

2Chronicles 36:1 ¶ Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.

2Chronicles 36:2 Jehoahaz *was* twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

2Chronicles 36:3 And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.

After the death of Josiah, the people made his son Jehoahaz (aka Shallum) the next king. He was age 23 when he became king, and he reigned for a short three months in Jerusalem. His mother was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

2 Kings 23:31 "Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah."

The king of Egypt removed Jehoahaz as king and made Judah a tributary to Egypt. He made them pay a tribute of 100 talents (7500 lbs. or over 3 tons) of silver and a talent (75 lbs.) of gold.

2Chronicles 36:4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

2Chronicles 36:5 Jehoiakim *was* twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD his God.

2Chronicles 36:6 Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

2Chronicles 36:7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

2Chronicles 36:8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they *are* written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim, another son of Josiah, the king and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He then took Jehoahaz as a captive to Egypt where he eventually died.

Jehoiakim was age 25 at the beginning of his reign, and he ruled for 11 years in Jerusalem. He was an evil king before the LORD. Again, the writer of Kings identifies his mother.

2 Kings 23:36 "Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah."

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacked and bound the king in chains, intending to take him back to Babylon as his prisoner. According to Jeremiah, he

suffered a shameful burial somewhere (the Hebrew indicates far away) outside the gates of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 22:18–19 “Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah....He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.”

Nebuchadnezzar also carried away the vessels in the temple to put in the temple to his false god in Babylon.

Side note: Daniel and his three friends were taken a captive to Babylon at this time. This was the beginning of the 70-year captivity (cf v21); it was 605 BC. By comparing the verses in Daniel with the record in Chronicles, we know that the Babylonians set siege to Jerusalem for eight years before finally taking the city and removing Jehoiakim from the throne.

Daniel 1:1–3 & 6 “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it....And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king’s seed, and of the princes.... Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah....”

The Chronicler notes that more is written about Jehoiakim’s evil deeds in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin (aka Jeconiah or Coniah) became the next king.

2Chronicles 36:9 Jehoiachin *was* eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did *that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.*

2Chronicles 36:10 And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.

I think there is an error here and that Jehoiachin became king at age 18 as noted in Kings. I just don’t see the LORD describing an 8-year-old boy as doing evil—sinful, yes.

2 Kings 24:8 “Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign....”

He reigned for 3 months and 10 days in Jerusalem and was yet another evil king in the sight of the LORD.

Once again, Nebuchadnezzar and his armies came against Jerusalem. He took Jehoiachin captive, along with many others (as shown in the verses from Kings below) to Babylon along with more vessels out of the temple; this happened in 597 BC.

2 Kings 24:14–16 “And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths:

none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon."

We also learn from Kings that he was eventually released from prison and given a privileged position.

2 Kings 25:27–30 "And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life."

Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah his brother (relative) the king of Judah in Jerusalem.

2 Kings 24:8–12 "Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign."

The writer also identifies Zedekiah as Jehoiachin's uncle.

2 Kings 24:17 "And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah."

2Chronicles 36:11 ¶ Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

2Chronicles 36:12 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD.

2Chronicles 36:13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.

The 21-year-old Zedekiah succeeded his nephew as king and ruled for 11 years in Jerusalem. He was yet another evil king that refused to humble himself before the LORD or His prophet Jeremiah. He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar after swearing his loyalty to him in God's name. He was a

stubborn man with a hard heart who refused to follow the LORD God of Israel.

2Chronicles 36:14 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

2Chronicles 36:15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:

2Chronicles 36:16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till *there was no remedy*.

Under his rule, the chief priest and the people were once again entrenched in following the wicked deeds of the heathen and had yet again dishonored and made unclean the house of the LORD.

Still, the LORD had compassion on His people and His dwelling place in Jerusalem and sent them messengers (e.g., the prophets Jeremiah and Zephaniah). However, the king and the people mocked and mistreated God's prophets. They scorned His words and provoked Him to the point that judgment could no longer be held back.

2Chronicles 36:17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave *them* all into his hand.

2Chronicles 36:18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all *these* he brought to Babylon.

2Chronicles 36:19 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

The LORD finally gave them over completely to the king of the Chaldees, the Babylonians, in 586 BC. The enemy soldiers killed men and women, young and old; they showed compassion on no one. He also allowed Nebuchadnezzar to take as spoil all the treasures of the house of God, including the two brass pillars in the front of the temple, as well as from the the palace and the homes of government leaders. They burned down the temple and destroyed the wall around Jerusalem, burning everything with fire.

2 Kings 25:11–16 “Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away....And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And the firepans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away.

The two pillars, one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight."

The writer of Kings also tells us more about Zedekiah's fate.

2 Kings 25:4–7 "And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain. And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army were scattered from him. So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon."

Jeremiah and Ezekiel had prophesied that though Zedekiah would see Nebuchadnezzar with his own eyes, he would never see Babylon.

*Jeremiah 32:4 "And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, **and his eyes shall behold his eyes...."***

*Ezekiel 12:10–13 "Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; This burden concerneth the prince [Zedekiah] in Jerusalem....he shall be taken in my snare: and **I will bring him to Babylon** to the land of the Chaldeans; **yet shall he not see it**, though he shall die there."*

2Chronicles 36:20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

2Chronicles 36:21 To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

Nebuchadnezzar did not kill everyone. He took many captives to Babylon to serve him and his sons until his kingdom was overthrown by Persia. It was at this time that the prophet Ezekiel was taken captive.

The time of captivity of the Jewish people was predetermined by the LORD to allow the land of Israel to enjoy the 70 sabbath years that had been neglected over the last 490 years.

*Leviticus 25:1–5 "And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. **Six years thou shalt sow thy field**, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in **the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD**: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land."*

2Chronicles 36:22 ¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying, 2Chronicles 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which *is* in Judah. Who *is there* among you of all his people? The LORD his God *be* with him, and let him go up.

The Chronicler closed his writings with the news that Cyrus, King of Persia, had fulfilled the prophecy declaring that he would send the Jews back to Israel to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. In his first year he made a proclamation calling for any who were willing to go back to Jerusalem for that purpose to do so. Ezra tells us that he even sent them back with the temple vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken.

Ezra 1:7–8 “Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah.”

It was actually the prophet Isaiah, not Jeremiah, that recorded this prophecy.

Isaiah 44:21, 26, 28 “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me....That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof...That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”

The NIV Commentary adds this historical note: “In October 539 Babylon fell to ‘Cyrus king of Persia,’ as he overthrew Nabonidus and his son Belshazzar, who were its last native rulers. Cyrus’s policy of cooperating with local religions and of encouraging the return of exiles has received explicit archaeological confirmation from the inscriptions of the king himself (cf. the famous Cyrus Cylinder).”