

Wednesday, May 10, 2023 ▫ Read 2Kings 23:28–24:20

Questions from the Scripture text: What are written where (v28)? Who helped whom, where, in Josiah's days (v29)? When Necho had to pass through Israel to get there, what did Josiah do? With what result? What did Josiah's servants do with the body (v30)? Who took whom to replace him? What did they do to him? Who became king in v31? How old was he, and how long did he reign? What was his mother's name? What did he do, in Whose sight (v32)? According to what? Who did what to him in v33? What did Necho impose on the land? Whom did Necho make king in whose place (v34)? To what did he change his name? What did Necho do with Jehoahaz? Who paid the imposed tribute (v35)? How did he come up with the money? How old was he when he became king (v36)? How long did he reign? Who was his mother? What did he do in Whose sight (v37)? According to what? Who came up in his days (24:1)? How did Jehoiakim respond to this? For how long? Then what? Who(!) sent whom against him (v2)? To do what to Judah? According to what word? How does v3 emphasize the reason this happened? Whose sin, particularly, had led to this (cf. 21:16)? And what else had Manasseh done (v4)? What wouldn't the Lord do? What are written where (v5)? What happens to Jehoakim in v6? Who reigns in his place? What no longer happens in v7? Why not? How old was Jehoiachin when he became king (v8)? How long did he reign? Who was his mother? What did he do in Whose sight (v9)? According to what? Who came up at that time (v10)? Against where to do what? Who shows up in v11? Who respond in v12? By doing what? And what does Nebuchadnezzar do in which year of his own reign? What did Nebuchadnezzar do to whom in v14? Which people in particular? Whom did he leave? Whom else did he take where (v15)? How does v16 catalog this exile? Whom does the king of Babylon make king in v17? How was he related to Jehoiachin? To what did the king of Babylon change Mattaniah's name? How old was Zedekiah when he became king (v18)? How long did he reign? What was his mother's name? What did he do in Whose sight (v19)? According to what? Why did all of these bad kings and defeats and exiles happen (v20)? Until he had done what? What does Zedekiah do at the end of v20?

How did God finally punish Judah? 2Kings 23:28–24:20 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these thirty verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the Lord punished His people by giving them evil kings who not only continued to offend God but were also unskilled leaders, suffering defeat and destruction.**

How to read this history. 24:2–4 and 24:20 must control how we read this history. Others may get excited about the decline of Assyria, the rise of Babylon, the last gasp of Egypt, and the smaller players jockeying to fill various vacuums in the midst of it all. But, the Spirit gives us interpretive comments to keep us from getting wrapped up in all of that. It is not geo-politics but God-pleasing that matters in history. Necho and Nebu may think that it's all about them, but they're only permitted whatever power will suit the plan of the history of redemption.

Point of no return. We've seen this once, already, when Josiah sought the Word of Yahweh, and the Lord responded that indeed the curses threatened in Deuteronomy were now coming irreversibly, as soon as Josiah died. But here it is again in 24:3; Manasseh was the tipping point. It is dangerous to offend the Lord and take grace for granted. Particularly for churches and nations, there's a point where God has glorified His patience as much as He is willing and turns instead to glorify the justness of His wrath. Now, Josiah is dead (v28–30), and the destruction ensues.

Either a household, a church, or a nation is reforming and repenting, or it is backsliding and hardening. There is no neutral, which the Bible calls lukewarm, and God describes as vomitous. And, frighteningly, if one of these is not reforming/repenting, it cannot know how close it is to that point of no return. It is essential to the life of a covenantal body that it actively seek to please the Lord, in dependence upon His grace.

For individuals, there is a similar dynamic. There is a point at which the Lord stops giving the mercy of the pricked conscience, the terrors of Hell, the sense/curiosity that God might be desirous and glorious. When there is no repentance and faith, there is the terrible danger that one is reaching the point when God leaves him to himself. Ultimately, nothing matters compared to one's condition before God.

Boring destruction. Ostensibly, this history is full of intrigue. Necho prefers Eliakim to Jehoahaz, and renames him Jehoiakim, so that even his identity will remind him that he's Egypt's choice. Then Nebu prefers Mattaniah to Jehoiachin, and renames him Zedekiah, which has the same effect. Everyone's got an agenda. But in the end, we just have four reigns in a sing-songy pattern of 3mo-11yr-3mo-11yr with the above parallels already mentioned. It's all ho-hum, given in fairly rapid-fire narrative. Like when the northern kingdom was going down in ch15, now it's Judah circling the toilet bowl. They go out not with a bang, but with a series of boring, rhyming whimpers.

What is the most important part of the history of your household? Your church? Your nation? Your life? Why is it so dangerous to "coast" either in the Christian life, or in the life of a household, church, or nation? How are you currently participating in reformation/repentance in each of these spheres?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for Your marvelous patience. We see how patiently You bore with Judah for so many generations, and we know that You have been similarly patient with us. Forgive us for how we have taken that patience lightly. We see how Egypt, and Babylon, and Judah were all concerned with their interaction with one another, but disregarded what was most important: how they interacted with You. Forgive us for when pleasing You, in dependence upon Your grace, isn't the great and all-encompassing concern of our church and our households. Have mercy, and do not let us decline into the repetitive pattern of those who spiral away from You. Grant to us, instead, to return to You with all our heart and always be reforming and repenting by the grace of Jesus Christ. We rejoice at the infinite value of His atoning blood, and come to You through Him alone, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP80 "Hear, O Hear Us" or TPH80B "Great Shepherd Who Leadest Thy People"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second kings, 23, verse 28, through chapter 24, verse 20. These are God's words. Now, the rest of the act is just hire and all that he did. Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of judah? In his days, pharaonoco, king of Egypt, went to the aid of the king of Assyria to the river.

Euphrates and king desawa went out against him. And veronico killed him at megiddo when he can run it in. Than his sermons moved, his body in a chariot from

the ghetto. Brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took, Jehovah has the son of Jesse.

Anointed him and made him king in his father's place. He was 23 years old when he became king. And he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hammeh. The daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did evil. And the side of Jehoahaz according to all that his fathers had done.

Ahaz, put him in prison that red block in the land of a mat that he might not reign in Jerusalem and he imposed on the land, a tribute. Of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold. Then Ahaz made Ahiyah keen. The son of desire king in place of his father Ahaz.

And changed his name to Jehoahaz. And Jehoahaz, Jehovah has, and went to Egypt. And he died. So Jehoahaz gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh. But he taxed the land to give money. According to the command of Pharaoh, he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land.

From everyone, according to his assessment. To give it to Ahaz. Jehoahaz was 25 years old when he became king. Then he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibud. The daughter of Padaya of Ruma. And he did evil in the sight of Jehovah. According to all that, his fathers had done.

In his days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up and Jehoahaz became his vassal for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him. And you always sent against him. Raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, bands of the people of Ammon. He sent them against Judah to destroy it.

According to the word of Jehovah. Which he had spoken by his servants, the prophets. Surely. At the commandment of Jehovah. This came upon Judah. To remove them from his site because of the sins of Manasseh. According to all that, he had done. And also, because of the innocent blood that he had shed, he filled Jerusalem within us and blood.

Which would not pardon. Now. The rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did. Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? So, Jehoahaz came to rest with his fathers. Then Jehoahaz died. His son reigned in his place. When the king of Egypt did not come out of his land anymore.

For the king of Babylon, had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the river. Jehoahaz. Jehoahaz was 18 years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem. Three months. His mother's name was Nahushta. The daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.

And he did evil in the sight of Jehovah. 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 then we can neither king of Babylon came against the city as a servant were besieging it. Enjoy a team king of Judah.

Sorry, Jehoahaz king of Judah. His mother, his servants, his princess, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon. And the king of Babylon in the eighth year of his reign. Took him prisoner. And he carried out from there, all the treasures of the house of Jehoahaz. And the treasures of the king's house.

And he cutting pieces, all the articles of gold, which Solomon King of Israel had made in the temple of Jehovah. As Y'all play had said. Also, he carried into captivity all Jerusalem. All the captains, all the mighty men of valor. 10 thousand captives. And all the craftsmen. And the smiths.

Non remained except the poorest people of the land. And he carried Jehoahaz captive to Babel. The king's mother, the king's wives his officers. And the mighty of the land, he carried in into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. All the valiant men seven thousand. And craftsman. Smiths 1000. All who are strong and fit for more.

These the king of Babylon brought captive. To Babylon. Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah. Uncle king in his place. And changed his name, Jehoahaz. Was 21 years old, when he became king. And he reigned 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was he tall the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

He also did evil in the sight of Jehovah. According to all that Jehoahaz had done. For because of the anger of Jehovah, this happened in Jerusalem and Judah. That he finally. Cast them from his presence. Then Jehoahaz rebelled. Against the king of Babylon. So far, the reading of God's.

Inspired. And Over there. It worked.

So, when Someone who isn't paying attention to? The comments that the holy spirit makes by the prophet. On this reads. About Egypt coming out against Babylon and Jehoahaz making the mistake of putting himself in Egypt's way and You can actually read a little bit more about that in second chronicles.

Um, And Babylon. And The different. Countries that were Trying to fill the power gap with the Assyrians on the decline and Egypt, trying to counterbalance babbling and the rise. The last kind of last gasp of Syrian and Moabite. Fightings and they get very interested. In the history of it and they treat it like it's all Uh, it's all about.

Geo political. Warfare and the politics and military interests of it all. But the lord doesn't allow us to read it this way. Because he names all that stuff. In fairly short order. In particular when he summarizes the raiding bands of the Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites. And then it says, according to the word of Y'allah, which he had spoken But his servants of prophets and then, he says, surely Of the commandment of Jehovah.

This came upon Judah. And then it's a lot at the end of our reading. It says again. For because of the anger of Jehovah. This happened in Jerusalem and Judah. That he finally casts them out. From his presence. What we see here.

Is the rapid? Decline. And the author doesn't give us many details. It's very similar. To, when the northern kingdom was. Was rapidly declining. He gives us. Several rains very quickly. And in rapid fire fashion. Because what matters is? That there's a point at which a nation of church. Gets beyond the point of no return.

And we see this, even in the bible of people. Where they hardened themselves. And the lord appeals to them, no more. He gives them up. Gives them over. To themselves. Yeah, and this is That's a dreadful judgment. But what he said, About Manasseh. And you remember he's been setting us up to hear about this because he didn't even tell us about Manasseh's conversion.

You have to go to second chronicles to read that. But then, when Jehoahaz finds the book of the law and he sends to ask And the Lord, remember, he tells him, That you won't be in his day and mercy to him and responds to the faithfulness that the lord had produced in Jehoahaz by his own grace.

But that it was surely coming that. To the point of no return had been reached the Uh, just as the sins of the Amorites. Had been filled up. The 400 years or so after Abraham received the promise. So now the sins By Judah. Have been filled up. And so we have Almost.

A sing-songi rhythm. Of these last four rains. Three months, 11 years. Three months, 11 years. Y, three months. Because the king of Egypt, didn't like, what was Uh, like the new administration in Judah. And so he went and grabbed the king that was there. And replaced him with a with someone from the royal family that he liked better.

Who would pay the? 100 pounds of silver on the talent of gold. And he hauled the three-month king back to Egypt. Second phase. Y, three months. Well, because the king of Babylon. Hold the three-month king. Off to Babylon. And so, you have this. Um, saw the king. Although, we'll see.

How that goes. Because we see at the very end of the, the reading. Rebelled against the king of Babylon. And we'll come to that in a moment. Or next week, Lord willing. When I come to the next passage, And, The rise and fall of nations is. Not nearly as important.

As the conduct of a nation before the Lord, and what the Lord himself is doing. And so, he gives us this kind of rapid fire rhythmic. Almost rhyming. History of these last four. Rains, these last four. Administrations. So that we will see that. The people of God before. God himself and receiving.

According to what God had said in his word, And according to what? According to what they had done. That. This is what we are to see in history. So that we Although, We must respond wisely to the government that has set over us and other governments in the world.

Those who are in government have. Significant responsibilities and in those ways. Yet the main thing, the great thing would be to interact. With God. Just as the main thing for you in your own life. In your individual life, personal life. Is that you would have Christ. That whatever else.

Uh, you would lose to get him. He would be worth. And, That having him would be all of the happiness and strength, and blessedness of your life in this world. And that having him, nothing can take away from you. The perfection and everlasting blessedness. Of the next world. But it's also true to a great extent of a family.

And of a church. End of the nation. That the great thing is how it interacts with the Lord Jesus Christ, How it interacts with the living God? That a family operate before God and in the way that he has designed the family to operate. Both in the roles within it.

For instance, the husband The life. Parents and children. And each. Can. You know, other Uh, wielding authority or yielding to authority in a way that honors. The Lord. And putting others interests about themselves. But also in, The pattern of The life of the society of the whole. That morning and evening, come.

Before the Lord caught. That his word would be. More food to us than the bread that The the family, the physical bread that the family Uh, eats together. That it'd be punctuated by the Lord's day that six days of labor, and that there would be a cooperation in and labor and the harmony that.

Um, Honor's God brings him glory in his design in the home and making each one of us different. But giving each one of us apart, But then sending aside of the labor for the one day a week. For the day of worship. And being then, as I as a family, those Who labor to be able to be hospitable.

Mom by herself. Cannot. Exercise, hospitality if She's barely surviving. Um, The upkeep and maintenance of the home. The home does not feel like a place that we can open to others. If we are not cheerful and welcoming with one another, If it is not a pleasant joyful and peaceful.

Society already. Why would we open it up and bring people in? Uh, either. We will be as we ordinarily are And we will harm them by their time with us. Or we will be hypocrites. And pretend with them among us to be something that we are not. And so, Uh, there is much before the face of God.

For. Uh yeah, there is much to be considered in the way a household. Functions before the face of God. A church, should think. Um, first and foremost of how it functions before the Lord. It doesn't matter. How anyone in the church want stores, Christ, over the church. Is the one who's worship preferences.

Must always be consulted and catered to as much as possible. He is the Uh, the great member of the church. He is the head. To whom the rest of us belong. As members. Um, Just as it is right for us when there are parts of the body who are not there, And, We miss them, and we wish they were there.

When there are parts of the body, who return or the Lord brings among us, new believer, in which excited to have them with us. It should be infinitely more. So for the Lord Jesus. So that if we have him and Every. Everything else is? Um, Is an ancillary blessing but he is the main blessing and if we don't have him, there's no one else whom we could have among us.

And nothing else that we could do. Uh, that could compensate for that. That we seek especially to keep the first table of the law together as a congregation. That any loving of our neighbor is ourselves and we love any loving of our brothers as Christ has loved us. Would flow out of loving him first.

With all our heart soul, mind and strength. So that, as we pray for, The work to be done in the hearts of the people of the congregation. So that we, as we pray, for effectiveness fruitfulness and faithfulness and evangelism. As we pray for the the peace and prosperity of the congregation.

We do it. Our hope and him. Before whom we walk and The pleasing of him is our highest aim. That the main thing for the congregation be, How we interact? With the Lord. And then also for a nation. And then God's mercy to us, we have Some tests. Not as it should be.

And may he grant us repentance and And growth in holiness reformation, in our home. Than in our church. But we have no idea what it is like for a nation. To have as it's great concern. What it? Uh, does and how it appears before the face of God, how it appears in the sight of God?

Isn't that what we've heard? As the first thing about every rain, And he did wake. In this side of Yahweh. There's either good or evil. And that should be the great concern of a nation. That it would be said of them and they did, right? They did. What was good.

They did what was right? In the sight of Yahweh. And the nation that doesn't. Was destined to be used. For the gathering and perfecting Of whatever saints. The Lord is bringing to faith in Christ at that time. But then to end up on the scrap heap of history. For once they're usefulness and the planet redemption is done, they will be destroyed.

For their offensiveness before the face of God. Which is where we are right now as a nation. And yet to make a board. Give us repentance. Lest we end up being? One of those. Boring few paragraphs in the history of the world. Where there was some geopolitical stuff? Guys came into power and guys went out of power.

But it all happened because of what Yahweh had said. Concerning his work among his people.

Man, let's pray.

Their father, we grieved to read. Of the demise of Judah or Southern Kingdom. That even with these various sons of David, they were all those who did. What was evil in your sight. And those who were increasingly weak. And suffered defeat and destruction. Because you had warned your people with your word, you had patiently, born with them and there many backslidings. When do you had even by your grace given many reformations?

And yet they persisted until the time of Manasse when they reached. The tipping point of no return.

Lord weep. Thank you, that. For the sake of your son. Our Lord Jesus. Whom you gave to be thus son of David. About whom you had made the great and precious promises. That for his sake, you have given us to know you. Pray that for each one of us.

Individually in our life. That would be the great thing. That we know you and belong to you. That each one of us would be able to say in our heart, for you. I am my beloveds and my beloved as mine. You pray, Lord. If there are any who just go through the motions?

That you would not allow them to reach the point of no return. Where they? Having been familiar with you. And your word for a long time. Finally, just become hardened. And unaffected and you leave them to yourself for themselves. Don't let them. Do that large? We do pray for Sophia.

That you would cause as it were the scales to fall from her eyes and she would be able to see spiritual things. That she would see sin for what it is. Because Your spirit would give her to see you for who you are. And that she would begin to hit head for its being against you, and it's being sinful.

Most of all that you would call her to see Christ. As a savior of sinners and does her own savior. So that when she grieves and is alarmed over her own said, she would find comfort in the tournament that you have given. The pray Lord for our household. That you would help us to walk before you.

The honor you in our interactions directly with you. And in our interactions with one another. Pray, Lord, for our congregation that you would continue reformation and revival. And that you would make it to spread throughout our Presbytery, throughout our sentence. That you would give a general and great outpouring of your holy spirit.

And Lord, we pray for our nation. Which so obviously, is in. Extreme rebellion against you. We pray, Lord that it's usefulness for the building of the church would continue. But that, that would be by your giving. Repentance and reformation and making us to be. Such a nation and such a people.

As for him. Pleasing you and not offending you. Fearing you and obeying you. Would be the great concern. Of our country. One of those whom you sent in places of authority in it, Granted, we ask in Jesus name, Amen.