

How to Use Sermon Resources

- **READ AHEAD TOGETHER** - MCG's should use the Devotional at the end of this resource as a reading plan for the week leading up to your meeting.
- **SIT UNDER THE WORD** - This resource is filled with scripture references. Read them aloud, together before you answer any questions.
- **APPLY TRUTH** - The goal is deep discussion and application, not necessarily to complete this resource. Don't squash a good discussion. If you get into something important along the way that's fine.

Small Group Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer [2 mins]

Use the Overview [5 mins]

- Cover any key points for people who missed parts or all of the sermon

Scripture Deep Dive [30-40 mins]

- Opening Question
- Read the scripture for each question then ask the question. Some have multiple scriptures.

Close in Prayer

- In this extended prayer time, ask others to pray as they feel led, pray in a circle, pray over one another, pray to your left, or pray for someone specific. Whatever seems best.

Split Time (if applicable)

- Men with men, women with women
- Share in a circle. "What's one thing you want to celebrate? What do you need prayer and accountability for?"
- After everyone shares, pray in a circle for the person to your left/right.

SERMON OVERVIEW

“Kingdoms Collapse, God Reigns” 2 Kings 23-25

Sermon Summary: Pastor Matt concludes a 20-week series through 1 and 2 Kings, examining the final chapters (23-25) that detail Judah's collapse and exile to Babylon. Through the reigns of four consecutive evil kings—Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah—we witness the devastating consequences of rejecting God's Word and pursuing self-rule. Despite appearing like total destruction, God's providential hand continues working behind the scenes through figures like Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah.

Key Points:

- The predictable path of self-rule: Each of the four kings did evil in the sight of the Lord, rejecting God's Word and pursuing their own way, leading to inevitable destruction
- What seemed unsinkable (the nation of Israel at its height) collapsed when leaders trusted in political alliances, military strategy, and human wisdom instead of God
- The providential hand of God: Though it appeared God had lost control during the deportations, He strategically positioned Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah to minister to His people
- Providence is the unseen hand of God working behind the scenes to accomplish what only God can do, while miracles are the visible hand of God
- The persistent hope of God's promises: The release of Jehoiachin from prison (verses 27-30) serves as a ray of hope that God has not forgotten His promise of a Messiah through David's line
- The goal of studying Scripture is not just information but transformation—growing in love and affection for Jesus
- God has not forgotten His people even in their darkest circumstances, and He continues to keep His promises

Scripture Reference:

- 2 Kings 23:31-25:30

Stories:

- The Titanic illustration: The "unsinkable ship" that sank in 1912 after hitting an iceberg, paralleling how the seemingly invincible nation of Israel collapsed through persistent rebellion against God
- Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith analogy: Just as the film ends in apparent darkness but with a ray of hope through the birth of Luke and Leia (symbolized by two suns rising).
- The road trip metaphor: The entire sermon series compared to a journey on I-40 from Wilmington to California, with various stops along the way representing different sermon series
- Historical context of the three deportations to Babylon and how God positioned Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah to minister to His people.
- The narrative of Jehoiachin's release from prison after 26 years, being given new clothes and a seat at the king's table as an undeserved act of mercy

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question

Read Proverbs 14:12 and 1 Kings 11:1–4. In what specific ways do Solomon and the kings in 2 Kings show that “doing what seems right” to them actually leads to spiritual danger and eventual ruin?

Point 1 – The predictable path of self-rule

1. Read 2 Kings 23:31–32 and 2 Kings 24:8–9. These kings “did what was evil in the Lord’s sight” despite Josiah’s godly example. How do these verses show that a godly upbringing or environment does not automatically produce godly hearts, and what does Ezekiel 18:20–24 add to that understanding?

2. Read 2 Kings 24:1–4 and Galatians 6:7–8. How do Jehoiakim’s choices demonstrate the principle of sowing and reaping spiritually, and in what concrete ways does the text show that God is actively judging, not passively watching?

Point 2 – The providential hand of God

3. Read 2 Kings 24:10–17 and Daniel 1:1–8. How do these passages together show that God is strategically positioning His people (like Daniel) even through judgment and exile, rather than losing control of history?

4. Read 2 Kings 24:10–17, Ezekiel 1:1–3, and Jeremiah 29:4–7. How do these texts demonstrate that God’s purposes for His people continue even when their circumstances look like total defeat, and what specific instructions show that exile itself is part of God’s plan, not the end of it?

Point 3 – The persistent hope of God’s promises

5. Read 2 Kings 25:27–30 and 2 Samuel 7:12–16. How does God’s kindness to Jehoiachin—releasing him, giving him new clothes, and a place at the king’s table—serve as a concrete reminder that God is still keeping His covenant with David, even when the kingdom appears destroyed?

6. Read 2 Kings 25:27–30, Matthew 1:11–16, and Romans 8:31–32. How does tracing Jehoiachin’s line to Jesus turn the “ray of hope” at the end of 2 Kings into a “spotlight” of hope in Christ, and how does Romans 8:31–32 show that this same covenant-keeping God is for believers today?