

Jehoahaz reigns briefly before he is deposed by Neco and replaced with his brother Jehoiakim. He lasts longer but does only evil in the eyes of the LORD his God. He's attached and robbed by King Nebuchadnezzar. Everything he does is detestable (8). Jehoiachin briefly replaces him (aged 8 or 18) and in 100 days this child king does evil in the eyes of the LORD. Once more King Nebuchadnezzar loots the temple.

Zedekiah follows for 11 years. He too, v12, does evil in the eyes of the LORD his God. Was there no restraint? No, Jeremiah preached to him and he refused to humble himself. Jeremiah preached God's word and he would not listen. Furthermore God spoke to him through Nebuchadnezzar, v13, who had made him king. Zedekiah is stiff-necked (36v13, 30v8) the classic example of the wilderness wanderers. And it wasn't just the King – when the King is unfaithful the priests and leaders follow suit. They all become unfaithful. They follow the detestable practices of idol-worshipping nations – so defiling the temple. The temple! The place God had made for his name (ch6-7).

God speaks again and again to them (v15) out of compassion for his people and his temple. But there was no remedy. They mocked God. They despised God. They scoffed against him. So finally, finally, God sends Nebuchadnezzar to judge them and exile them – handed over to God's wrath executed by the Babylonians. The people die and the temple burns. And, v21, the land breathes a sigh of relief. The land comes to enjoy sabbath until the seventy years Jeremiah had preached were done. And there the whole Hebrew OT closes... waiting for the 70 years to be completed. The seventy years could mean the period of the exile, but Leviticus 26 and Daniel 9 suggest to us that it's a way of describing the completing of all judgement against rebellious humanity. **Waiting for the day that the humble and orthodox perfect King Jesus comes.**

Some versions add in the first paragraph of Ezra which sounds like the start of 2 Chronicles... a temple built by a King – but it's a foreign king and a false dawn. Still the people must wait for God's King to come and bring the dwelling of God to his people forever.



Cell Notes

5/5 Josiah & the end – what happens when God's people don't know God's voice...

Welcome (10)

Your cell is a **mission team** based in your hall. **Share together... WHAT IS GOD DOING IN YOUR LIFE? What's good? What's a struggle?** Explain that you'll study God's word together, pray and seek to encourage and equip one another to live and speak for Jesus. **This term we're studying 2 Chronicles** a book about **living in humble orthodoxy**.

Witness (30)

Christian Union is a Mission Team – you're part of that!

Share stories of attempting to witness to friends.

Where do you need help? Who can you pray for?

Ask that God would spread his fame throughout all the earth.

Word (40) 2 Chronicles 35v20-36v23

Theme : *What happens when God's people don't know God's voice*

Transform : *Get into God's word – and be thankful for God's Faithful King*

35v20-27. The lamentable death of an otherwise faithful king...

What is Josiah's downfall?
What's strange about this? 34v30
Why is it a problem that God's people don't know the voice of God?
How does Jeremiah respond to these events?

36v1-14. The brief reigns of the evil kings

What happens next?
What do these kings have in common?
v5,8,9,12,13,14
What is their relationship to what God says?

36v15-23. God is as good as his word

What does the LORD do in the face of all this evil? v15
How is this received?
What are the benefits of exile?
How is God keeping his word?
7v19-22

*Two possible endings.
At v21 – At rest and expectant of restoration.
(this is the end of the Hebrew OT.. waiting...)
At v22-23 – starting again with words from Ezra 1, restored but lacking glory.*

How do **v22-23** bring us full circle? (see 2 Chronicles 1)
What's strange?
What will be hoped for post-exile?

With the story closing in **v21** what expectation is left?
How will the promises Solomon claimed in 2 Chronicles 6 be fulfilled?

Next Week > Esther 1-3 / Prizing God's Promises

Worship (10)

Ask for the true God to vindicate his name!

Give thanks that Jesus has come.

The humble King! The true temple!

Word Notes

Josiah has a glorious reign until his final days. He brings restoration and celebrates the passover (35v19), and unlike previous kings who ignored God's word (34v30) he read God's word to the people, calling them (31) to obey God's word.

Now, like previous good kings (like Hezekiah and Uzziah) in his final hours everything goes wrong. 35v20, he decides to go to war with Neco of Egypt. Neco tells Josiah to go away saying that God has told him to go to war, and this isn't his fight to be involved in. God is speaking to Josiah through Neco. In not listening he is opposing God (21), he will not listen to what God says (22).

And so Josiah goes to war, and dies in disguise much like evil Ahab. After a glorious reign he falls and is succeeded by his son Jehoahaz. The decline that follows is swift, dark and tragic.

- Jehoahaz reigns for 3 months
- Eliakim-Jehoiakim reigns for 11 years
- Jehoiachin reigns for 3 months
- Zedekiah reigns for 11 years.

And then it's all over. One of the marks of a good king tends to be the length of his reign – nothing here is extended. But given the kings concerned it's good that it doesn't last longer.