

Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church of Beaumont
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www.magnoliambc.org

Theme Unit: Judah, from Isaiah to the Exile

Unit III: Ezekiel and the Exile of Judah

Subject: We've Fallen and We Can't Get Up!

Printed Text: 2 Kings 24: 18-20; 25: 1-9

Key verse:

Through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24: 20, KJV).

Lesson Pointers:

- 1) The Cost of Failed Leadership (2 Kings 24: 18-20)
- 2) The Siege and Suffering (2 Kings 25: 1-7)
- 3) The Temple's Destruction (2 Kings 25: 8-9)

Introduction:

Our Black American communities often confront the painful reality and consequences that often affects generations after generations. The very systemic inequalities, the personal struggles, and the very weight of oppression creates moments of feeling as though everything is falling apart. Now in 2 Kings 24: 18-25: 9 gives us a powerful illustration of the fall of Jerusalem and the impact of leadership and collective actions on the people of Judah. Judah people had to face dire consequences due to the result of a series of poor leadership decisions. Now Josiah was the last godly king of Judah (Read 2 Kings 22: 1-23: 28). Now Josiah had four sons, and Zedekiah was the third of those sons (Read 1 Chronicles 3: 15). Now after Josiah's death, his ungodly son Jehoahaz, known as Shallum, ruled briefly before being deported to Egypt by Pharaoh (Read 2 Kings 23: 30-33). Now Pharaoh installed another son of Josiah by the name of Eliakim as king, and changed his name to Jehoiakim (Read 2 Kings 23: 34). When Jehoiakim died 11 years later, he was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin (Read 2 Kings 24: 1-6). Now after three months of Jehoiachin's ascent to the throne the Babylonians overtook Jerusalem. The Babylonians installed one of Jehoiachin relatives, by the name of Mattaniah in Jehoiachin's place as king (Read 2 Kings 24: 8-17). And the King of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar renamed Mattaniah to the name of Zedekiah. These four ungodly kings poor leadership brought GOD'S Judgment upon the people of Judah. They listened to false prophets who promised Egyptian aid, instead of listening to GOD'S instructions.

Lesson Pointer # 1

- The Cost of Failed Leadership (2 Kings 24: 18-20)

When we have adversity in our life as leaders it often presents the greatest lesson for us, and about our leadership and faith in Jesus Christ. Now let us take a look at how the writer of 2 Kings chapter 24 and verse 18 open up. The writer gives us the age when Zedekiah became king, and the number of years that he reign as king in Jerusalem, and the writer even gives us his mother's name Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah (2 King 24: 18). Some times when we come into position of authority we are not ready for it because we do not rely on GOD for instructions and

guidance. We think that we can do it on our own, trusting in ourselves; which opens the way for evil to enter in; for pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. So Zedekiah did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done (2 Kings 24: 19). Zedekiah choose to do evil because he could have broken the cycles by choosing to do what was right; poor leadership causes the LORD'S judgment. Therefore, the devastating consequences, as the LORD'S anger against Jerusalem and Judah reached its peak, and the result was that they were cast out from the LORD'S presence. This caused Zedekiah to be rebellion against the king of Babylon (2 Kings 24: 20). Zedekiah shows us that true leadership is more than position and power; it cost; when one does not align one's will with the LORD'S purpose.

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Lesson Pointer # 2

- **The Siege and Suffering (2 Kings 25: 1-7)**

Now it is worth noting that, even in the darkest hours, The LORD'S purpose prevails. The writer open up by marking the beginning of the siege, saying, that in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, is when Nebuchadnezzar's entire army marched against Jerusalem (2 Kings 25: 1). Now the city was besieged or taken over on the eleventh year of King Zedekiah (2 Kings 25: 2). Now it came to pass that on the ninth day of the fourth month that the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land (2 Kings 25: 3). This caused the city to be broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about); and the king went the way toward the plain (2 Kings 25: 4). So, the army of the Chaldees went after the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him (2 Kings 25: 5). So the Chaldees took king Zedekiah and brought him to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and gave judgment against king Zedekiah (2 Kings 25: 6). And the Chaldees slew Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, and put out the eyes of king Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters and brass, and carried him to Babylon (2 Kings 25: 7).

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Lesson Pointer # 3

- **The Temple's Destruction (2 Kings 25: 8-9)**

Now having made an example of Zedekiah, the Babylonians now made an example of the entire city of Jerusalem. They burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard burnt with fire (2 Kings 25: 8-9).

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Nuggets of the Lesson:

- 1) **Poor leadership brings the LORD'S judgment to all.**
- 2) **The Judgment of the LORD judges the nation or community, the righteous suffer along with the ungodly.**
- 3) **Leadership requires one to do that which is right by obeying the LORD'S instructions and trusting HIS guidance and purpose.**
- 4) **Remember that pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.**