **BENJAMIN**, but was arrested on false charges of defecting to the **BABYLONIANS**!

He was **physically smitten and injured** in some way and then **imprisoned** by some of the princes of **JUDAH**.

VII. WE SEE ZEDEKIAH'S SECRET MEETING WITH

JEREMIAH! Jeremiah 37:16-21

While **JEREMIAH** was in prison, **ZEDEKIAH** arranged a secret meeting with him to ask if there was any **WORD from THE LORD**.

JEREMIAH assured him that there was a **WORD from THE LORD**. **It was the same WORD that ZEDEKIAH had been given before and had ignored!**

It was as if this indecisive king seemed to expect the **LORD** to be just as fickle as he was.

Conclusion

Well, that's all we have time for this evening. But, we have at least one more message on the time of **ZEDEKIAH'S** reign!