

BOOK OF 2 KINGS
THE EVIL REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ
2 KINGS 23:30b-34; 2 CHRONICLES 36:1-4

Introduction

We last looked at **JOSIAH** king of **JUDAH** who was the godliest of all of the kings of **JUDAH**!

As I was looking more into **JOSIAH'S** background to find out what set him apart from his predecessors, I found that he had some **godly influences early in his childhood and on into his reign as he assumed the throne at age 8.**

According to some **JEWISH HISTORY** that I found, **JOSIAH had some very eminent teachers who influenced him** such that he developed into the **GOD-fearing person that he was!** Some of these folks we have already seen:

1. **HILKIAH**, the **HIGH PRIEST** (who was the great-grandfather of **EZRA** the **SCRIBE.**) (**22:8**)
2. **SHAPHAN** the **SCRIBE** (**22:8**), and his son **AHIKAM.** (**22:12**)
3. **SHALLUM** who had a prominent position in the palace as the keeper of the king's wardrobe and his wife, **HULDAH** the **PROPHETESS** who worked in the **COLLEGE** in **JERUSALEM** **teaching women.** (**22:14**)

As I was looking more at who she was, I found some more interesting information in **JEWISH HISTORY** about her. It seems that **HULDAH** took care of **JOSIAH** in his early childhood.

In the **JEWISH TALMUD**, it is stated that **HULDAH** was a relative of the **PROPHET JEREMIAH**. She was a descendant of **JOSHUA** the son of **NUN** (of the tribe of **EPHRAIM**).

The PROPHET JEREMIAH was also a descendant of **JOSHUA**—on his mother's side. On his father's side, **JEREMIAH** was a **PRIEST**, the son of another **PRIEST** named **HILKIAH**, who was a **PRIEST** of **ANATHOTH**, who came from a long line of **PRIESTS** going back to **AARON** (of the tribe of **LEVI**).

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4. The **PROPHET ZEPHANIAH** was a prominent **PROPHET** who prophesied during **JOSIAH'S** reign! (**Zephaniah 1:1**)
He would have had the king's ear. Then last, but not least:
5. **JEREMIAH** the **PROPHET** prophesied during the reigns of the last five kings of **JUDAH**. He began prophesying during the **13th year** of **JOSIAH'S** reign according **Jeremiah 1:2** which would have been the year after **JOSIAH** began to purge **JUDAH** and **JERUSALEM** from anything and everything associated with idolatry according to **2 Chronicles 34:3-7.**

JEREMIAH had a great influence on the young **KING JOSIAH** and as we saw last week **JEREMIAH** lamented the death of his king who had been instrumental in bringing reforms to the nation of **JUDAH!**

Now, understand that I started to incorporate both **ZEPHANIAH'S PROPHECIES** and **JEREMIAH'S PROPHECIES** into our messages here but there is so much there that it would greatly prolong our being able to finish **2 KINGS** in a timely fashion.

So I felt compelled to go ahead and finish **2 KINGS** first, then, **LORD willing**, we will go to the **BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH** first and see what he had to say during **JOSIAH'S** reign. And then, **LORD willing**, we will go to **JEREMIAH** and look at **HIS PROPHECIES** during the reigns **JOSIAH** and each of the last four kings of **JUDAH!**

So, what we are looking at as we close out **2 KINGS** will directly relate to a lot of what we will see in the **BOOKS OF ZEPHANIAH AND JEREMIAH** if and when we get there!

In those books, we will be referring back to what we are seeing toward the end of **JOSIAH'S** reign **all the way through the next four kings on into the BABYLONIAN EXILE.**

I will make some exceptions along the way and look at **JEREMIAH** to see some portions of **PROPHECIES** related to these kings.

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So tonight, **WE BEGIN TO LOOK AT JUDAH'S JUDGMENT AS WE LOOK AT HER LAST FOUR KINGS:**

WE SEE THE EVIL REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ AND HIS CAPTIVITY AND DEATH IN EGYPT! (2 Kings 23:30b-34; 2 Chronicles 36:1-4)

I. JEHOAHAZ WAS THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE TO REPLACE JOSIAH HIS FATHER! (2 Kings 23:30b; 2 Chronicles 36:1)

It says in *verse 30b* that, *"the people of the land took JEHOAHAZ the son of JOSIAH and made him king in his father's stead."*

JEHOAHAZ'S name is omitted from among those of our LORD'S ancestors in *Matthew 1*, which may indicate that the LORD did not recognize him! **He was the people's choice, but not the LORD'S!**

One thing that is unusual in his being chosen is that **normally** the **FIRSTBORN** by **BIRTHRIGHT** would ascend to the throne, but **JEHOAHAZ** was the **YOUNGEST** of the four sons of **JOSIAH!**

The name **JEHOAHAZ** means *"JEHOVAH upholds, hath laid hold, or has seized"* and is believed to be his throne name. *(We are not told, but maybe it was a name he gave himself or one that was given to him by the people to make him sound like he was a man of the LORD like his father was, but he wasn't anything at all like his dad!)*

JEHOAHAZ'S personal given name was SHALLUM! (*1 Chronicles 3:15; Jeremiah 22:11*). The name **SHALLUM** means *"recompense, retribution, or spoilation"*

II. JEHOAHAZ WAS TWENTY-THREE YEARS OLD WHEN HE BEGAN TO REIGN AND HE ONLY REIGNED THREE MONTHS. (2 Kings 23:31; 2 Chronicles 36:2)

III. JEHOAHAZ DID EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD! (2 Kings 23:32)

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The reforms of **King JOSIAH** were wonderful while they lasted, but they were **short-lived** as was the **REVIVAL** in **JUDAH**.

JOSIAH'S own son **JEHOAHAZ** did not follow in his father's godly ways. *(We are not told why, but it might be the fact that **JOSIAH** fathered his son at such a young age. Or it may have had something to do with who his mother was!)*

IV. AS FOR JUDAH, AS THE LEADERSHIP WENT, SO NORMALLY DID THE NATION AS A WHOLE!

With **JOSIAH** off the scene, **JUDAH** didn't have any problem going back to their **old idolatrous, ungodly ways** as their **HEARTS** were never really into all that **REVIVAL** stuff in **JOSIAH'S** reign and all those restricting **REFORMS** that he instituted with it!

All of this just hastened some of the earlier **JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD** that eventually led to the **JUDGMENTS OF THE LORD** that had already been pronounced against them in the days of **MANASSEH**. We were reminded last week that the **LORD** had not forgotten about it his declarations against them! (*1 Kings 23:26-27*)

Now some might say *"Hey wait a minute preacher! What about the LORD'S promise to HIS people in 2 Chronicles 7:14? Why didn't that come into play since **JOSIAH** and **JUDAH** turned back to the LORD in his day? Have you thought about that?"* **I have.**

Let me address that as simply as I know how to do it:

It goes to **JUDAH'S** heart! The **LORD** said that he would **NOT** bring the evil in **JOSIAH'S** day because of his **HEART** toward the **LORD!** (*2 Kings 22:19-20*)

SCRIPTURE shows that the **REVIVAL** that came under **JOSIAH** came from **HIS HEART** and **HE WAS SINCERE** about it! However, the **REVIVAL** was **NOT** in the **HEARTS** of the majority of the people of the nation of **JUDAH** other than the **REMNANT!**

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The nation of **JUDAH**, by-and-large was just going through the motions of her leader! For the vast majority of them, their **HEARTS** were just as wicked as ever before and it showed up in how quickly they turned back to their old ways after **JOSIAH'S** death!

V. THE PROPHECY OF JEREMIAH AGAINST SHALLUM (JEHOAHAZ)! (Jeremiah 22:1-12; esp. vs. 10-12)

Regarding verses 1-2

This section is addressed to the **KING OF JUDAH**, his **SERVANTS**, and the **PEOPLE OF JUDAH**! Since no king is mentioned by name, this could have applied to any of the last four kings. However, it is believed to have been written to **ZEDEKIAH**.

Regarding verses 3-5:

The **LORD** called for them to “Execute judgment and righteousness,” and to deliver the oppressed and do no wrong to them (*the stranger, the fatherless, the widow*) and to not shed innocent blood in the land. That is what would allow the nation to continue. (*Vs 4*)

The people of **JUDAH** had mistakenly placed their faith in the institution of the **DAVIDIC KINGSHIP** instead of in the **LORD**! But the **LORD** is saying here that even a **DAVIDIC KING** cannot expect **DIVINE** blessing when he oppresses his people!

Regarding verse 6:

“*Thou art GILEAD to me...*” **GILEAD** was a fertile region east of the **JORDAN RIVER**. Metaphorically, **GILEAD** and **LEBANON** represented desirable and profitable property.

“*...and the head of the LEBANON...*” **LEBANON** was a heavily forested mountainous region north of **ISRAEL** that was famous for its abundance of natural resources (especially timber) and rugged beauty.

Regarding verse 7:

LEBANON is a metaphor for **JUDAH**, and cutting down the best cedar trees represents the destruction of its most cherished institutions

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—the royal line of **DAVID** and the **TEMPLE** of **JEHOVAH**.

Regarding verse 8-9:

We see the **JERUSALEM** would become a gazingstock as people pass by it and wonder why the **LORD** destroyed the great city. The answer is found in them having forsaken the **LORD** for idols.

Regarding verses 10-12

Verse 10a refers to **JOSIAH** who was not coming back from death! *Verse 10b-12* refer to **JEHOAHAZ (SHALLUM)** who was **NOT** coming back from **EGYPT**, but die there!

VI. JEHOAHAZ'S CAPTURE, IMPRISONMENT, EXILE, AND DEATH! (2 Kings 23:33-34; 2 Chronicles 36:3-4)

After the defeat of King **JOSIAH** in battle, **PHARAOH NECHO** of **EGYPT** was able to dominate **JUDAH** and make it effectively a vassal kingdom and a buffer against the growing **BABYLONIAN EMPIRE**.

NECHO removed **JEHOAHAZ** from the throne, put bands on him, and carried him away bound to **EGYPT** where he died.

(Just as **JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY** from the **LORD** said!)

NECHO then imposed on the land a heavy tribute and put on the throne of **JUDAH** a puppet king, a brother of **JEHOAHAZ** who was born with the name **ELIAKIM**, but renamed **JEHOIAKIM**).

ELIAKIM means “*GOD is setting up or GOD doth establish.*”

JEHOIAKIM means “*JEHOVAH sets up.*”

But we will delve into the life and reign of **JEHOIAKIM** next week, **LORD** willing as that concludes our **BIBLE STUDY** on **JEHOAHAZ** for this evening!