

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

God's judgment comes when His people do not repent.



THE STORY: 2 KINGS 23:28-37

MONDAY

Judah's last kings were wicked in the sight of the Lord

Judah's last kings were wicked in the sight of the Lord – After Josiah's death, his son Jehoahaz became king. Jehoahaz did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Kings 23:30-35). Jehoiakim, Jehoahaz's brother, became king after him and also did evil in the sight of the Lord. During Jehoiakim's reign, the King of Babylon captured him, bound him in chains, and took the first of the exiles along with some of the temple vessels away to Babylon. We learn from Daniel 1:1-3 that this was when Daniel was taken to Babylon. Jehoiachin, the captured king's son, reigned for three months. During his reign Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem and deported thousands of fighting men and craftsman, leaving only the poorest people behind. He also took all the golden articles from the temple (2 Kings 24:1-7). Finally, Nebuchadnezzar established Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, as king, but he also ruled in wickedness until Jerusalem fell.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How were Josiah's sons (Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim) different from their father? *(Neither followed the ways of the Lord. Both made a mockery of all that Josiah had stood for. When it says he did evil like his fathers, it is referring to the same kind of idolatry which their grandfather Amon and great grandfather Manasseh had done.)*

True or False – If your parents are Christians, you are, too. *(False. There is no guarantee that just because your parents follow the Lord that you will do the same. It is important that children seek the Lord while they are still young and not assume they can start following God later in life. Parents, take time to ask your children how they are doing in seeking after God.)*

How does this story encourage us to cry out to God for mercy and grace? *(Each person is accountable to God for his or her decisions. We cannot rely on the faithfulness of godly parents to save us. Therefore, we need to regularly ask God to help us serve Him so that we will not become entangled in the things of this world like Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to pour out His grace on every child in your family. Take time to allow any of your children to repent and call out to God for grace.



God sent His messengers, but the Kings of Judah did not listen

God sent His messengers, but the kings of Judah did not listen – In verse fifteen we read that God persistently sent prophets to the people of Judah. However, they mocked the prophets and despised their words. God used Jeremiah to warn the people by saying things like, “Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place” (Jeremiah 7:3). He also said, “Hear the words of this covenant and do them. For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice” (Jeremiah 11:7). Needless to say, neither the kings nor the people of Judah repented of their sin.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why did God send the prophet Jeremiah to Zedekiah? *(God sent Jeremiah to warn him but he did not listen.)*

How does God warn us today? *(We are warned through God’s Word. Jesus tells us that unless we repent, or turn from our sin, we will perish. See Luke 13:3-5.)*

PRAY:

Have each of your children pray a prayer of repentance (admit that they are sinners in need of God’s forgiveness and help).





THE STORY: 2 CHRONICLES 36:15-16

WEDNESDAY

Where is Jesus?

God sent his prophet Jeremiah to warn the kings of Judah. The kings did not listen to Jeremiah and, in the end, God was “aroused against his people” (2 Chronicles 36:16). Jerusalem was ransacked and its people were taken into captivity.

God, however, was not finished speaking through Jeremiah. Jeremiah spoke of another king from the line of David. This king would be a righteous branch. “He will be called The Lord Our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:5-6). Jesus is that King!

TALK ABOUT IT:

Where do you see God’s mercy and grace in this account? *(Every time Jeremiah warned the kings of Judah it was an act of God’s grace. But God’s grace didn’t end there. Jeremiah prophesied about the coming of another, better king – Jesus.)*

Why is it critical that we obey God’s Word? *(We have God’s plan of salvation through Jesus spelled out clearly for us in the New Testament. We have no excuse if we reject God.)*

PRAY:

Ask God to help each member of your family trust in Him.



THE STORY: 2 CHRONICLES 36:17-23

THURSDAY

Jerusalem fell and was captured

Jerusalem fell and was captured – Not only did Zedekiah rebel against the Lord, but he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chronicles 36:13). As a result, Nebuchadnezzar made war against Jerusalem and trapped the people inside the city without supplies until they surrendered (2 Kings 25:1). The walls of Jerusalem were broken down (2 Kings 25:10), and the house of the Lord was burned (2 Kings 25:9). The Babylonians also took away all the precious articles made of silver and bronze that were still in the temple (2 King 25:17). The once great temple, built by Solomon, was laid to waste and the surrounding buildings were destroyed.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How did God use the Babylonians to accomplish His will? *(God used the Babylonians to judge the kings and people of Judah who refused to obey him and follow His Word.)*

Where do we see God's mercy in the midst of His judgment against Judah? *(In verse 21 it says the Lord brought rest to the land for seventy years. After seventy years God spoke to Cyrus King of Persia to rebuild God's house in Jerusalem!)*

PRAY:

Thank God for the amazing way that He works to accomplish His plan and that God's mercy is evident even in the midst of His judgment.



THE STORY: JEREMIAH 32:37-41

FRIDAY

On the road to Emmaus.

In the midst of the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the people of God, Jeremiah brought an encouraging word: God will one day make an "everlasting covenant." This everlasting covenant refers to the covenant of the blood of Jesus (Luke 22:20). The new covenant introduced by Jesus would be a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6) because Jesus would be the mediator of this covenant and provide the sacrifice. That sacrifice has the power to reconcile man and God.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How do we know that Jeremiah's prophecy refers to Jesus? *(Men tried to keep the law of God's covenant with Israel, but they failed. Israel never enjoyed the kind of relationship with God Jeremiah describes. The everlasting covenant is the new Covenant Jesus described at the last supper. Jesus lived a perfect life described by Jeremiah in this passage. Because Jesus places His Spirit in our hearts, we are able to faithfully follow Him. Men fail because men sin. It is only through the finished work of Christ that we can have victory over sin and death.)*

What does "everlasting covenant" mean in verse 40? *(Jeremiah was looking forward to the New Covenant that Jesus would introduce at the last supper. It is his promise of salvation, forever true.)*

PRAY:

Thank God for giving us an everlasting covenant that will never pass away because it

