



Judah's Last Days 586 B.C.

- Text: 2 Kings 23-25; 2 Chronicles 33-36
- Hezekiah was followed by his son **Manasseh** who reigned for 55 years
 - He was the most wicked king Judah ever had! 2 Chronicles 33
 - Revived idol worship.
 - Built altars to all kinds of idols INSIDE the temple grounds.
 - Sacrificed his own sons to Molech. (cf. 2 Kings 21:6)

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- Practiced sorcery, witchcraft, and divination.
- Cruel and unjust in all his dealings.
 - Filled Jerusalem with the blood of innocent people. (2 Kings 21:16)
- God declared he was worse than the Amorites that had been driven out of Canaan in Joshua's day. (2 Kings 21:11)
- God would soon wipe Jerusalem clean! (2 Kings 21:13)

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- Manasseh remained loyal to Assyria.
 - He was later taken prisoner. (2 Chronicles 33:10ff)
 - Had a hook put in his nose, bound in shackles and taken to Babylon. (verse 11)
 - While in Babylon he turned his heart to seek Jehovah. (2 Chronicles 33:12)
 - God heard his prayer.
 - Later released and allowed to come back to his throne.
 - Spent the last few years of his life trying to undo the evil that he did.

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- His son **Amon** came to the throne. (2 Chronicles 33:21ff)
- Wicked, reigned only two years and was killed in his own house.

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Josiah

- Became King when only 8 years old and was determined to serve Jehovah. (2 Chronicles 34-35)
 - Age 16 -Sought after God.
 - Age 20 -Destroyed the idols throughout the land.
 - Age 26 -Gave orders that the temple be cleansed and repaired.
 - Book of the Law found.
 - Observed the Passover.

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- Burned the bones of false priests
- Destroyed the high places of false gods that Solomon had built for his wives nearly 300 years earlier
 - **BEST KING JUDAH EVER HAD!**
- **TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE!!**
- Punishment would be postponed because of Josiah's faithfulness. (2 Chronicles 34:27-28)

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- Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was able to secure all land UNTIL he came to Egypt
 - Egypt was formidable – Babylon was victorious but was weakened.
 - Babylon and Egypt agreed to coexist.
- Trouble was mounting in Judah
 - Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim (Josiah's sons) were terribly wicked. (2 Chronicles 36)
 - Jehoiakim accepted Babylon's rule when the armies first came – but thought he could rebel when weakened at Egypt.

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- Arameans, Chaldeans, Moabites, and Ammonites raided Judah – probably at Nebuchadnezzar's instigation
- Babylonian forces came and took treasures from the temple
 - Took captive young men from the royal family and nobility
 - **Daniel** and his three friends were in this first group taken (606 BC)
 - Ezekiel later taken captive. (597 BC)

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- Jehoiakim rebelled again and Nebuchadnezzar came back. Jehoiakim was bound and killed.
- Jehoiachin, his son, held out three months before surrendering to Babylon.
 - Babylonian army took away all the treasures from the temple and from the palace.
 - Gathered the officials and craftsmen of the city and took them away captive – leaving only the poor.
- Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was set up as a puppet king over the remnant of Israel.

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- **Jeremiah was God's spokesman during this time. TEXT: Jeremiah 50**
 - The Israelites would not listen to Jeremiah. (cf. Jeremiah 44:20ff)
- Babylon came again in **586 BC** and Jerusalem was leveled.
 - Gold was stripped from the walls of the temple.
 - Bronze pillars were broken and carried away.
 - Walls broken down and the gates burned.
 - Rest of the people were taken captive.
 - Nothing was left but a pile of rubbish! **2 Chronicles 36:17ff**

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- The land was left barren – Jerusalem was uninhabitable.
 - All of God's people were in captivity spread from Egypt to the Persian Gulf – it remained idle for the next 50 years.

A Scattered Flock Jeremiah 50:17-20

- **The lions scattered the flock of God's people. (50:17)**
 - Assyria and Babylon.
- **Their shepherds had led them astray (50:6-7).**
 - Kings: Manasseh, Amon and Zedekiah.
 - Princes, Prophets, Priests. Zephaniah 3:1ff

A Scattered Flock Jeremiah 50:17-20

- **Value of faithful shepherds. (Home and Church)**
 - Leaders need to value the word of God (Deuteronomy 18:9-22). cf. Galatians 1:1, 11-12.
 - Leaders need to make a covenant to walk with the Lord and to keep His commandments.
 - Heed those who communicate God's word. (Hebrews 13:17)
 - Elders: as shepherds/teachers. (Ephesians 4:11;1 Timothy 3:2)
 - Parents: less as "punitive discipline;" more as teaching. (Ephesians 6:4; Hebrews 12:11)
 - Give attention to the development of Teachers/leaders.

A Scattered Flock Jeremiah 50:17-20

- **The Lord of hosts punishes lions and restores His flock (50:18-19).**
 - The kings of Babylon and Assyria were punished (50:9-16).
 - Shepherds of Israel were punished. (Ezekiel 34:17-22; cf. Acts 20:28-29).
- Note: Those acting as agents of the devil are described as lions when he too is described as a lion seeking someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).
- God pays with affliction those who afflict His people (2 Thessalonians 1:6-8; cf. 2 Peter 2:1ff).
- The Lord grants good things for His flock (Jeremiah 50:19; Ezekiel 34:9-16, 23-31).

A Scattered Flock Jeremiah 50:17-20

- **The Lord pardons the sins of His people (50:20).**
 - Our pardon comes, as a result of what He has done to pay for our sins.
 - Romans 5:6, "*Christ died for the ungodly.*"
 - John 10:11, "*I am the good shepherd! The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.*"
 - Pardon is conditioned on the appropriate response by the individual (Ezekiel 16:60ff; 18:21-23, 30-32).
 - The Kings of Babylon and the Kings of Judah received no pardon because they "*stiffened their necks against God.*"

A Scattered Flock Jeremiah 50:17-20

- Although lions scatter the flock of God He will execute judgment against those lions and restore His flock.
- Although His flock has sinned He will pardon their iniquities so that their sins cannot be found.
- His relationship with us is purchased by the blood of His son. Let us be ashamed of our sin and come to Him for forgiveness.