

II Chronicles 36 –5 February 2026

“22.5 Years Of Reality Shock”

Introduction

- *We've landed at final 22.5 year of Judah's kingdom
- *The Lord was gracious to King Josiah to not allow Judah's end during his lifetime, but today it ends
- *We ended chapter 35 with King Josiah's demise
 - *After Pharaoh Necho killed Josiah at Megiddo
 - *Then General Nebuchadrezzar met Pharaoh Necho of Egypt at Battle of Carchemish in 605 BC
 - *Egypt & Assyria were crushed by Babylon & Pharaoh retreats home thru Israel
- *We'll see 3 of Josiah's sons & 1 grandson rule today
- *Most people at this time had fallen into unreasonable assurance that God would protect no matter what

*Yet many prophets spoke against this like Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Ezekiel and Zephaniah

*Read Jer 7:3-4 - Yet God's now bringing judgement

*Reality Shock is when your belief system doesn't allow for the events happening before your eyes

*ie when people cry for days after an election in disbelief that it was even possible

*Today we look at 6 key people in these final 22.5 years of Judah's kingdom

*The 1st four of them: We'll see their absolute inability to affect the world around them in a meaningful way

*The final two of them: We'll see how they *are* utilized by God to actually bring the reality shock

***So, let's look at these 6 key figures for the final 22.5 years**

#1 – Joahaz: Reigns for 3 months – Shows us that exile is worse than death (Chap 36:1-4)

Read Vs 36:1-4

1. Read Jer 22:10-12 - There is *something worse than dying*
 - a. Being taken to a life apart from God's blessing
 - b. Being taken to a life of servitude
 - c. Being taken to another life, never to return
 - d. Sounds exactly like hell b/c it's the very picture of it
2. So just 3 months after killing Josiah in Megiddo, Egypt retreats to Egypt thru Jerusalem & imprisons Jehoahaz
 - a. Then they put his brother Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah to pay tribute

#2 – Jehoiakim: Reigns for 11 years – Shows us that oscillating between 2 wrongs is futile (Chap 36:5-8)

Read Vs 36:5-8

1. Jeremiah tells us that he sided with Egypt and *greedily* taxed the people
2. During his reign, Babylon first invaded Israel in 605 BC
 - a. Took Temple treasures & people (Read Dan 1:1-2)
3. Jehoiakim tried to live subservient to Egypt, but we'll see this is a great mistake
4. Jehoiakim can't figure out whether to serve Egypt or Babylon (*b/c he should be serving God*)
 - a. Read Jer 22:17 – He couldn't figure whom to align with b/c he was really serving self
 - b. “Oh God, should I eat McDs or B King? Neither...you should be eating Chic-fil-a” haha
5. Jehoiakim dies in office in Judah

#3 – Jehoiachin: Reigns for 3 months – Shows us one cursed of God & deported to Babylon (Chap 36:9-10)

Read Vs 36:9-10

1. Jehoiachin is on throne only 3 months when Babylon comes back for 2nd attack in 597 BC
2. Being besieged, Jehoiachin surrenders and many are deported & a great spoil is taken
3. Mattaniah, renamed Zedekiah is NOT son of Jehoiachin, but his uncle, Josiah's 3rd son to reign
4. Jeremiah prophesied Jehoiachin's exile & curse by God (Read Jer 22:28-30)
 - a. Spiritual implications in that Messiah doesn't come thru the lineage of Jehoiachin

#4 – Zedekiah: Reigns for 11 years – Shows us one blinded & deported to Babylon (Chap 36:11-17)

Read Vs 36:11-14

1. It says he didn't humble himself before Jeremiah who was sent from the Lord
2. Hard times from God will either...
 - a. Hasten your repentance & softening or hasten your hardening against God
 - b. Same sun that softens wax, will harden clay
 - c. Like hardening of Pharaoh's heart (Moses)

Read Vs 15-16

1. Their hearts were far from God's will, but they convinced themselves that God was on their side
2. Not only was Jeremiah telling them to submit to Babylon, but also God would bring them back!

Read Vs 17

1. This is the final siege & conquest of Jerusalem & of Israel occurring in 586 BC

2. Interesting prophecies that Zedekiah would see & speak w/ Nebo (Read Jer 32:4) but wouldn't see Babylon (Read Eze 12:13)

#5 – Nebuchadrezzar: Used of God to bring destruction to Israel (Chap 36:18-21)

Read Vs 36:18-20

1. Temple is sacked to the ground & main defense of city (what makes it a city) the wall is broken
2. All the treasures & blessings from God are now spoiled and taken from them

Read Vs 21

1. Warned about in Lev 26:33-35
2. Prophesied by Jeremiah in Jer 25:11-12 & 29:10
3. The Law of the Lord ***will*** be fulfilled

#6 – Cyrus: Used of God to bring restoration to Israel (Chap 36:22-23)

Read Vs 36:22-23

1. Cyrus' proclamation was in 538 BC, Israel began to return in 537 BC & Temple stones were first placed in 536 BC
2. Cyrus was prophesied by name to be the one to deliver Israel 150 year before he did (Isa 44:28)
3. It says the Lord “stirred up the spirit of Cyrus” & “charged” him to command this work, God’s work be completed
 - a. How God did this is a mystery, but it happened (direct revelation? Used a prophet?)
4. *“Who is there among you that will go?”*
 - a. Takes faith to uproot and go after 70 yrs
 - b. Notice the charge is to build their spiritual life back up 1st – no promise of a good physical life

Conclusion

If we live by a set of beliefs that oppose God, it *will* smack us in the face at some point

1. **Joahaz was exiled – that's worse than death**
2. **Jehoiakim died oscillating between two bad choices of Egypt & Babylon – how futile**
3. **Jehoiachin was cursed & deported – what's worse than uselessness? Being spiritually cut off**
4. **Zedekiah was blinded & deported b/c he didn't humble himself before the Lord**
5. **Nebuchadrezzar was used by God to bring destruction**
6. **Cyrus was used by God to bring restoration**

God will have His way – His reality is the *only* reality

If we live *contrary to* God's reality – there is a shock coming

If we live *according to* God's reality – there is peace coming