

Monday, July 4, 2022

From Darren:

2 Kings 23:31-25:30 — A long painful downfall

Ps 2:1-12 — Serve the LORD with reverent fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Pro 18:13 — Listen, then speak

Acts 22:17-23:10 — Paul knows how to divide a room

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2 Kings 23:31-25:30

23 31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.

32 He did what was evil in the LORD's sight, just as his ancestors had done.

33 Pharaoh Neco put Jehoahaz in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath to prevent him from ruling in Jerusalem. He also demanded that Judah pay 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold as tribute.

34 Pharaoh Neco then installed Eliakim, another of Josiah's sons, to reign in place of his father, and he changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. Jehoahaz was taken to Egypt as a prisoner, where he died.

35 In order to get the silver and gold demanded as tribute by Pharaoh Neco, Jehoiakim collected a tax from the people of Judah, requiring them to pay in proportion to their wealth.

36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother was Zebidah, the daughter of Pedaiiah from Rumah.

37 He did what was evil in the LORD's sight, just as his ancestors had done.

24 1 During Jehoiakim's reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded the land of Judah. Jehoiakim surrendered and paid him tribute for three years but then rebelled.

2 Then the LORD sent bands of Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against Judah to destroy it, just as the LORD had promised through his prophets.

3 These disasters happened to Judah because of the LORD's command. He had decided to banish Judah from his presence because of the many sins of Manasseh,

4 who had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. The LORD would not forgive this.

5 The rest of the events in Jehoiakim's reign and all his deeds are recorded in *The Book of the History of the Kings of Judah*.

6 When Jehoiakim died, his son Jehoiachin became the next king.

7 The king of Egypt did not venture out of his country after that, for the king of Babylon captured the entire area formerly claimed by Egypt—from the Brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem.

9 Jehoiachin did what was evil in the LORD's sight, just as his father had done.

10 During Jehoiachin's reign, the officers of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up against Jerusalem and besieged it.

11 Nebuchadnezzar himself arrived at the city during the siege.

12 Then King Jehoiachin, along with the queen mother, his advisers, his commanders, and his officials, surrendered to the Babylonians. In the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, he took Jehoiachin prisoner.

13 As the LORD had said beforehand, Nebuchadnezzar carried away all the treasures from the LORD's Temple and the royal palace. He stripped away all the gold objects that King Solomon of Israel had placed in the Temple.

14 King Nebuchadnezzar took all of Jerusalem captive, including all the commanders and the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and artisans—10,000 in all. Only the poorest people were left in the land.

15 Nebuchadnezzar led King Jehoiachin away as a captive to Babylon, along with the queen mother, his wives and officials, and all Jerusalem's elite.

16 He also exiled 7,000 of the best troops and 1,000 craftsmen and artisans, all of whom were strong and fit for war.

17 Then the king of Babylon installed Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, as the next king, and he changed Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah.

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

19 But Zedekiah did what was evil in the LORD's sight, just as Jehoiakim had done.

20 These things happened because of the LORD's anger against the people of Jerusalem and Judah, until he finally banished them from his presence and sent them into exile. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25 1 So on January 15, during the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon led his entire army against Jerusalem. They surrounded the city and built siege ramps against its walls.

2 Jerusalem was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign.

3 By July 18 in the eleventh year of Zedekiah's reign, the famine in the city had become very severe, and the last of the food was entirely gone.

4 Then a section of the city wall was broken down. Since the city was surrounded by the Babylonians, the soldiers waited for nightfall and escaped through the gate between the two walls behind the king's garden. Then they headed toward the Jordan Valley.

5 But the Babylonian troops chased the king and overtook him on the plains of Jericho, for his men had all deserted him and scattered.

6 They captured the king and took him to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where they pronounced judgment upon Zedekiah.

7 They made Zedekiah watch as they slaughtered his sons. Then they gouged out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and led him away to Babylon.

8 On August 14 of that year, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard and an official of the Babylonian king, arrived in Jerusalem.

9 He burned down the Temple of the LORD, the royal palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem. He destroyed all the important buildings in the city.

10 Then he supervised the entire Babylonian army as they tore down the walls of Jerusalem on every side.

11 Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took as exiles the rest of the people who remained in the city, the defectors who had declared their allegiance to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the population.

12 But the captain of the guard allowed some of the poorest people to stay behind to care for the vineyards and fields.

13 The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars in front of the LORD 's Temple, the bronze water carts, and the great bronze basin called the Sea, and they carried all the bronze away to Babylon.

14 They also took all the ash buckets, shovels, lamp snuffers, ladles, and all the other bronze articles used for making sacrifices at the Temple.

15 The captain of the guard also took the incense burners and basins, and all the other articles made of pure gold or silver.

16 The weight of the bronze from the two pillars, the Sea, and the water carts was too great to be measured. These things had been made for the LORD 's Temple in the days of Solomon.

17 Each of the pillars was 27 feet tall. The bronze capital on top of each pillar was 7 feet high and was decorated with a network of bronze pomegranates all the way around.

18 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took with him as prisoners Seraiah the high priest, Zephaniah the priest of the second rank, and the three chief gatekeepers.

19 And from among the people still hiding in the city, he took an officer who had been in charge of the Judean army; five of the king's personal advisers; the army commander's chief secretary, who was in charge of recruitment; and sixty other citizens.

20 Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took them all to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

21 And there at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king of Babylon had them all put to death. So the people of Judah were sent into exile from their land.

22 Then King Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan as governor over the people he had left in Judah.

23 When all the army commanders and their men learned that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they went to see him at Mizpah. These included Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, Jezaniah son of the Maacathite, and all their men.

24 Gedaliah vowed to them that the Babylonian officials meant them no harm. "Don't be afraid of them. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and all will go well for you," he promised.

25 But in midautumn of that year, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama, who was a member of the royal family, went to Mizpah with ten men and killed Gedaliah. He also killed all the Judeans and Babylonians who were with him at Mizpah.

26 Then all the people of Judah, from the least to the greatest, as well as the army commanders, fled in panic to Egypt, for they were afraid of what the Babylonians would do to them.

27 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, Evil-merodach ascended to the Babylonian throne. He was kind to Jehoiachin and released him from prison on April 2 of that year.

28 He spoke kindly to Jehoiachin and gave him a higher place than all the other exiled kings in Babylon.

29 He supplied Jehoiachin with new clothes to replace his prison garb and allowed him to dine in the king's presence for the rest of his life.

30 So the king gave him a regular food allowance as long as he lived.

Psalm 2:1-12

2 1 Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans?

2 The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against the LORD and against his anointed one.

3 "Let us break their chains," they cry, "and free ourselves from slavery to God."

4 But the one who rules in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them.
5 Then in anger he rebukes them, terrifying them with his fierce fury.
6 For the Lord declares, "I have placed my chosen king on the throne in Jerusalem, on my holy mountain."
7 The king proclaims the LORD 's decree: "The LORD said to me, 'You are my son. Today I have become your Father.
8 Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession.
9 You will break them with an iron rod and smash them like clay pots."
10 Now then, you kings, act wisely! Be warned, you rulers of the earth!
11 Serve the LORD with reverent fear, and rejoice with trembling.
12 Submit to God's royal son, or he will become angry, and you will be destroyed in the midst of all your activities— for his anger flares up in an instant. But what joy for all who take refuge in him!

Proverbs 18:13

18 13 Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish.

Acts 22:17-23:10

22 17 "After I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the Temple and fell into a trance.
18 I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, 'Hurry! Leave Jerusalem, for the people here won't accept your testimony about me.'
19 "But Lord,' I argued, 'they certainly know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you.
20 And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.'
21 "But the Lord said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!' "
22 The crowd listened until Paul said that word. Then they all began to shout, "Away with such a fellow! He isn't fit to live!"
23 They yelled, threw off their coats, and tossed handfuls of dust into the air.
24 The commander brought Paul inside and ordered him lashed with whips to make him confess his crime. He wanted to find out why the crowd had become so furious.
25 When they tied Paul down to lash him, Paul said to the officer standing there, "Is it legal for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't even been tried?"
26 When the officer heard this, he went to the commander and asked, "What are you doing? This man is a Roman citizen!"
27 So the commander went over and asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" "Yes, I certainly am," Paul replied.
28 "I am, too," the commander muttered, "and it cost me plenty!" Paul answered, "But I am a citizen by birth!"
29 The soldiers who were about to interrogate Paul quickly withdrew when they heard he was a Roman citizen, and the commander was frightened because he had ordered him bound and whipped.
30 The next day the commander ordered the leading priests into session with the Jewish high council. He wanted to find out what the trouble was all about, so he released Paul to have him stand before them.

23 1 Gazing intently at the high council, Paul began: “Brothers, I have always lived before God with a clear conscience!”

2 Instantly Ananias the high priest commanded those close to Paul to slap him on the mouth.

3 But Paul said to him, “God will slap you, you corrupt hypocrite! What kind of judge are you to break the law yourself by ordering me struck like that?”

4 Those standing near Paul said to him, “Do you dare to insult God’s high priest?”

5 “I’m sorry, brothers. I didn’t realize he was the high priest,” Paul replied, “for the Scriptures say, ‘You must not speak evil of any of your rulers.’”

6 Paul realized that some members of the high council were Sadducees and some were Pharisees, so he shouted, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, as were my ancestors! And I am on trial because my hope is in the resurrection of the dead!”

7 This divided the council—the Pharisees against the Sadducees—

8 for the Sadducees say there is no resurrection or angels or spirits, but the Pharisees believe in all of these.

9 So there was a great uproar. Some of the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees jumped up and began to argue forcefully. “We see nothing wrong with him,” they shouted. “Perhaps a spirit or an angel spoke to him.”

10 As the conflict grew more violent, the commander was afraid they would tear Paul apart. So he ordered his soldiers to go and rescue him by force and take him back to the fortress.