

Bible Stories for Adults

Judah is Taken Into Captivity

2 Kings 24-25; Ezekiel; Jeremiah 38-44

Opening

Gathering: How do the sins of one person create problems for others?

Today's Focus: After years of calling His people back to Him, the Jews continued to reject God so He removed them from the Promised Land and sent them to Babylon for 70 years of soul-searching.

Key Verses: *The Lord is righteous, yet I rebelled against His command. Listen, all you peoples; look upon my suffering. My young men and maidens have gone into exile.* Lamentations 1:18

I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Ezekiel 33:11

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Good King Josiah (2 Kings 22-23)

How faithful of a king was Josiah?

2 Kings 23:25

But wasn't Hezekiah the most faithful of all of Judah's kings?

2 Kings 18:5

What happened to Josiah?

2 Kings 23:29

Why wasn't God with Josiah when he fought against Egypt?

2 Chronicles 35:21-22

Jehoahaz / Shallum (2 Kings 23:31-35)

Who succeeded Josiah and what happened to him?

2 Kings 23:31a, 32-33

What did God prophecy through Jeremiah about Jehoahaz?

Jeremiah 22:11-12

Jehoiakim / Eliakim (2 Kings 23:36-24:7)

Who succeeded Jehoahaz and how did he secure his reign?

2 Kings 23:34-35

How faithful was Jehoiakim and what happened to his alliance with Egypt?

2 Kings 23:37-24:1

How did Babylon respond when Jehoiakim revolted?

2 Chronicles 36:6-7

What did God prophecy through Jeremiah about Jehoiakim?

Jeremiah 22:18-19 (18-23)

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Jehoiachin / ? (2 Kings 24:8-16)

Who succeeded Jehoiakim and how faithful was his reign?

2 Chronicles 36:9

Why was Jehoiachin's reign so short?

2 Chronicles 36:10

What did God prophecy through Jeremiah about Jehoiachin?

Jeremiah 22:26-27, 30 (24-30)

What happened to Jehoiachin later in Babylon?

2 Kings 25:27-29

Zedekiah / Mattaniah (2 Kings 24:17-20)

Who succeeded Jehoiachin and how faithful was his reign?

2 Kings 24:17, 19

What were Zedekiah's biggest mistakes?

2 Chronicles 36:12-14

God's Marriage (Jeremiah 3)

How did God explain Israel's actions to Jeremiah?

Jeremiah 3:6-7

What did God do in response to Israel's adultery and did this affect Judah?

Jeremiah 3:8 (8-11)

Should Israel and Judah expect to be welcomed back by God if they returned?

Jeremiah 3:1

Did God follow this rationale?

Jeremiah 3:12-13 (12-25)

God's Judgement of Israel (Jeremiah 25)

How did God try to get His people to return to Him?

Jeremiah 25:4-7

Why didn't God's people find it necessary to return to God?

Micah 3:11b

What did God decide to do as a result of Israel's continued faithlessness?

Jeremiah 25:8-11

How would the 70 years of captivity be ended?

Jeremiah 25:12

The First Deportation (2 Kings 24)

How did God begin to bring about this destruction?

2 Kings 24:10-12

What did Nebuchadnezzar take back to Babylon with the first exile?

2 Kings 24:13-16

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The Response (*Lamentations*)

How did the Jews respond to this?

Lamentations 1:1-2, 6

What prophet was taken into exile with Jehoiachin?

Ezekiel 1:2-3

Why was Ezekiel compelled to warn the Jews even though they were already receiving His punishment?

Ezekiel 33:7-9

God is Punishing Us for the Sins of Our Fathers (*Ezekiel 18*)

What did the exiles blame as the cause of their troubles?

Lamentations 5:7

Where did the Jews get this idea?

Exodus 34:7b

Note: Households commonly had 3-4 generations living together

How did Jesus explain part of the meaning behind this warning?

Matthew 23:29-36

How did Ezekiel explain that it was wrong for the Jews to blame their fathers for their problems?

Ezekiel 18:2-4, 20 (Jeremiah 31:29-30)

But weren't they being punished for the continued unfaithfulness of past generations?

Ezekiel 18:21-24 (21-32)

Our Guilt is Too Great (*Ezekiel 33*)

Did the Jews recognize that the exile was the result of their continued unfaithfulness?

Lamentations 1:8-9

How did God tell Ezekiel to respond to this?

Ezekiel 33:10-11

What was he to say when the Jews said that God wouldn't be fair and would punish even if they returned?

Ezekiel 33:17-20 (12-20)

God has Abandoned His People Israel. We Have No Hope. (*Ezekiel 37*)

How did the Jews feel about being taken from the Promised Land to a foreign land?

Lamentations 3:1-3, 7-11, 18 (1-18)

What object lesson does God give Ezekiel to respond to this hopelessness?

Ezekiel 37:1-4, 10 (1-10)

What did 'dem bones, 'dem bones, 'dem dry bones have to do with the Jews' situation?

Ezekiel 37:11-14

Zedekiah Rebels (*2 Kings 25:1-7*)

What did Nebuchadnezzar do when Zedekiah rebelled?

2 Kings 25:1-3

How bad did the famine become?

Lamentations 4:10

What happened when Zedekiah tried to escape?

2 Kings 25:4-7

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The Second Deportation (*2 Kings 25*)

What did Nebuchadnezzar take back to Babylon with the second exile?

2 Chronicles 36:17-20

How did those of the first exile hear of the final destruction & exile?

Ezekiel 33:21

What happened to anyone who escaped the exile and stayed in Judah?

Ezekiel 33:27-29

Did Babylon repopulate the land of Judah with other captives like Assyria did with Israel?

2 Chronicles 36:21

Who did Nebuchadnezzar appoint to govern this conquered land?

2 Kings 25:22

Jeremiah's Destiny (*Jeremiah 40*)

How was Jeremiah allowed to remain in Judah instead of going to Babylon?

Jeremiah 40:1-6

Note: Nebuzaradan was following instructions from King Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 39:11-14)

What happened to Jews who had fled to nearby countries before the exile?

Jeremiah 40:11-12

What happened to Gedaliah?

Jeremiah 40:13-14; 41:2-3

Stay or Run? (*Jeremiah 41-44*)

How did the few left handle the assassination of Babylon's appointed ruler?

Jeremiah 42:1-3

What answer did Jeremiah return with?

Jeremiah 42:10-11, 13-14, 16 (4-22)

What did the Jews do with God's instructions?

Jeremiah 43:2-3, 5, 7 (1-7)

How would God punish this disobedience?

Jeremiah 44:13-14

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I recently blamed someone else for causing problems that were really my fault?
(*1 Kings 18:16-18; Ezekiel 18; Luke 6:41-42; Romans 2:1-11*)
2. When have I felt that God was unfair to me?
(*Job 19:5-21; Proverbs 16:2; Ezekiel 18:25; Romans 9:14-21; Colossians 3:25*)
3. When have I felt the burden of guilt for sins I committed?
(*Genesis 42:21-22; 1 Samuel 24:5-7; Job 9:29; Psalm 38:1-4; Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 1:18-32*)
4. How have I felt God's forgiveness when I repented from sins against Him?
(*Ezekiel 33:10-16; 2 Samuel 19:19-20; Psalm 32:1-5; Isaiah 1:18-20; Luke 7:36-50*)
5. How have I found hope in times when I have felt abandoned?
(*Ezekiel 37; Romans 15:13; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 6:13-20*)