

## Lesson 4:

### Part Two

## Prophecies Delivered During The Reign Of Jehoiakim

### *Introductory Comments*

1. Part two of this study considers the prophecies and work of Jeremiah that bear upon Jehoiakim, not a direct successor of Josiah but the next monarch who ruled for any length of time.
2. It is first necessary to remind ourselves of the changes that have taken place during and following the reign of Josiah.

### **The Historical Setting**

#### *Changes During Josiah's Reign*

1. Jeremiah began his prophetic work in the thirteenth year of his reign.
2. Just prior to Josiah, Manasseh had ruled, the worst of the kings at least in terms of the consequences that his reign had for the people. As the record states: "Surely at the commandment of the LORD [this] came upon Judah, to remove [them] from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh..." (2 Ki 24:3). He introduced the idolatry and apostasy which led to the downfall of Judah.
3. Manasseh was succeeded by his son, Amon, who lasted 2 years and "did evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done" (2 Ki 21:19-21).
4. Josiah 640/639-609 B.C. was the last of the good, strong kings. He introduced stringent reforms throughout the length and breadth of Judah and Israel. This was made possible because the hitherto regionally dominant power of Assyria was waning. He was mortally wounded at Megiddo when he intercepted Pharaoh Necho who was marching to the aid of the Assyrian king in his struggles with the Medo-Persian alliance (2 Ki 23:29). The Egyptians were unable to prevent the Assyrians from being crushed at Haran (610-609 B.C.).
5. However, these reforms had only limited success. The people generally returned only outwardly to the Lord and on his death reverted to their old ways (Jer 3:10).

#### *After His Death*

1. The people Placed Jehoahaz, son to Josiah, on the throne in his father's stead. He survived three months before being removed by the Egyptians (2 Ki 23:30-33). They tried to build up their influence and gain control over Palestine.
2. Pharaoh Necho installed Josiah's son, Eliakim and changed his name to Jehoiakim (2 ki 23:34). Jehoiakim reigned about eleven years (609-598).
3. Jehoiakim was succeeded by Jehoiachin who reigned just three months (2 Ki 24:8). Note that the dates, 598-597, are deceptive. The events must have happened during the close of one year and the beginning of the next.
4. Jehoiachin was replaced by Zedekiah who ruled until the fall of Jerusalem in 586.
5. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the Babylonian king, Nabopolassar, sent his son, the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar, to dislodge Egypt from Syria and Palestine (Jer 25:1). Nebuchadnezzar soundly defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish (605). Then he overtook the fleeing Egyptians near Hamath and dealt them an even more crushing blow. These decisive battles determined the destiny of the near eastern world for the next seventy years. They ended Egypt's hopes of empire and established Babylon as the master of Palestine and Syria. After victory at Carchemish the Babylonians swept south, their first appearance in Judah.
6. Initially, Jehoiakim submitted, the Babylonians taking several hostages. However, he revolted after three years in 598 (2 Ki 24:1) which was answered by a second invasion resulting in a larger number of captives, including Ezekiel, being taken 597. But by the time Nebuchadnezzar was able to respond Jehoiakim had died and been succeeded by his son Jehoiachin (2 Ki 24:8-16; Eze 1:1-3).

7. Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, was enthroned by the Babylonian king (2 Ki 24:17), who in turn rebelled resulting in the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem (586).

### **First Group Of Readings: Jer 22:13-19; 25; 26**

#### *Introductory Remarks*

1. As previously commented, this study is organised on the basis that chapters 1 through 20 deal with the reign of Josiah. 21:1 provides the first definite time marker since 3:6. Notice as we proceed that Jeremiah's habit was to date his later prophecies (25:1 for example).
2. From Chapter 21 the book presents prophecies from later times. These are not arranged in chronological order. The first of these (ch. 21) pertains to the siege of Jerusalem when Zedekiah reigned (21:1, 4; cf. 2 Ki 25).

#### **R. 1:22:13-19 - Dealing With Jehoiakim's Character.**

##### *Setting*

1. Chapter 22 contains prophetic observations with respect to:
  - Shallum/Jehoahaz (10-12). Shallum is named but comparison with 2 Kings 23:31-34 shows them to be the same. Jehoahaz succeeded Josiah only to reign three months before he was taken away captive by Pharaoh Necho to Egypt, never to return to his homeland. His identity is clinched by the listing of Josiah's sons in 1 Chronicles 3:15. Here the name "Shallum" is mentioned but Jehoahaz omitted.
  - Jehoiakim (13-19; note 18).
  - Jehoiachin (20-39; note 24, 28 where Jehoiachin is called "Coniah").
2. The chapter opens with a threat of destruction if justice is not practised (1-9).

##### *Notes on passage*

1. Woe pronounced upon Jehoiakim (13-15).
  - This king's end would be worse than that of Shallum (cf. 18-19 with 10-12).
  - Not content with what existed, He built himself a magnificent palace using forced and unpaid labourers (13-14).
  - Kingcraft did not consist in constructing magnificent palaces (15). Jehoiakim was challenged, "Shall you reign because you enclose yourself in cedar?"
2. The behaviour of Josiah and Jehoiakim contrasted (16-17). Josiah dispensed justice to the poor and needy and it was well with him (16). On the other hand, Jehoiakim exploited and mistreated the people; his sole concern was the accumulation of wealth (17).
3. Therefore, he would have a horrible end; Unmourned even by his family and not accorded the respect of a proper burial but cast beyond the walls of the city like a donkey (18-19).

#### **Reading 2: ch. 25 - About The 70 Years**

##### *Prediction Of Babylon's Seventy Year Domination Of Judah And The Surrounding Nations (1-11)*

1. The prophecy dated (1-2).
  - This is the first of Jeremiah's prophecies to be dated so specifically - the fourth year of Jehoiakim, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (1). Others are dated more generally and without such precision (e.g., 3:6; 26:1).
  - Why so? This was an extremely important year. It was the year which marked a notable turning point in the fortunes of Judah. It was the year of the Battle of Carchemish (605 B.C.), the decisive battle in which Babylon dealt Egypt a crushing defeat (46:2). That battle determined the future of this region for the next seventy years. It ended Egypt's hopes of empire (2 Ki 23:29-24:7) and established Babylon as the master of the ancient world. After Carchemish, the Babylonians swept south and invaded Judah for the first time, taking Daniel and some others to Babylon as hostages (Dan 1:1-7).

- Apparent contradiction between Dan 1:1 and Jer 25:1. Two possible explanations: 1) Daniel refers to the commencement of the military campaign and Jeremiah the time of arrival in Judah (Gill). 2) perhaps Daniel's dating followed the accession method used by the Babylonians. With this, the accession year of a king was counted separately rather than being treated as the first year of the reign.

<https://history.stackexchange.com/questions/58535/why-did-babylonians->

2. For twenty-three years Jeremiah, as well as others, had delivered the same message but this had gone unheeded (3-7).
3. Therefore, the time had come for these threats to be enacted (8-10).
4. The period of desolation and service specified - seventy years (11; Cf. 2 Chron 36:20-23; Ezra 1:1-2; Dan 9:1-2).

*Prediction Of The Fall Of Babylon (12-14)*

1. The king of Babylon to be punished (12). The Babylonians were God's servants to act against Judah (9), but their intent was not to serve God but to build an empire for selfish passion. They therefore were accounted guilty and would be punished.
2. The Babylonians were to be enslaved just as they had enslaved others (13-14).

*The Cup of God's Wrath (15-26)*

1. This cup was to be drunk by Judah (17-18), other nations (19-25) finishing with the kings of the north (26).
2. This figure was used widely (Psa 60:3; Isa 51:17, 22-23; Jer 13:12-14; 48:26; 49:12; 51:7; Rev 14:10 etc.). Nations would be left reeling and staggering like a drunkard but drunk on God's wrath.
3. How was this prediction to be brought into effect? Was there actual symbolic action as in Jeremiah 25:1-11? Was Jeremiah to physically dispense cups of wine? The number of nations involved makes this unlikely. Probably the action was carried out in a vision. Jeremiah in this, would have dispensed cups to the various representatives of the nations. This vision then was transformed into reality in Jeremiah's work as he prophesied the doom of those involved (cf. v. 13 with chs 46-51).

*The Message to Accompany the Cup (27-29)*

With the exchange of a sword for a cup, symbol becomes reality. If this falls upon the city "which is called by my name", says God, then others will not escape.

*The fearsomeness of Jehovah's Controversy with the nations (30-31)*

*Description of the World Judgment (32-38)*



