



2 Kings 24-25

Tape #7123
II Kings 24-25
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now to II Kings, chapter twenty four. The last good king that Israel had was Josiah. Upon his death, his son began to reign in his stead. Pharaohnechoh came to Jerusalem, and captured the city, made them a vassal state. He changed the name of Josiah's son to Jehoiakim, and he allowed him to reign upon the throne.

Now as you're dealing with the reign of Jehoiakim, he was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, he reigned for eleven years. You're dealing now with the bulk of the prophecy of Jeremiah. Jeremiah prophesied during the reign of Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. He was a bad king, and he allowed the people again to revert to idolatry, and the sins of Manasseh. Those sins for which the nation was doomed. So in chapter twenty four...

In his days Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years: then he returned and rebelled against him (24:1).

So, as Nebuchadnezzar came, he saw that his forces were outnumbered, he realized there was no sense in trying to hold off against Nebuchadnezzar. So he submitted unto Nebuchadnezzar, and thus the city of Jerusalem was spared the siege.

But the Lord sent against him the bands of the Chaldees, the bands of the Syrians, and the bands of the Moabites, and the children of Ammon, and he sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the servants the prophets. And surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, [That is, the things that Manasseh had introduced. The worship of Baal, the sacrifice of their children unto the idols, and all of these things.] according to all that he did (24:2-3).

Now, when Nebuchadnezzar first came, Jehoiakim surrendered, or submitted to him. Nebuchadnezzar went away. Three years later, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. Now what had happened, is that the Babylonians had other problems. Nebuchadnezzar at this time was engaged personally in the siege of the city of Tyre. There was so many problems with the Babylonian kingdom, they were being attacked by different groups, that Jehoiakim probably felt secure in rebelling. "Why should I submit to him? He's got his own problems, and he can't get back here for awhile." So, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.

So Nebuchadnezzar then asked the other nations that were vassal states to Babylon, to go ahead and to attack Jerusalem. So that is where you read, "They sent the bands of the Syrians, and the Moabites, and the Ammonites against Judah, to destroy it". So he turned loose the neighboring states to attack. But, they were not able to take Jerusalem, and so Nebuchadnezzar came again to Jerusalem, and the Lord declares that, "Because of these sins that Manasseh introduced", that were prevalent again.

Also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not pardon (24:4).

In the book of Jeremiah, we read that there was a prophet by the name of Urijah, who prophesied against Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim had him put to death. He also sought to put to death, Jeremiah and Baruch. But Jeremiah and Baruch hid themselves, and Jehoiakim could not find them. When we get to Jeremiah, we'll expound the story, but Jeremiah had Baruch as his scribe, as his secretary, and he dictated on this scroll, the judgements that God pronounced against Jerusalem. He had Baruch take it to the temple, and read the scroll.

When some of the men heard the reading of the scroll of judgement against Jerusalem, they got together the princes, and they said, "We want you to hear the words of this scroll". So he read it to them, and they said, "We need to get this to the king", and so they started to read the scroll to the king, and the king took his knife and cut the thing, and threw it into the fire! Then Jeremiah and Baruch wrote a second scroll with the same thing, and said, "Though you may try to get rid of the pronounced judgements, you can't". You know, "Though you may burn the scroll in the fire, still the judgements are going to come. You can't escape the

judgement”.

So Jehoiakim was guilty of shedding the innocent blood. During his reign, again they began to offer their children in the fires, to Molech. And, of course the killing of the prophets of God, who spoke against these acts.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? [And they are also written in the prophecies of Jeremiah.] So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead (24:5-6).

Jehoiachin was also known as Jechoniah, or in some places as Coniah. Jechoniah, Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim. And he, .

The king of Egypt did not come again anymore out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken all of the territory from the river of Egypt [Not the Nile that would be a, but a wadie down towards Egypt.] unto the river Euphrates and all that pertained to the king of Egypt. [So where they could've been expecting Pharaohnechoh to come and help them, he did not come again.] Jehoiachin eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he only reigned for three months. His mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done. And at the time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged (24:7-10).

So a very short reign under Jehoiachin, or Jechoniah. Interesting prophecy in Isaiah, concerning this fellow Jechoniah. In the twenty second chapter of Jeremiah, he prophecies against Jechoniah, and he predicts that there would not be any of his seed to sit upon the throne of Israel. Verse thirty. “Thus saith the Lord, right ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days. For no man of his seed shall prosper sitting on the throne of David, or ruling anymore in Judah.” So, Jechoniah did not have, because of this curse of the Lord, his son reigning in his stead. But instead his uncle reigned in his stead. Jechoniah was carried as a captive to Babylon, and his uncle was placed on the throne in his stead, by Nebuchadnezzar.

Now the interesting thing about this fellow Jechoniah, and about this prophecy, is that when in the new testament, you have two of the gospels giving the genealogy for Jesus, the gospel of Matthew, as it records the genealogy of Joseph, Joseph was a descendant of Jechoniah. In Matthew it is of course called, Coniah, but it is Jechoniah, or Jehoiachin, and being a descendant of Jehoiachin, had Christ been the son of Joseph, he could not be the heir to the throne of David, because of the curse under Jeremiah, that, “Not any of his seed shall sit upon the throne of David forever”. His line was cut off, and thus had Jesus been the son of Joseph, he could not, according to this prophecy of Jeremiah, sit on the throne of David.

That is why Luke's gospel records for us, the genealogy of Mary, who also was a descendant of David, royal seed. Mary's line goes back through another route, so that she was not a descendant of Jechoniah. Thus, being of the royal seed, her son could be heir to sit upon the throne of David, and we know indeed that, that shall be the case. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David, to order it, and to establish it in righteousness and in judgement.” Some people wonder, “Why is it that in the new testament you have two genealogies for Jesus, and they are different?”.

It is because the one in Matthew is the genealogy of Joseph, but it would disqualify Jesus from being upon the throne of David. The other is the genealogy of Mary in Luke's gospel, but bypassing in the genealogy Jechoniah, coming back to David by another line, it does then make Jesus an heir to the throne of David, and thus the rightful King, to sit upon the throne of David. So a little interesting insight from Jeremiah the prophecy against this fellow, Jechoniah, or Jehoiachin.

Now Nebuchadnezzar during his reign, came to Jerusalem, and he besieged the city. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign (24:11-12).

That is the eighth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. It was only the third month of the reign of Jehoiachin. When Nebuchadnezzar came, he had been besieged by these other little nations. They weren't able to do anything, but when Nebuchadnezzar himself came, probably with extra troops from Babylon, he realized that to try to hold off the Babylonian army was useless. Thus, he surrendered. He came out to

Nebuchadnezzar. But, Nebuchadnezzar took him as a captive to Babylon, and placed him in the prison there. But in his later years, as we get to the end of chapter twenty-five, we find that he was released from prison, and was allowed to have uh, to sit with the king in the court of Babylon. But at this time, “Nebuchadnezzar carried away the servants, the princes, the officers, and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign”.

In this particular captivity, Daniel the prophet was also taken to Babylon. So now you’re beginning to get into the time of the prophet Daniel, who was just a young man, carried away to Babylon while he was probably still in his teens. He was one of the princes in Judah, and when he came to Babylon he was groomed in the schools, in order that he might be a counselor in the court of Nebuchadnezzar. So this is the time that Daniel was taken, with his friends, Azariah, and the other two, I forget their Hebrew names, but they’re more commonly known as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed Nego. Babylonian names that were given to them by Nebuchadnezzar.

So he carried [At this time.] the treasures of the house of the Lord, the treasures out of the king’s house, he cut in pieces all of the vessels of gold which Solomon the king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all of Jerusalem, and all the princes, the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, [Actually according to Josephus, it was 10,852 that he carried away to Babylon, at this time.] he carried away all the skilled craftsmen, the silversmiths, goldsmiths: [and all] and none remained, save the poorest sort of people of the land. [He left just the very common poor people.] And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, the king’s mother, the king’s wives, his officers, the mighty of the land, those he carried away to captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, craftsmen, smiths a thousand, and all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon then made Mattaniah [His father] his father’s brother king in his stead, [So none of his seed sat upon the throne, but rather his uncle.] and he changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah was twenty one years old when he began to reign, he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For 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 (24:13-20).

So Zedekiah was made king, but now he is rebelling also against the Babylonian reign. The writer makes note that it was, “of the Lord”. God had given to Judah opportunities of repentance, and turning from their sins. “The Lord is slow to anger, plenteous in mercy”, the scripture says. Over, and over, and over again, through the prophets, God pleaded with these people to turn from their sins, to follow after the Lord. God had declared in the beginning, when He made a covenant with this nation. “If you will follow me, if you will keep my statutes, and my commandments, then I will bless thee, and you will be prosperous. But if you forsake me, then you will be taken captive. You’ll be driven from this land that I have given to thee. And they’ll carry thee away captive...”, and all.

All of this had been promised by God. In spite of the warnings, the people turned their backs on God, and would not repent. All kinds of vile, filthy acts were going on. The sins of the time of Manasseh, the killing of the innocent children, the sacrificing them, of them to their gods Molech, in the fire. Things of this nature. The sodomites, or the homosexuals, the temple prostitutes, the pornography. It was all very common, and very prevalent at this time, as the nation was destroyed. Idolatry, the thing that god had forbidden.

I was talking with professor Shiloh, who was in charge of the excavations of mount Offal. Just that area of the old city of David, that is just below the dung gate in Jerusalem. Going from the area of the dung gate, down to the pool of Siloam. They’ve done quite a bit of extensive archeological work there, and what they have uncovered is the city of Jerusalem, at the time of the Babylonian siege. The houses of the people that were destroyed by this Babylonian siege, when as we read right here, where the city was broken down and so forth, by Babylon, in this, in this next chapter. The interesting thing, professor Shiloh was showing me pictures of the little idols. And he said, “We found hundreds upon hundreds of these little idols in every one of these little houses”. They found the houses, they found the ashes where they burnt the city with fire, and they broke down the houses. In the rubble that they are now excavating, the rubble of the people of the time

of Zedekiah's reign, the people that were destroyed by the judgement of God, there is the mute evidence of their idolatry in their houses. Scores of these little household gods. These little nude images and so forth, the Ashorem that the people worshiped. It's again just the indictment of God was for these things.

Now it is interesting to me how that people are always wanting God, and others to be tolerant of their particular weakness of the flesh. I can be very judgmental against people's problems, which I do not share. If you have a particular weakness of the flesh, that I don't have, it's horrible, and I can be very judgmental against you. But those weaknesses that I have, I want you to understand, I want you to be tolerant, I want you to say, "Well that's alright, you know, we all have our weaknesses!". It's interesting how that we are all trying to protect our own area of weakness, rather than repenting saying, "Hey it's wrong. God help me, God deliver me". I somehow want to coddle my own weakness, and want people to say, "Well it's alright to go on in your weakness".

Now this is perhaps evidenced today in, in the main, by the homosexual community. Though this is a sin that is forbidden in the word of God, and judgement is pronounced against it in the word of God, and it is explicitly declared by God, to be a sinful act that in the law, they were put to death! The act for which the city of Sodom was destroyed, and from which the name, "Sodomites" comes. Yet these people are trying to twist the scripture, saying, "No, no, you know, I was born with this penchant. I, and I, it's a part of my very nature, and thus I want you to accept me". And, they wanted to be recognized as an acceptable alternative for marriage. An acceptable lifestyle. "Don't look down upon me. Don't call me a sinner. Don't call me wicked because I do these things. This is just the way I was born! It's just a part of my nature, I just happen to love men." You know, and it's sick! Yet they want it to be recognized socially, as sociably accepted behavior.

Why should I accept that anymore than I would accept a pedophile, who says, "Hey I just happen to love little boys who are eight years old. That's just my nature. I have a drawing, an attraction, a physical lust for little boys eight years old. But, that's just the way I was born, so I want you to accept me. Accept the fact that I'm willing to entice your little son, and to bring him into..."? Or, "I happen to have a fixation and fascination for little girls. I'm drawn and I lust after little girls, but that's just the way I was born, and so I want you to accept that". No! I can't accept that!! Or, a fellow says, "Hey, I just love women man! One woman's not enough for me. So, I was just born that way, I'm just so powerful in my sex drives, there's no woman, no single woman can, can satisfy me, so I've got to have a lot of experiences. So, I cheat on my wife, but accept that. That's just the way I am". No you can't accept that! The bible calls it adultery, it's sin!

But it's interesting how that we always want toleration for our sin. "Well I just have a bad temper man. I was just born with it, you know it's just my nature. So accept my bad temper". No, we can't! We're not to be accepting or tolerant of our own weaknesses! We are to be repentant! We're to ask God's help.

Now, everybody has a problem with the flesh, in some area or the other. I have never yet met a person who did not have some problem with the flesh-life. We are living in these bodies, and as long as we're living in these bodies, we're gonna be problemed with the desires of the flesh, with the weaknesses of the flesh, in some area or another. Though God forgives us, God does not intend to leave us as we are, but through the power of the Holy Spirit, transform, and change us.

So, rather than seeking the acceptance of the flesh-life, the weaknesses, or the problems of my flesh, I should be seeking God for freedom, and deliverance from that flesh-life. That the body of sin should no longer rule over me. God's answer is, "Put it to death. Let there be that recognition that, that old life, the life of self, the self-life, and the, "I'm gonna have my way, and you've gotta do it my way, and if you don't, I'm gonna throw a little temper tantrum, and I'm gonna scream and yell at you, and I'm gonna make your life hell, if you don't surrender to my will!" Hey, hey, hey wait a minute. That's not the way God wants us to live. "Know ye not that the old man was crucified with Christ?", that the body of sin might be put out of business. That you might not be ruled by the body appetites any longer.

If you do have a weakness, and homosexual tendencies, God can give you freedom, or deliverance over that. If you have inordinate lusts for children, God can deliver you, and free you from that. If you have a vicious temper, if you are prone to say, mean, cutting, hurting things, God can deliver you from that. Rather than seeking acceptance and toleration, we should be seeking God's deliverance from the power of the flesh

reigning over us! No matter what area it might be in your life, or in my life, God is able to set me free, and to deliver me. I should be seeking God's help.

Now, because the children of Israel gave themselves over to the flesh, rather than seeking the help of God, and deliverance from God, they gave themselves over to the flesh, and did not repent. As the result, God allowed them to go into captivity. If you do not find God's deliverance from those areas of the flesh-life, the ultimate result will be, God will allow you to go into the captivity of the enemy. Judah fell, because Judah would not repent.

Chapter 25

As we get into the twenty fifth chapter, we come to the fall.

It came to pass in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, the tenth month, the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came, he, and all of his host, against Jerusalem, [This is again the second time. He first time, carried away all the captives, the princes under the reign of Jehoiachin, carried away Jehoiachin, put on his, on the throne his uncle. His uncle did the same thing, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. So in the ninth uh, year, or the tenth, "It came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem.] they built the forts against it. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, [The Babylonians had cut off the supplies, and they were now six months under the siege. The food was depleted within the city. People began to starve, and Josephus describes some of the horrible conditions under this particular siege that existed in Jerusalem. "And the famine prevailed",] and there was no bread for the people of the land. And the city was broken up, and all of the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which is by the king's garden: [That is, they fled down through the Tyropian Valley, and probably escaped at night, somehow undetected by the Babylonians.] (but when the Chaldees were [had] encircled the city:) the king went by the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, they overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and his army was scattered from him (25:1-5).

So every man for himself, they were all fleeing. They caught king Zedekiah down by Jericho.

And so they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and there they pronounced the judgement upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, [He watched them, as they killed his little sons. His sons, of course could not have been very old, he was still a rather young man. So his sons were not that old. "And they slew his sons before his eyes,"] and then they put out his eyes, [It was a common practice of putting out the eyes of your enemy, in order to disable him. You remember that they put out the eyes of Samson. The idea was to weaken and disable your enemies. Up until rather recent times, whenever the king would be placed upon the throne in Persia, they would put out the eyes of all of his brothers, so that none of them would think about assassinating the king, in order to take the throne. So it was a very common practice. In ancient warfare, often a common practice of putting out the eyes of the captives, in order to debilitate them, and to, oh I don't think, I can't grab the word I want, it's not forestall, it's not forego, but it is like that. Their endeavor to rebel.] so they bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him away to Babylon (25:6-7).

Now, let's turn to Ezekiel, chapter twenty-two, or chapter twelve rather, and notice here an interesting prophecy concerning Zedekiah. Verse thirteen. He is prophesying against the rebellious house, against king Zedekiah. He declares, "My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans, yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there." Interesting prophecy. "I'm gonna take him, and make him a captive, catch him in my trap, I'm gonna carry him away to Babylon, though he won't see it." This of course was literally fulfilled, when Nebuchadnezzar put out the eyes of Zedekiah, so he was carried as a captive to Babylon, though he never saw Babylon. His eyes had been put out. So the prophecy literally fulfilled. The prophecy of Ezekiel, against Zedekiah.

Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, came Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, a servant to Nebuchadnezzar: And he burnt the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all of the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's

house burnt he with fire (25:8-9).

Today, as you go down the area of Ophel, you can see the ashes of these fires, there in the ruins of these houses. You can see the layer of ashes, that come to this very passage of scripture here. When Nebuzaradan came, and destroyed the temple, destroyed the city, destroyed the houses.

And all of the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls of Jerusalem. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away. [In other words it was a total sacking now of the city. The city was devastated. The walls were torn down, the temple was torn down, that glorious temple of Solomon. The houses, the palaces, just a rubble.] But the captain of the guard left the poor of the land to be the vinedressers and the husbandmen. [So just the poor people living in the fields, to keep the vines and the crops.] Now the pillars of brass [That Solomon had made for the temple. Boaz, and Jehoiachin.] that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, [Upon which those pillars stood.] and that brass sea [That big fifteen foot, brass laver that was made for the priests to bathe in.] that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and they carried the brass away to Babylon. And the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the spoons, and all of the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered in the house of the Lord, they took away. And the firepans, the bowls, such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away (25:10-15).

So they, they just totally sacked the place. Now you remember, later in the book of Daniel, when Belshazzar was having that great feast with a thousand of his lords? He commanded that they bring to him the gold and the silver vessels, that his father had taken out of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. They began to drink their wine out of the gold, and silver vessels, and they began to praise the gods of gold and silver, when came the hand, and the writing on the wall. This is when those things were taken. So the whole thing, Daniel and the whole thing, begins to tie together, as you look at the accounts here.

The two pillars, the sea, the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord; the brass of all the vessels which you could not weigh. [There was no way to measure the weight.] The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, the chapter was of brass: [The chapter, that is the fancy brass around the top.] the height of the chapter was three cubits; with the wreathen work, the pomegranates upon the chapter around about, all of the brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with the wreathen work. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door: And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, the principal scribe for the host, which mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land that were found in the city: And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah: And the king of Babylon smote them, and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land (25:16-21).

Tragedy, and the tragic end of a nation that had forsaken God. The interesting thing is that there is no mention of their taking of the ark of the covenant, which would have had tremendous value, for the amount of gold that was used in the overlaying of this ark of the covenant.

According to one of the books of the Apocrypha, the reason why it does not declare that they took of the ark, they took the ark of the covenant, was that according to the book, one of the books of the Apocrypha, Jeremiah, upon word that the Babylonian troops were coming, and knowing that they were no doubt, going to just totally sack the city, took the ark of the covenant, and hid it, so that it could not be taken by the king, or the king's man in this case. There is no mention of the ark of the covenant when the temple was rebuilt.

Where the ark of the covenant is at the present time, no one really knows. It is possible that the ark of the covenant was taken, but no mention made. It is possible that Jeremiah did hide the ark of the covenant, and many Jews believe that, that is so. Many believe that he hid it in one of the caves under the temple mount. There are some who believe that it is hid in a cave, over on the mount of Olives, in the courtyard of the area that is now in an empty cistern, in an area that is now controlled by the Greek orthodox church.

A man a few years ago, claimed that he found the ark of the covenant over on mount Nebo in Jordan. This same man also claimed he found Noah's ark. He is a man who makes great claims. His name is Tom

Crotzer. So Associated Press picked up the story of his discovery of the ark of the covenant. I made several calls to him, and finally he sent me the picture that he had taken of this little box that he found in a cave, over in mount Nebo. Upon examination of the pictures, it is my personal conclusion that what he found is not the ark of the covenant. The pictures do not match the description in the book of Exodus.

It is interesting that in the arch of Titus, in the city of Rome, as they have the base release on the arch that show his triumphant entry into Rome, with the captives that they had brought from Israel when Titus conquered Israel, after their last rebellion in 70 AD. It, also in the parade, the victory parade of Titus, shows his soldiers carrying what would appear to be the ark of the covenant. Whether or not it was brought out at the time of the rebuilding of the temple under Ezra, and placed again in the Holy of Holies, later to be incorporated in the temple that was built by Herod. But, then finally destroyed by Titus, and carried to Rome, is not really known.

Could the ark of the covenant be found today, it would surely be one of the most remarkable of all of the archeological discoveries. If you'd like your name to go down in history, especially in an archeological sense, you might find that ark someplace! But, it is fascinating that there is no record of them taking the ark of the covenant, or the uh, menorah, that was in the temple, but the other things, they took.

Now for the people that remained in the land, [verse twenty-two] whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, the ruler (25:22).

They would not leave the place without any kind of rule, any kind of authority, so now they chose this man, Gedaliah. Referring, or coming back to Zedekiah for a moment, and as you read the book of Jeremiah, because he prophesied during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, you find that they come up in the book of Jeremiah, and concerning Zedekiah, he called Jeremiah in, and Jeremiah told him, "Look God has appointed that the Babylonians are gonna take this land. God is using them as His instrument of judgement. Now, just surrender to them. Don't try to fight them, just surrender to them, because they're gonna take this place. It'll be easier on you and the people, if you surrender, rather than go under the siege".

Zedekiah said, "Don't tell anybody that you talked to me and told you these things. I can't surrender, you know, I'd have insurrection by the princes that are here. These other fellows are wanting to hold out and fight. So just keep it quiet that you talked to me, and told me these things. I'm sort of helpless you know. These guys will rebel if I try to capitulate." Isaiah, I mean, Jeremiah was actually accused of being a traitor, as he was telling the people, "Don't try to resist Babylon. Go ahead and surrender. Babylon's gonna take this place, it's gonna fall to Babylon". And, there were false prophets, who were going around saying, "You know, no, no. We're gonna push Babylon right out of here, thus saith the Lord", you know, and they were going around predicting victory. So Jeremiah prophesied against them, "Woe unto the prophets who say, 'peace, peace', when there is no peace".

So this whole drama was all played out in Jeremiah, so remember this bit of history. You're at that point of Jeremiah, and when we read Jeremiah, then in your mind you're gonna have to flip back. Make a file, that you can flip back to in your mind, II Kings here, chapters twenty-four, and twenty-five. Because this is the time of Jeremiah's prophecy. The time under Jehoiakim, he threw him in prison, you remember, in the dungeon. Zedekiah, later imprisoned in the courtyard, and said, "Feed him with bread and water until the bread runs out." All because of his prophecy which got him in trouble as a traitor, because he was saying that Babylon was gonna conquer the place, no sense resisting".

So Gedaliah was made the ruler, and when the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, [These are the names that you're gonna get in Chronicles, I told you to skip, and so let's just skip them.] And Gedaliah swore to them [verse twenty four] and to their men, and said unto them, Don't be afraid to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, serve the king of Babylon; and it will be well with you (25:22-24).

So Gedaliah was using real wisdom, he said, "Hey, they've conquered us, don't be afraid to dwell here. You know, they're gonna be okay. They're not going to be hard taskmasters."

But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the

royal seed, came, with ten men, and they assassinated Gedaliah, and the Jews, and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. [And so some of the Babylonians that were there, with some of the Jews, and Gedaliah, they came up, and they wiped them out.] And all of the people, both small and great, the captains of the armies, arose, and they fled to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees (25:25-26).

They knew that after this act of treason against Babylon, that it was gonna really be tough, so they all fled for safety, to Egypt. It is declared that at this time, Jeremiah also fled to Egypt, according to traditions. That, we don't know for sure.

And it came to pass in the seventh and the thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin [Now this is the guy that was, only reigned for three months. When the Babylonians came, he surrendered and they carried him off captive. "In the thirty seventh year",] in the twelfth month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, that Evilmerodach [Who was king after Nebuchadnezzar.] began to reign and he lifted up the head of Jehoiachin the king of Judah out of prison; [And so he in the beginning of his reign, sought to show a kindness unto the king, released him from prison.] He spoke kindly to him, and he set his throne above the kings that were with him in Babylon; And he changed his prison garments: and he did eat the bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given to him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life (25:27-30).

So he was brought out of prison, and treated kindly by the king of Babylon, the successor to Nebuchadnezzar on the throne. Thus we get to the end of the history as such, as we move into Daniel, and in Ezekiel we'll have parts of their history, while in captivity in Babylon. As we get to Ezra, and Nehemiah, we will pick up their history again, after the Babylonian captivity. So that will carry us out to the end of the old testament period, in which God spoke through the prophets, to the time of Malachi, and Zachariah, which then we have a four hundred years of silence prior to the angel announcing to Zachariah, that his wife was going to have a son who would be the forerunner of the Messiah.

So we'll, we'll try and keep these whole things historically in a perspective, as we move along through them. Tying them together, so that you can tie the prophets with their period of history, in the Kings, and in the books of Chronicles, so that you'll get hopefully a good, overall grasp of how the things were working, why the prophets said the things that they were saying. It will help in understanding the prophets, when you can place them at that point of degeneration of the kingdom.

May the Lord be with you, and bless and keep you in His love. As we come to that point of the calendar that says that it's the end of the old year, and the beginning of the new, let us resolve to serve the Lord, and to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. To so commit ourselves, our lives, into His hands, that we will experience that power of His resurrection, making us new creatures in Christ. Freeing us from the chains of the flesh, conforming us into the image of Jesus Christ. May the beauty of the Lord, our God show forth through each of our lives, as we walk and fellowship with Him. In Jesus' name.