

2 Chronicles 36:5-23

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[0 : 00] The Lord has provided and just the nourishment that it provides to our lamb.! I'm excited because tonight we will be finishing up the book of 2 Chronicles.

! So our passage will be in 2 Chronicles chapter 36.! 2 Chronicles chapter 36. We will be picking up in verse 5 and going to the end of the chapter, which gets us down to verse 23.

So 2 Chronicles 36 verses 5 through 23 will be our text tonight. When we get there we will be finishing up the historical writings of 2 Chronicles.

Hopefully we will see it kind of in a nutshell. There will be a lot of forewarning going into it. A lot of technical matters that we will kind of cover. A little bit more detailed because there is a lot that goes on in that last few verses there in that chapter.

But before we get into it, let's pray. Father, we thank you so much. We thank you for your faithfulness and your goodness towards us. We thank you for the provisions of this day.

[1 : 05] We thank you for this place. And we thank you for the opportunity we have to gather together with brothers and sisters in Christ. Father, we praise you for who you are. That you are high and lifted up, exalted upon the throne.

We praise you that we can come into your presence and we can fellowship with one another. We can be encouraged and be strengthened by that fellowship. We praise you that we can come and we can open up the word of God and we can see the word of God and what it has to say into our hearts and to our minds.

Father, we pray that you would lead us now as we study it and that our understanding of it would not be a gaining of information. But as always, it would be a transformation of our lives for your glory and honor.

We praise you for your word. We praise you for your power and presence as we come together. Pray that you would be with those in the back, with our young ones and our teachers and our students.

That Christ be magnified. We pray that you would make yourself known in a powerful way. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

[2 : 16] I am really doubly excited about this weekend. You know, many of us will be on our fall retreat. But I'm excited for those of you that will be here. Have a young man coming to preach for me.

21-year-old young man. They call them young preacher boys. I used to be one of those a long time ago. So, I'm not anymore. But it's great. I'm encouraged. I had a chance to meet with him yesterday.

I've known him since he was very young. But I'm excited for him to come and to be able to share with you and to share the gospel. Continue to be in prayer for him. Continue to be in prayer for that. So, I know the church is going to welcome him with open arms.

And it will be good any time when you, I can promise you, when you're just starting out preaching, any time you get an opportunity to get behind a pulpit, it is a treasured opportunity. So, I was excited to be able to offer that to him.

I'm excited for you guys to be able to encourage and to support him. And he is actually on staff at Fairhaven. And he's there. I don't know if he's full-time or part-time there.

[3 : 20] But really, I know he's preached there a couple of times. But really, super excited about that. I'm excited about our retreat. I'm excited about the things we'll study there. When we look at abiding in Christ as we gather together.

But there's a lot going on. It is a joyous time of War Trace Baptist. It is a time of growth. I'm excited as I see the church around me. And I'm encouraged by it.

But also, I'm also equally aware of the reality that there are matters that we must constantly be on guard against. So, again, lifting up the church in prayer, covet your prayers, and trusting that the Lord is going to continue to move in a powerful way.

Before we get into the text, this is kind of off script. And I don't normally do off script when we're videoing. But it's okay. We can do that. I get asked this question sometimes. And I guess Wednesday nights, I guess Sunday night would be a good time to answer it.

But Wednesday nights, we have a bigger crowd. And because we are videoing, if anybody ever wants to go back, they can look at it if they want to. I know the reality that I do not speak to current events very often.

[4 : 26] I also know that there are a number of things going on in our country. I know there are a number of tragic instances that are going on. The realities that are before us in our news events that are in all of our, in front of us, easily accessible in all of our phones and things that are moving.

And so the question is, it's just like any other matter that comes before church. Actually, as you look at it between pastors is, when do you choose to deal with something and when do you choose not to?

When do you address it and when do you not address it? And those are matters really that are just incumbent upon every pastor to kind of have wisdom there. I am open to any discussions anyone ever wants to have with that.

But I also do not mind sharing kind of my heart so that people understand where I'm at. And why I don't, because even other pastors actually say, oh, well, did you preach on this Sunday?

And I say, well, no, not in particular. And then they kind of ask me why. And people understand. I know that there is word out there, too, across a lot of platforms that say, well, if your pastor didn't address it, you need to leave that church.

[5 : 30] I would be cautious to give such warning if I was another well-known pastor. But just so that you understand where I'm at and you understand my heart and why I don't take, I don't want to say platform stances, but so much public stances and why I don't address current events as often as some others.

Billy Graham used to say that every preacher ought to preach with a Bible in one hand and a newspaper in another. Billy Graham had subscriptions to every major newspaper in the world. And he quite often spoke to current events, and he spoke to them very in details, and he spoke to the reality of them.

And he would share that advice. And as much as I love and I've benefited from the ministry of Billy Graham, I've benefited from it personally by going and being renewed at the Cove and things of that nature and have really been encouraged with some of that.

You also need to understand, too, that Billy Graham was an evangelist. And the role and the call in the office of an evangelist is so much different than the role and the call of the office of a pastor. The evangelist has the particular calling to deal with the need of the moment and to call people to focus on the need of the moment.

And they're doing that in such an interdenominational manner that they are speaking to the heart cry of every individual before them. And there are callings for that.

[6 : 53] And I agree 100% when he said that, that pastors need to be aware. They need to be as we look in the book of Esther and we see that the king was surrounded by men who understood their time.

You need to understand your time. But I think there's a unique thing that is incumbent upon pastors and upon churches. And I gather this from my study of church history.

There are matters that have taken place that were current events. The death of Jim Elliott and Nate Saints and those that were with him in the jungles when they died so tragically on the field.

A great movement happened following the death, in particular of Jim Elliott when it was publicized because he had just graduated from Wheaton College not too soon or not too long before that.

And there was a great movement of youth. And those youth had such missional zeal. And they took that missional zeal and they went to the field and did a great number of things. But with all due respect, the missional zeal was not connected to sound doctrine.

[7 : 57] So in the end, the missional zeal ended up not doing as much good, but rather a lot of harm to the cause of Christ. Because the answer, and I say this with all due respect, and I hope you understand my heart in this.

The answer throughout history has always been the church. Christ came to build the church. And it is the well-equipped, well-informed church of the gospel that meets the needs of the moment. And the answer has always been to rightly understand what the word of God says. And it has always been my heartbeat, and I know many of you understand that, is to call the church to be the church.

And we don't call the church because it would be hard for me to pick which current event do I speak to. Would it be the assassination of an individual that was speaking on a college campus?

Would it be the needless murder of a Ukrainian refugee who was riding a train? Would it be the needless murder of an elderly couple that was in their home in New York, and an individual walked in and tortured them and then burned them to death?

[9 : 01] Would it be the innocent slaying of children? I mean, what would be the current event that we would speak to? But one reality that we find out is that Scripture speaks to all of those because we know that there is nothing new under the sun.

And so my focus has always been, in my pastoring and in my preaching, is just to preach the word. Understanding that ultimately it is the word of God that addresses every problem that we ever encounter.

And it not only addresses it, but it answers the question of what do we need the most. So now I say all that, that if anybody ever has questions and they want to talk about those things, I'm up for discussion and we can talk about it.

But I also want you as a church to have full confidence. It's not that your pastor does not know current events, but I know the Ancient of Days who has told us that in the end days it will get worse. And I'd rather point people to Christ than to point them to a movement. And I do say that with all due respect. Because movements are great when they're rooted in the work and person of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

[10 : 10] And so I do tend to shy away from particular current events in my preaching because I'd rather point us to Christ and to see who Christ is and to be moved in that way.

So hopefully, if you have any questions as to why, hopefully that answers it. If you have any questions right now, I don't mind taking them. But I just wanted to share that because, as I said, I've been asked that by other pastors.

I've been asked that by other people. And that's just kind of, that's my stance, okay? So feel free to ask me at any time if you want to. The only answer I know to the problem that's going on in the world is Jesus Christ.

That's all I know. And so I have found that if I preach, if I preach current events, I have to change my preaching with every new happening. But if we just preach the Bible, then I always have a fresh passage to preach that will speak to the need that we have before us.

Okay? So hopefully you understand that. And let's just admit it. You have a long, slow, boring pastor who just trudges through the Word of God.

[11 : 15] And that's just all he does. Okay? That's it. And I told the pastor's search committee when I came here, I'm not razzle and dazzle. I'm not showmanship. It's just long and boring.

And it's just, we're just going to preach the Word. And so that's the thing that changes my heart is the Word of God. Well, thank you. Well, I am, but the Word is not.

Okay? I am, but the Word is not boring. The Word is fresh and powerful and cuts to the quick. So thank you. Okay, let's get into the Word. Because I had to say that now because I know I'll get caught up in the passage and I would forget to say it later.

Okay? Because this is a rich text. Your context for this, this passage before us, you will find the parallel found in the latter chapters of 2 Kings.

But your primary context that you will find here will be the books of Jeremiah and the book of Ezekiel. Even the book of Lamentations as it speaks to the tragedy of what takes place at the very end of this.

[12 : 14] So with the background information of knowing what's happening in Jeremiah, the book of Ezekiel, and even in the book of Lamentations. And knowing also the reality that 2 Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Bible.

So it would have been the very last portion of Scripture recorded. It is not the last prophetic word. That is the prophet Malachi. So that is the book of Malachi. But following Malachi in Hebrew Scriptures would have been 2 Chronicles, 1 and 2 Chronicles.

And what we are about to read are the very words that the Hebrew people would have read as they awaited the coming of the Messiah and the Savior. Hopefully we will find some encouragement in that because this is written to the people who have come out of Babylonian captivity.

More than likely the grandchildren or even the great-grandchildren of the people who came out of the captivity. You will find the last couple of verses in the book of 2 Chronicles are the first couple of verses in the book of Ezra.

So when we transition and we read the book of Ezra, you will see the same exact verses. Because they are written at two different times in history, but they are written for a purpose. So we are definitely in the latter days, if you will.

[13 : 24] And I want you to see here in the last few verses of 2 Chronicles, entering a time of discipline and restoration. Entering a time of discipline and restoration.

It says in verse 5, Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and the abominations which he did and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

And Jehoiachin, his son, became king in his place. Jehoiachin was 8 years old when he became king. Let me stop right here for just a moment. That 8, 2 Kings tells us he was 18.

Now, we're not saying that there are contradictory recordings in scripture. Many people believe that Jehoiachin was probably co-regent with his father for 10 years before he was self-regent.

Or he reigned independently of his father. It was not uncommon in those days for the king to go ahead and appoint his heir. And so more than likely, Jehoiakim. And what the chronicler gives us is when he was appointed king.

[14 : 47] Not necessarily when he began to reign independently of his father. That is recorded for us in 2 Kings. So for 10 years, he reigned alongside of his father. When his father was taken to Babylon, then he became the sole king at the age of 18.

I know that's a little bit extra, but I wanted you to have that. Jehoiachin was 8 years old when he became king. He reigned 3 months and 10 days in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord. At the turn of the year, King Abednezer sent and brought him to Babylon with the valuable articles of the house of the Lord.

And he made his kinsman, Zedekiah, king over Judah and Jerusalem. Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king. And he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem.

He did evil in the sight of the Lord his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for the Lord. He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear allegiance by God.

But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord God of Israel.

Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations.

[15 : 52] And they defiled the house of the Lord which he had sanctified in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by messengers because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place.

But they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised his word, and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people until there was no remedy. Therefore, he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with a sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm.

He gave them all into his hand. All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the kings and of his officials. He brought them all to Babylon.

Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles. And those who had escaped from the sword, he carried away to Babylon.

And they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths.

[16 : 57] All the days of its desolation, it kept Sabbath until 70 years were complete. Now, in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom.

And he also put it in writing, saying, Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Whoever there is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him and let him go up. 2 Chronicles 36, verses 5 through 23.

By the way, there's a really clear word here that you need to pay attention to when we get into the book of Ezra, is that Cyrus gave the decree and also put it in writing. That phrase, and also put it in writing, is of utmost importance by the time we get to the book of Ezra.

And you'll see why. Because if he had not put it in writing, then some other, the path would have went a different direction. But again, we are getting ahead of ourselves because now we're looking at this end time, this entering a time of discipline and restoration.

[18:07] And we say discipline and restoration because we believe that the Babylonian captivity had a particular effect. Much like we don't understand our salvation event until we can grasp the Exodus reality.

That is, that there were people born into slavery, that they were under the rule of a taskmaster, which they did not choose. They knew nothing but slavery, but there was a day when they cried out to the Lord, and the Lord God sent them a deliverer named Moses, and Moses led them out so that he may bring them in.

That is the Exodus event told us in the book of Exodus, but it's also the salvation event of everyone that has accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We were born captives of a ruler which we did not choose.

There was a day in which we cry out in desperation, and he sends the Redeemer, a kinsman Redeemer to us, who leads us out of that captivity that he may bring us into his presence.

That is, the Exodus event is the fulfillment, or is fulfilled in the salvation event. I also believe that we do not fully understand what is going on in the book of Revelation, in particular with the nation of Israel, until we understand what has taken place during the Babylonian captivity.

[19:14] Scripture is grand, and it is glorious, in that it continuously tells us the same story. It is but one book. It is but one account of God's interaction with his people, both Jews and Gentiles.

And what we see happening in the Babylonian captivity are a group of people who were very polytheistic. They were very unfaithful to the Lord God Almighty. They broke covenant with him. Therefore, he chastised them, and he disciplined, but he did not do it unendingly. He had a time constraint upon it. That time constraint we see from our passage. We will get to it in just a little bit. We see it as 70 years, and that time constraint was in particular because God was going to call them back to himself at the end of those 70 years. And what we find after the Babylonian captivity, historically, is that the nation of Israel comes out of Babylonian captivity, the most monotheistic people in the world, even to this day.

I told you it was going to be a technical sermon, okay? So stay with me. I'm going to throw you a lot of information. So what God was doing was not just disciplining his people. He was restoring them, bringing them back to the root of being a monotheistic nation.

[20:21] They were to be a nation with one God. And when the Jewish people came out of Babylonian captivity, never again do we see them worshiping a multitude of gods. 400 plus years transpire before the end of this book until we get to the Gospel of Matthew.

But even when we get into the Gospel of Matthew, what we do not find are the Jewish people worshiping foreign gods. As a matter of fact, what we find are the only people group within the Roman Empire that have an exception granted to them by the Roman Empire not to burn incense to Caesar.

The Pax Romana ensured that you can worship your God as long as you worship Caesar. The Jewish people had so revolted against that polytheistic worship. Think the Maccabean revolt during the Intertestament time.

And so much blood had been shed that the Roman Empire said, you know what, we'll give you a pass. The Jews, they don't have to burn incense to Caesar. So we see them being very, very monotheistic.

Now the reason I say that points to the book of Revelation is because I believe that is exactly what is going on during the tribulation period. That is for another time and another space. But I believe it is pointing to after the rapture of the church, the tribulation is an appointed time of discipline for God's particular people, that is the Jewish nation, so to restore them to faith.

[21 : 39] At that time, not to call them to monotheism, but to call them to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. This is why Paul refers to it in the books of Romans, Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11.

When the fullness of Gentiles has come, then the day of the Lord will transpire. The fullness of Gentiles just means when the last Gentile accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. I don't know the number.

You don't know the number. If you ever find anyone who says they know the number, walk away from them, tell them they don't know what they're talking about. Okay? That's no other way of putting it. That's just very blunt. Because Jesus says, no one knows the day, not even I, only my Father knows the day.

And if Jesus says, I'm not sure of it, then surely we're not sure of it. So we understand that, okay? In his humanity, he limited himself in that. But, so it is after that rapture that God begins to restore. This is why, when we find in the book of Revelations, you say, Pastor, I thought we was preaching 2 Chronicles. We are. But this is why, when you find in the book of Revelation, that there is an agreement made with the Jewish people for a time and times and half a time.

[22 : 37] Right? There is an appointed time with a particular people for a purpose. And he is restoring them. So, when we look at the Babylonian captivity, we're not looking at God just disciplining his children.

We're looking at him disciplining them to restore them. And it is an appointed time. And this really matters because how we see that, it really dictates how we understand who God is.

Because if God's not sovereign with the Babylonian captivity, then God's not sovereign over all events. But he is. He is in control. And he absolutely is in control. And we see that here.

So we do not get carried away by the events that we see before us. But I want you to see just three things in particular. Number one, what we notice is the decline of the latter years. The decline that came upon them rather rapidly.

After the good reign of Josiah. And Josiah again restores the temple. He renews the worship. He celebrates the Passover like none other before him. When Josiah dies and then we have his children reigning.

[23 : 35] Josiah dies because he goes into battle which he should never have went into with Necho, Pharaoh of Egypt. If you understand that, he didn't heed the warning. But anyway, once we see this discord and this disruption kind of happen in society, then Josiah's children begin to reign.

And the fall off happens very, very quickly. We are told that Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king and he reigned 11 years and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. This Jehoiakim is the Jehoiakim that we find in the book of Jeremiah.

Okay, so I'm not going to ask you to turn there. I'm not going to ask you to go through all of that. But just so you understand, when you read the book of Jeremiah, you are not reading a chronological event. Don't let that, Jeremiah is not written in chronological order.

Okay, because what you do is you encounter Jehoiakim before you meet Jehoiakim and he refers to him as Koniah, not Jehoiakim and it kind of gets you all confused but he's not really concerned about writing chronologically because he's writing for a purpose.

But what we find of this Jehoiakim and you'll remember him, you'll remember Jeremiah had a scribe. He had a word from the Lord and the scribe's name was Barak. Barak was told to record this word from the Lord and to go into the temple and to read what Jeremiah had written and Barak does that.

[24 : 52] He goes into the temple and he reads it and the people in the temple render garments. They say, wow, this is a word of warning from the Lord and so this is Jehoiakim is reigning during this time because Barak is then taken by the scribes or they take the scroll from Barak and the scribes take it and they go to Jehoiakim and they read the same scroll that has just broken the hearts of the individuals in the temple.

These are probably the same people that were appointed by Josiah, okay, the good king and they read it to Jehoiakim and as they're reading it, it's the winter time and the king is sitting in front of the fire and he cuts the scroll with his knife and he throws it in the fire.

Jeremiah chapter 29 coinciding also with Jeremiah chapter 45. If you remember that, he throws the word of God in the fire and says, I want nothing to do with that and he says, go find Jeremiah and Barak but we are told in Jeremiah that God hid Jeremiah and Barak from Jehoiakim and Barak had to rewrite the scroll and it was in the rewriting of the scroll, now pay attention to this because this is

where the word of God gets so good, okay, it is in the rewriting of the scroll that God declares through Jeremiah that Jehoiakim is so wicked that no descendant of Jehoiakim will ever reign upon the throne.

Now in your mind you're going, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute, he's got a son right after this, stay with me. God made this promise, a solemn promise that no descendant of Jehoiakim would sit upon the throne of David, okay, because of his wickedness.

It is he, by the way, Jeremiah says and it seems like a conflicting testimony, it says in the book of Jeremiah, you will be taken away into exile and you will go to Babylon, Jehoiakim doesn't like that, he says there's no way I'm going.

[26 : 37] Ezekiel says you will never see the city of Babylon. Now Jeremiah and Ezekiel by the way are both prophets from the Lord so now we have ourselves what we call a good biblical quandary, right?

We are told by one prophet you will be taken to Babylon. Now pay attention to this, this is why the word of God is so important. You will be taken to Babylon. Ezekiel says you will never see the city of Babylon.

Why? Because Jehoiakim when they do put the chains on him and lead him away, he is taken out of the city, his children are slain in front of him and his eyes are gouged out. By the way, he was taken to Babylon but he never saw it.

Fulfilling therefore the words of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in which Jehoiakim said there's no way both those things can be. Don't ever tell God that he cannot fulfill it completely. All of those things came about and his son is up on the throne and now we say well wait a minute his son is up on the throne that's not going to happen.

He only reigns independently for a short amount of time. Essentially what happens is three months. What happens is Nebuchadnezzar takes him to Babylon and then turns around and comes back and gets his son. You know his son in the book of Jeremiah by the name of Coniah and the reason we know he's not eight years old because it tells us in the book of 2 Kings that he goes into captivity with his mother and his children and his wives.

[27 : 55] Eight year olds don't have children and wives. Okay? And he's carried away in exile but it is also during the reign of this second one known as Coniah in the book of Jeremiah who is here referred to us as I told you I'm giving you a lot of information right?

Who is Jehoiachin. Jehoiachin's reign it is during his reign that the Babylonians carry away Ezekiel, Daniel and all the upper class of society. So when you read the book of Daniel he was taken away during Jehoiachin's reign.

Now when the book of Jeremiah refers to Jehoiachin he actually calls him Coniah and Coniah in Jeremiah chapter 22 there is a word from God in Jeremiah chapter 22 that says no descendant of Coniah will ever set up on the throne of David.

So what God has declared of his father he also declared of the son. You are a well informed people of the word of God and you know that when you open up the book of Matthew you find Jehoiachin there who is Jehoiachin and also Coniah same person by the way Jehoiachin is Coniah who is Jehoiachin and when you say why did we do that okay well Jehoiachin has a really great name it means the Lord will sustain by the time Jeremiah speaks of him he drops the Lord part of it the J-E on the front of his name gives credit to the Lord he says he's so wicked he's dropping the Lord's name from him and then when we get into the Old Testament I mean the New Testament in the book of Matthew it's just referred to as Jeconiah he's kind of the abbreviated version of his original name Jeremiah won't even refer to him as one who has the favor of the Lord upon him that's how wicked he is and he is included in the genealogy of Christ but as you know Matthew's genealogy traces its way through Joseph and Jesus is not the seed of man but rather he's the seed of a woman and we find the descendants of Mary found in the

Gospel of Luke which Jeconiah Jehoiachin or Coniah is not a part of God fulfills his word completely which by the way hold on to that reality because we'll get to it in just a moment but the last king is Zedekiah Zedekiah is not the son of Jehoiachin he here he is referred to as the relative he is actually Josiah's other son the good king Josiah so he would be Jehoiachin's uncle so now God has fulfilled his word Jehoiachin and Jehoiachin neither one will set up on the throne because it will be the uncle who is Zedekiah who is sitting up on the throne Zedekiah becomes just a puppet king of Nebuchadnezzar it is he that Jeremiah prophesies to it is also he that pulls Jeremiah out of the empty well vat you remember that when he was thrown into the empty cistern and the man goes

before him Zedekiah by the way kind of seems to have kind of a complex he gets mad at Jeremiah doesn't want anything to do with him they throw him into his cistern and he pulls him out and then he asks

[31 : 04] Jeremiah should I trust what should I do and Jeremiah says just go to Babylon right just surrender and Zedekiah says don't tell anybody I had this conversation with you and as soon as he goes away from him guess what he does he flees to Egypt this is what's in our text where it says he had no regard for the word of God given through Jeremiah so what you find here is this rapid decline of the latter days these kings who not only just disregarded the word they were trying to completely remove the word we read the suffering of Jeremiah the reason he's referred to as the weeping prophet is because of the misery he went through the reason Ezekiel doesn't go through most of that is because he is in Babylon by the time this takes place but look at the suffering here and you see the decline of these latter days and you know it's because of a disregard for the word of God disregard for the things of God and we're told that even the people in the temple were behaving as the other nations around them which leads us to the second thing and that is the destruction of the city and the temple itself this decline ultimately led to the destruction and in case we think that God was really rapid in his response and we fail to understand the long-suffering patience of the Lord God it tells us in verse 15 the Lord the God of their father sent word to them again and again by his messengers because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place think about that for just a moment he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place these very people that want nothing to do with what he is declaring to them these people who are casting

Jeremiah into the Amari sister and these people who are throwing the scrolls into the fire these people who are declared to be so wicked that no descendant would reign upon the throne but God in his long-suffering patience has compassion upon them and he waits and he longs and he's reaching out to them but they continually mocked the messengers of God despised his words and scoffed at his prophets we can see that in the prophetic writing we don't have to go back there and revisit that but here is this grand dangerous phrase until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people look at what it says until there was no remedy God's long suffering does not mean that God will be mocked until there was no remedy there was nothing that could be done there's no revival there's no renewal it tells us that God tried he had compassion he reached out but the sins of the people eventually led it to the place where there was no remedy the reality is this and I know it doesn't sound very patriotic to say but we do know that every civilization has a beginning and an end because of the degradation of man that man is a fallen being that there is no society no civilization that has ever endured eternally some have lasted longer than others some have risen to power and exerted that power in a greater way in a greater fashion but we should not be surprised when societies collapse and finally get to the point much like we see here where there is no remedy and the reason we see there is no remedy here is because it is full of people people who are not acknowledging the lord god as holy and rightfully the reign and ruler of their life and mankind and their sin their greatest rebellion is the rebellion of unbelief and as long as man exists nations will rise and fall and eventually get to the point where there is no remedy that is why in our thinking and our discord scripture tells us to set our mind on things above and not on things below because we know that it is there that we are focused on the eternal we have a citizenship which does not fail nor falter and our citizenship is with the king of kings and lord of lords now that ought to cause us to live in a certain way within the society that he's put us in so that we can be the remedy because if it had not been for the staying hand of the presence of the church and the holy spirit of god then the world would have went downhill a lot sooner but it is the grace of god in allowing the church to continue to exist in the society that he has put it that is really the staying hand because we are told I believe it is in the book of second thessalonians that when god calls his people to himself then those who have believed the lie will be given over to the lie and there will no longer be any opportunity for them to repent that is a scary passage I believe it's second thessalonians chapter 2 that in that day the day of the lord because by the way first and second thessalonians are all about the day of the lord when christ calls his people back to himself that those who have given themselves up to the lie will be given to the lie so that they may believe the lie and will no longer have an opportunity to repent because the testimony of the truth that is the church has already been taken out of the way and we understand that there comes a time when people get to this point where there is no remedy because god is the remedy when god became flesh and dwelt among us

and we refer to him as Emmanuel or Jesus Christ he is the remedy and when the remedy is not acknowledged and there comes a place where things come therefore it says he brought against them the king of the Chaldeans and this time no longer are we seeing the upper class of society being carried away but it's during the reign of Zedekiah when you want to know how bad it gets read the book of Lamentations the city is besieged for a number of years so much so that people begin to boil and eat their own offspring it is a horrendous series of events that take place during that time the most finessed individual among them does some atrocious realities just to exist the food supply and the water supplies cut off but the people will not give up eventually Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuchadnezzar and his leader break into the city and it is utter destruction they tear the wall down as the way Nehemiah found it in the book of Nehemiah they tear the temple down and they burn the temple and they try to build another temple they burn it they try to build something else they burn it they just keep burning it over and over and over and over again everything that is valuable is taken out of the temple it says they have no regard for the old or the healthy or the young or the sick they have no regard for anyone there because everyone is slain it is a time of utter destruction and it was the appointment of God who brought them there because they had rejected and rebelled against him all that time it is but for a season though those who did not fall by the sword were carried away into Babylon and the land is left desolate which brings us to the third and final thing in our text tonight not only do we see the decline of the latter days the destruction of the city and temple third and finally the encouragement we need to have look at the dependability of the word of God we have already seen how God can speak through two different prophets which seem to be two conflicting messages and yet both of them be fulfilled we have seen how he has declared to two different kings that they would have no descendants set up on the throne and even in the New Testament it is absolutely fulfilled but now we harken back to a prophecy given to us by Isaiah Isaiah chapter 44 the end of chapter 44 and into chapter 45 Isaiah calls a man by name now Isaiah is prophesying in the 700s B.C.

Jerusalem falls in 586 B.C. so it was probably 706-705 somewhere around there when the prophetic word of Isaiah is declared but the fall is not until 586 the decree of Cyrus is many many years even after that but it tells us the reason God had declared these things in verse 21 it says to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths Jeremiah declares in his word that the Babylonian captivity will last for 70 years it is that word by the way that Daniel reads and Daniel reads the 70 years and begins to pray it is that word that Daniel sees in the book of Jeremiah and understands that it is but for a season it is that reality that Ezekiel understands that it will be for that time that Ezekiel tells them to make themselves at home to build houses and to pray for the prosperity of Babylon because they're going to be there for a while and the reason they can have such confidence is because when Jeremiah said 70 years so that the land may have its Sabbath that's not the first time God had made that declaration as a matter of fact if you go back to the book of Leviticus in Leviticus chapter 26

[40 : 42] I told you it would be a lot of technical information right if you go back to the book of Leviticus in Leviticus chapter 26 God makes a solemn promise that is during his blessings and cursings time right and God says that if you do not observe the sabbatical year that is every 7th year don't plant your crops and then every 50th year have the year of Jubilee so you would have the 49th year as the Sabbath year and the 50th year two years in a row where you don't plant any crops and the reason is not just so the land would rest and say well it makes good crop management well it also makes good soul management because what you're saying is I'm trusting the Lord to provide enough in year 6 to feed me for year 6 and year 7 and even into year 8 so it is a good object of faith that's what the whole reality was is I'm trusting in the giver of the harvest more than I am in the harvest itself and he says to just take that time every 7th year give it a year of rest every 50th year observe the year of Jubilee but God declares in Leviticus chapter 26 that they're not going to do that he says and when you do not do this then I will carry you away into exile and I'll put you in a land that is not your own until your land has observed its Sabbath rest so what was God saying

God says by faith you will either keep the word or by force I will make you realize the word he had declared to them all the way back in the book of Leviticus that if they did not walk according to faith then he would give the land its rest for a number of years actually enough sevens if you do the math and it is absolutely right by the way this is how we date by the fall of Jerusalem and the issuing of the decree of King Cyrus just for all you real good Bible geeks like me now this is how you date not

only the Exodus event but this is how you date the flood of Noah this is how you date everything this is how you date everything going back okay it's because these 70s matter we know how long they were in the land because it was 70s that they did not observe we can date it very clearly we do not date it by the first deportation but it is by the first mass deportation of the Babylonians into Babylon but God is keeping his word he's keeping not only what Jeremiah had declared but he's also keeping what he himself had declared in Leviticus chapter 26 and it says now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah because Jeremiah said that this would be a season with an end to it so God uses Cyrus to bring this end but as we said in Isaiah 44 and 45

God called Cyrus by name God said that I will raise up and I want you to pay particular attention to this passage I will raise up a king he will know that I am sovereign that I gave him authority the curtain will be open before him he will reign upon the throne the doors of bronze will be open so that he may come in and assume power and when he does he will know that I reign on high and since he knows that I reign on high and he even refers to Cyrus as his anointed he says he will be my anointed that will issue my decree now does that mean Cyrus is a believer?

no that's not what it means that just means that God was using him as an instrument he will be my anointed and I will use him to issue a decree when Cyrus came into Babylon when the Persians came in just so you know your history a little bit and if you can read this in the book of Daniel 2 when the Persians came in they came in unopposed you know what happened?

the city gates of Babylon were opened to them they walked in and took control just like Isaiah said there was no battle the gates of bronze were cast open before them they walked in and said oh by the way we're in charge now and they were and Cyrus is here and Cyrus issues a decree and he issues a decree just as God had said why?

[44 : 53] because God was even if Cyrus had said his lowercase g God gave him the authority to do it we know likewise that it was not that it was the Lord God Almighty and look at how he refers to God it tells us that he issues this proclamation verse 23 thus Cyrus king of Persia said the Lord the God of heaven did you notice that?

the God of heaven he doesn't refer to him as the God of the Jews or the God of Jerusalem but rather he refers to him as the God of heaven and Isaiah what does it say?

I will make him to know that I reign on high from heaven Cyrus says the Lord the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem and I'm about done which is in Judah this is the last word this last sentence is the last word it is a word of praise and a word of promise that was issued not only to those who are leaving Babylonian captivity we'll get to that in the book of Ezra but this would be the last thing the Hebrew people read in their Bibles and look at what it says whoever there is among you of all his people and to those exiles that were living that the chronicler was writing to whoever there is among you of all his people may the Lord his God be with him and let him go up it is a word of promise for a coming Messiah whoever there is among the people of God let the Lord his God be with him and let him the wording is and let him arise if we were reading Hebrew scripture we would turn the page and we would immediately go to the genealogy of the one among God's people who is rising up and it is Jesus Christ and we would see that God is with him and he is going up there is a dependability of the word of God it can be trusted in every aspect in every way in every part and portion God's word was absolutely true everything God had declared would happen did happen just as he said it would even with the issuing of King Cyrus I know that was a little bit long a little bit technical but hopefully you see here this was a people of God entering a time of discipline and restoration when we transition to the book of Ezra we will begin to see them as they come out of that discipline and how God is restoring them we find it here in 2nd Chronicles 36 verses 5 through 23 thank you thank you brothers okay happy