

Rock Bottom

I. Slide1 Announce:

A. Slide2 Tanzania Mtg Tonight after service - rm.133

II. Slide3a Intro: Rock Bottom

A. Slide3b *Rock Bottom* - **NOT** the character that played the professors sidekick in *Felix the Cat* (a bulldog who walked/dressed like a human) *but I mean...*

1. rock-bottom | ' ,ræk 'bädəm | adjective - **at the lowest possible level.**

a) **Johnny Cash** with his distinctive voice, had a long and successful musical career. But not all of Cash's life was characterized by joy. In the **early 1960s** Cash started **drinking heavily** and became **addicted to drugs**. As a result, his behavior became increasingly **erratic**, his performances suffered, **and** his marriage was being destroyed. **By 1967**, his life out of control, Cash crawled deep into **Nickajack cave** in Tennessee hoping to die. **He had hit rock bottom.**

B. Slide4 Read 1st 1/2 of song, Gary Allan, *Nickajack Cave, Johnny Cash's Redemption*

1. Today's reading is Judah's version of hitting rock bottom, and it's clear that the writer wants to emphasize **the sadness and loss** Judah experienced.
2. We'll look briefly at the **loss** of: *The Kingdom of Judah, The City of Jerusalem, The Temple, The People & The Land. And then end with The Flicker of Hope.*

III. Slide5a **ROCK BOTTOM (24:1-20)**

A. 2 Kings 24,25 is summed up with these simple words, *Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land* (25:21). That promised land of **milk and honey**, that land of **freedom** from the slavery of Egypt, **was now taken away.**

B. Slide5b 1st, **THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH** (24:1-7)

C. For about a century and a half Judah had a somewhat *checkered existence* after the termination of **the kingdom of Israel** till its final overthrow in the destruction of the temple.

D. Slide5c 2nd, **THE CITY JERUSALEM** (24:8-12. 24:17-25:10)

E. That fortified capital of Judah, **God's Zion**, represented **His protection and glory.**

- F. The Psalms are full of the praises of **Zion's** strength and beauty (Ps.48:2 *Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, The city of the great King*), **but** now that city was destroyed. Its walls were broken through, torn down, and burned. The great city had been reduced to ruins.
- G. **Slide5d 3rd, THE TEMPLE** (24:13. 25:13-17)
- H. There was a **loss of the temple**, the place of *worship* and of *God's presence!*
1. Not content simply to capture the city, the Babylonian king burned the temple to the ground. **Later**, his commander removed the articles from the temple, piece by piece. *The bronze pillars, the bronze Sea, the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, dishes - all were removed from the temple and taken to Babylon.*
- I. **Slide5e 4th, THE PEOPLE** (24:14-16. 25:11,12. 25:18-26)
- J. The people were forced to live in a foreign land. Only *the poor* left behind to till the land.
- K. **Slide5f 5th, THE LAND** (25:21b)
- L. The land was now gone. **Shocking.**
1. **In the biblical covenants** there are 2 kinds: *conditional* & *unconditional*.
 2. There are 8 (only 2 are conditional (upon man) **Edenic** (fruit), **Mosaic** (obed= blessing))
 3. An *unconditional* promise of God is a declaration of the **certain** purpose of **God**. It **certainly** will be fulfilled **in God's time** and **in His way**.
 - a) **The Palestinian Covenant** (Deut.30:1-10) was *unconditional* regarding Israel's final possession of the land.
- M. **Slide6a Rock Bottom** - **you've** been there... **we all** have been there.
1. *Somewhere we've all been at our worse.*
 2. For you, you might have **felt it** at a **complete financial collapse**. **Or**, a **break-up** that you thought you'd never get past. **Or** a **divorce**. **Maybe** you found yourself in **the pit of despair**. In a dark cave of **depression**. **Or** found yourself **overrun by** a complete dependence on **some addiction**: *alcoholism, amphetamines, cocaine, nicotine, opiate, food, gambling, or sexual addiction*. **Or** **swallowed by** bitterness, anger or resentment.
 3. **Slide6b Rock bottom** became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life. *JK. Rowling*

N. **Slide7a** Why does God have us dwell on such **loss** and **sadness** in these 2 ch's?

1. Perhaps because **often** the realization of our **loss** prompts us **to return to God**. **Sadness can evoke our repentance**.
2. **Slide7b** 2 Cor. 7:10 *For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.*
3. Eccl.7:2-4 *Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting... 3 Sorrow is better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*

O. **Slide8 FLICKER OF HOPE** (25:27-30)

P. (25:27-30) As **Johnny Cash** lay in the dark, waiting to die deep inside *Nickajack cave*, a strange sensation overcame him. With a sense of clarity and peace, he began to think about his life, his decisions, and God's presence with him there. With a flicker of **hope**, but surrounded by pitch blackness, Cash began to crawl. After a time, he felt a faint breeze on his back, and Cash followed it until he eventually made his way out. Realizing God's hand in his life, Cash later entered rehab and recommitted his life to God.

1. **Slide9 Read** 2nd 1/2 of song by Gary Allan, *Nickajack Cave, Johnny Cash's Redemption*.
2. This last 4 verses is something like that faint breeze of **hope** in an otherwise *dark landscape*.

Q. **Slide10 Key:** **Judah** may have forgotten **God**, but **God** had not forgotten **His people**.

1. It would still be another **5 centuries** of ongoing **oppression** under foreign nations, **but** eventually, **out of that darkness**, the Light of Christ would come (**read** Mt.1:11-16 **Jeconiah** is *Jehoiachin*).
2. The book of 2 Kings **ends** with a glimpse of that **coming glorious restoration**.

R. **Slide11a Released...from Prison**

1. **Unbelievers** - In bondage to **sin**. **Believers** - In bondage to **sins**.
 - a) Would you like to be **released** from your **prison of sin(s)** tonight?

S. Slide11b Spoken Kindly To

1. Just as Boaz did to Ruth...*you have comforted me, and have spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not like one of your maidservants.* Ruth 2:13

T. Slide11c Given a Prominent Seat

- a) *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.* Rev.3:21
- b) This is our **position** in Christ. Our **standing** in Christ.

U. Slide11d New Garments

1. New robes. **Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.**
2. *The marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.* Rev.19:7,8

V. Slide11e Ate Bread

1. Fellowship. Koinonia. Communion.

W. Slide11f Received Provisions

1. Jehoiachin was not sent away from the king's palace with **a stockpile** to last him for months. **But** his provision was given him as a daily allowance.
2. A daily portion is *all that a man really needs.*
 - a) We do not need **tomorrow's** supplies, that day has not yet dawned, **and** its **wants** are as yet unborn.
 - b) The **thirst** which we may suffer in the month of **June** does not need to be quenched in **February**, **for** we don't feel it yet.
3. Sufficient for the day is *all that we can enjoy.*
 - a) We cannot *eat or drink or wear* **more than** the day's supply of food and clothes.
 - (1) **Also a surplus** gives us the **concern** of *storing it* **and** the **anxiety** of *watching against a thief.*
 - b) **One staff** aids a traveller **but a bundle of staves** is a heavy burden.
 - c) When our Father does not give us **more**, we should be content with **His daily allowance.**

d) Jehoiachin's case is **ours**, we have a **sure** portion, a portion *given us of the king, a gracious portion, a perpetual portion.*

4. It is a very sweet assurance that **a daily portion is provided for you.**

a) **How?** In the **Word**, by **meditation**, in **prayer**, and **waiting upon God**...you shall receive **renewed strength.**

5. **So**, enjoy your continual allowance.

a) *Never go hungry while the daily bread of grace...is on the **table of mercy.*** Spurgeon

X. What **spiritual provisions** will you ask for from Him tonight?

a) His strength? His nearness? His Intimacy?

b) Sensing His presence on the mountain top, in the dark valley, in your boat?

c) His Spirit afresh? His empowerment? The warm glow of His smile?

d) Wanting again to **drink deep** of the Well of His Word?

2. Let's **sing** to Him of **His beauty** & that **His face** is ultimately *what we seek.*