

Jerusalem's Fall

2 Kings 24:18-25:9
SS Lesson for 11/09/2025

Devotional Scriptures: 2 Kings 22:16-20

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: 2 Kings 24:20

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

FALL BECAUSE OF AN EVIL KING (2 KINGS 24:18-20)

Evil in the sight of God (18-19)

- Evil because of not being humble upon hearing the word of God (2 Chron 36:12)
- Evil because of not seeking God (2 Chron 12:14)
- Evil because of doing detestable practices (2 Chron 33:2)
- Evil because of practicing witchcraft (2 Chron 33:6)

Evil causing God's anger (20)

- God's anger because of complaining (Num 11:1)
- God's anger because of greed (Num 11:32-33)
- God's anger because of rebellion (Num 32:11-13)
- God's anger because of idolatry (Deut 4:25)

FALL BECAUSE OF RECKLESS REBELLION (2 KINGS 25:1-5)

Rebellion causing being encamped (1-2)

- Encampment because of disobedience (Jer 32:23-24)
- Encampment as a sign from God (Ezek 4:2-4)
- Encampment to remind of guilt (Ezek 21:22-23)
- Encampment because of not recognizing God's presence (Luke 19:43-44)

Rebellion causing famine (3)

- Famine to cause a move (Gen 12:10)
- Famine to cause one to seek God's face (2 Sam 21:1)
- Famine because of not fearing God (Ps 33:18-19)
- Famine but not separation from Jesus' love (Rom 8:35)

Rebellion causing Destruction (4-5)

- Destruction by the Almighty God (Isa 13:6)
- Destruction because of man's sinful nature (Gal 6:8)
- Destruction by a just God (2 Thess 1:6-9)
- Destruction of the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7)

FALL RESULTING IN HARSH RESULTS (2 KINGS 24:6-9)

Results of judgment (6)

- Judgment for stubbornness and unrepentant hearts (Rom 2:5)
- Judgment because all must appear before the judgment seat of God (2 Cor 5:10)
- Judgment because it is destined for man to face judgment (Heb 9:27)
- Judgment, but know that God knows how to rescue the godly (2 Peter 2:9)

Results of deaths (7)

- Death as the result of sin (Rom 6:23)
- Death because of being slaves to sin (Rom 6:16)
- Death because of idolatry (Deut 30:17-20)
- Death so that man's spirit will be saved (1 Cor 5:3-5)

Results of temple being destroyed (8-9)

- Temple destroyed because of despising God's messengers (2 Chron 36:16-19)
- Temple destroyed because of sins (Isa 64:9-11)
- Temple destroyed because of wickedness (Jer 7:12-14)
- Temple destroyed because of ungodly leaders (Mic 3:11-12)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM THOMAS CONSTABLE

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Today's text takes us to the time frame of 597-586 BC. Many centuries had passed since Moses warned the Israelites of the consequences of breaking God's covenant (Deuteronomy 29:9-28; 30:15-18). The prophets reminded Israel and Judah of the coming judgment (2 Kings 24:2). The exile of the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC had proven the prophets' warnings true (17:3-23). Now Judah too would face God's judgment. The blame for the tragedy in today's text is most directly traced to the nation's line of leadership. Were we to draw a "good and evil" timeline of Judah's 20 rulers since the beginning of the divided monarchy in the tenth century BC (1 Kings 12), we would see startling swings from evil to good and back again to evil. Today's lesson introduces us to the last in that line of 20 kings, a man named Zedekiah. Zedekiah's father, Josiah, was the last godly king of Judah (2 Kings 22:1-23:28). Josiah had four sons, Zedekiah being the third (1 Chronicles 3:15). Zedekiah might never have been king were it not for the untimely death of his father in battle (2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 35:20-24; compare Jeremiah 46:2). Following Josiah's death, his ungodly son Jehoahaz (also known as Shallum, 1 Chronicles 3:15; Jeremiah 22:11-12) ruled briefly before being deported to Egypt by Pharaoh (2 Kings 23:30-33). Concurrently, Pharaoh installed Eliakim, another son of Josiah, as king, changing his name to Jehoiakim (23:34). When Jehoiakim died 11 years later, he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin (24:1-6). By that time the Babylonians were on the march, overtaking Jerusalem a scant three months after Jehoiachin's ascent to the throne. The Babylonians installed one of his relatives, Mattaniah, in his place as king (2 Kings 24:8-17), renaming him Zedekiah. The first three verses of our lesson's text are worded almost identically to that of Jeremiah 52:1-3 and are very similar to 2 Chronicles 36:11-13.

Key Verse: 2 Kings 24:20

For because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Fall because of an Evil King (2 Kings 24:18-20)

24:18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

19 He also did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

20 For because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, that He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Evil in the sight of God (18-19)

Evil because of not being humble upon hearing the word of God (2 Chron 36:12)

12 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord his God and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke the word of the Lord.

Evil because of not seeking God (2 Chron 12:14)

14 He did evil because he had not set his heart on seeking the Lord.

Evil because of doing detestable practices (2 Chron 33:2)

2 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, following the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.

Evil because of practicing witchcraft (2 Chron 33:6)

6 He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger.

Evil causing God's anger (20)

God's anger because of complaining (Num 11:1)

11 Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.

God's anger because of greed (Num 11:32-33)

32 All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers. Then they spread them out all around the camp. 33 But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the Lord burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague.

God's anger because of rebellion (Num 32:11-13)

11 'Because they have not followed me wholeheartedly, not one of the men twenty years old or more who came up out of Egypt will see the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, 12 not one except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they followed the Lord wholeheartedly.' 13 The Lord's anger burned against Israel and he made them wander in the desert forty years, until the whole generation of those who had done evil in his sight was gone.

God's anger because of idolatry (Deut 4:25)

25 After you have had children and grandchildren and have lived in the land a long time — if you then become corrupt and make any kind of idol, doing evil in the eyes of the Lord your God and provoking him to anger,

Fall because of Reckless Rebellion (2 Kings 25:1-5)

25:1 Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around.

2 So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

3 By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

4 Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city. And the king went by way of the plain.

5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him.

Rebellion causing being encamped (1-2)

Encampment because of disobedience (Jer 32:23-24)

23 They came in and took possession of it, but they did not obey you or follow your law; they did not do what you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster upon them. 24 "See how the siege ramps are built up to take the city. Because of the sword, famine and plague, the city will be handed over to the Babylonians who are attacking it. What you said has happened, as you now see.

Encampment as a sign from God (Ezek 4:2-4)

2 Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it. 3 Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

Encampment to remind of guilt (Ezek 21:22-23)

22 Into his right hand will come the lot for Jerusalem, where he is to set up battering rams, to give the command to slaughter, to sound the battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to build a ramp and to erect siege works. 23 It will seem like a false omen to those who have sworn allegiance to him, but he will remind them of their guilt and take them captive.

Encampment because of not recognizing God's presence (Luke 19:43-44)

43 The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. 44 They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

Rebellion causing famine (3)

Famine to cause a move (Gen 12:10)

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe.

Famine to cause one to seek God's face (2 Sam 21:1)

1 During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years; so David sought the face of the Lord. The Lord said, "It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death."

Famine because of not fearing God (Ps 33:18-19)

18 But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, 19 to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

Famine but not separation from Jesus' love (Rom 8:35)

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Rebellion causing Destruction (4-5)

Destruction by the Almighty God (Isa 13:6)

6 Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

Destruction because of man's sinful nature (Gal 6:8)

8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Destruction by a just God (2 Thess 1:6-9)

6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

Destruction of the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7)

7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

Fall Resulting in Harsh Results (2 Kings 24:6-9)

6 So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they pronounced judgment on him.
7 Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.

8 And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

9 He burned the house of the Lord and the king's house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire.

Results of judgment (6)

Judgment for stubbornness and unrepentant hearts (Rom 2:5)

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

Judgment because all must appear before the judgment seat of God (2 Cor 5:10)

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Judgment because it is destined for man to face judgment (Heb 9:27)

27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

Judgment, but know that God knows how to rescue the godly (2 Peter 2:9)

9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

Results of deaths (7)

Death as the result of sin (Rom 6:23)

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Death because of being slaves to sin (Rom 6:16)

16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Death because of idolatry (Deut 30:17-20)

17 But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, 18 I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Death so that man's spirit will be saved (1 Cor 5:3-5)

3 Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. 4 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, 5 hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

Results of temple being destroyed (8-9)

Temple destroyed because of despising God's messengers (2 Chron 36:16-19)

16 But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord was aroused against his people and there was no remedy. 17 He brought up against them the king of the Babylonians, who killed their young men with the sword in the sanctuary, and spared neither young man nor young woman, old man or aged. God handed all of them over to Nebuchadnezzar. 18 He carried to Babylon all the articles from the temple of God, both large and small, and the treasures of the Lord's temple and the treasures of the king and his officials. 19 They set fire to God's temple and broke down the wall of Jerusalem; they burned all the palaces and destroyed everything of value there.

Temple destroyed because of sins (Isa 64:9-11)

9 Do not be angry beyond measure, O Lord; do not remember our sins forever. Oh, look upon us, we pray, for we are all your people. 10 Your sacred cities have become a desert; even Zion is a desert, Jerusalem a desolation. 11 Our holy and glorious temple, where our fathers praised you, has been burned with fire, and all that we treasured lies in ruins.

Temple destroyed because of wickedness (Jer 7:12-14)

12 "Go now to the place in Shiloh where I first made a dwelling for my Name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. 13 While you were doing all these things, declares the Lord, I spoke to you again and again, but you did not listen; I called you, but you did not answer. 14 Therefore, what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that bears my Name, the temple you trust in, the place I gave to you and your fathers.

Temple destroyed because of ungodly leaders (Mic 3:11-12)

11 Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the Lord and say, "Is not the Lord among us? No disaster will come upon us." 12 Therefore because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Thomas Constable

F. Jehoiakim's Evil Reign 23:36-24:7

Jehoiakim, formerly named Eliakim, reigned as a puppet king for 11 years (609-598 B.C.). He was a weak ruler who did not stand up for Judah's interests against her hostile enemies.

In 605 B.C. Prince Nebuchadnezzar led the Babylonian army of his father Nabopolassar against the allied forces of Assyria and Egypt and defeated them at Carchemish. This victory, as previously explained, gave Babylon supremacy in the ancient Near East. With Babylon's victory Egypt's vassals, including Judah, came under Babylon's control. Shortly after that event, in the same year that Nabopolassar died, Nebuchadnezzar succeeded him. Nebuchadnezzar then moved south and invaded Judah (605 B.C.). He took some captives to Babylon including Daniel (Daniel 1:1-3). This was the first of Judah's three deportations in which the Babylonians took groups of Judahites to Babylon.

Jehoiakim submitted to Nebuchadnezzar for three years but then rebelled. He appealed to Egypt for help unsuccessfully (2 Kings 24:1; 2 Kings 24:7). Foreign raiders who sought to take advantage of her weakened condition besieged Judah (2 Kings 24:2). The Babylonians then took Jehoiakim to Babylon (2 Chronicles 36:6). Later they allowed him to return to Jerusalem where he died (Jeremiah 22:19).

Jehoiakim did little to postpone God's judgment on Judah for her previous sins. The prophet Jeremiah despised him for his wickedness (Jeremiah 22:18-19; Jeremiah 26:20-23; Jeremiah 36).

G. Jehoiachin's Evil Reign 24:8-17

Jehoiakim's son Jehoiachin, whose other names were Jeconiah and Coniah, succeeded him on the throne but only reigned for three months (598-597 B.C.). When Nebuchadnezzar's troops were besieging Jerusalem, the Babylonian king personally visited Judah's capital, and Jehoiachin surrendered to him (2 Kings 24:12). The

invasion fulfilled the Lord's warning to Solomon about apostasy in 1 Kings 9:6-9. A large deportation of Judah's population followed in 597 B.C. None of Jehoiachin's sons ruled Judah, as Jeremiah had prophesied (Jeremiah 22:30). Rather, Nebuchadnezzar set up Jehoiakim's younger brother, Mattaniah, on the throne as his puppet, and exercised his sovereign prerogative by changing his name to Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17). The Jewish people, however, seem to have continued to regard Jehoiachin as the rightful heir to David's throne until his death. [Note: William Albright, "Seal of Eliakim," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 (1932):91-92. Cf. 25:27-30.]

H. Zedekiah's Evil Reign 24:18-25:7

Zedekiah (Mattaniah) was Josiah's third son to rule over Judah. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:20) by making a treaty with Pharaoh Hophra (589-570 B.C.), being pressured by nationalists in Judah (cf. Jeremiah 37-38).

"Clearly, he lacks the moral fiber to be more than what he is, a man who gauges each situation by how long its results can keep him in power." [Note: House, p. 395.]

Jerusalem was under siege for about eighteen months (588-586 B.C.; 2 Kings 25:1-2). The resulting famine that the residents experienced (2 Kings 24:3) was only one of many that the Israelites underwent for their rebellion against God. Yahweh again withheld fertility as a punishment for apostasy. Jerusalem finally fell in 586 B.C. Some scholars believe it fell in 587 B.C. [Note: E.g., Rodger C. Young, "When Did Jerusalem Fall?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47:1 (March 2004):21-38.] The Babylonians captured King Zedekiah while he was trying to escape and took him to Riblah (cf. 2 Kings 23:33) where Nebuchadnezzar passed judgment on him. Nebuchadnezzar killed Zedekiah's heirs to the throne thus ending his fertility, blinded him (cf. Revelation 3:17), and bound him with bronze shackles (2 Kings 24:7). All of these measures also represented the fate of the nation the king led. The Israelites were now without royal leadership, spiritually blind, and physically bound. The blinding of prisoners was a common practice in the ancient East (cf. Judges 16:21). [Note: Andre Parrot, *Babylon and the Old Testament*, p. 97.]

(Adapted from URL: <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/eng/dcc/2-kings-24.html>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The story of the fall of Jerusalem attests to God's patience and justice. God told his people what would happen if they broke his covenant (Deuteronomy 28:15-29:29). He saved them from their enemies and gave them time to repent (Judges 2:10-23). Because they failed to repent, the covenant curses fell on Judah (2 Kings 24:1-4). But judgment was not the last word. God also promised to restore his people and bring them into full relationship with him (Jeremiah 31:31-34). He sent Jesus Christ to keep that promise (Luke 22:20; 2 Corinthians 3:6). And God is still patient with us (2 Peter 3:9).