

- PRAY
- READ Isaiah 40:1-11; Matthew 3:1-12

Theme: “Behold your King is coming to you” (Zech.9:9; Mt.21:4-5)

CHARTING THE COURSE FOR THIS EVENING:

- House cleaning and tying loose ends: Jeconiah.
- Isaiah in Matthew’s Gospel & the importance of looking at all history “Messianically.”
- John the Baptist & the message of repentance.

HOUSE CLEANING AND TYING LOOSE ENDS: JECONIAH

A. The meaning of Jeremiah 22:24-30:

1. Judah will suffer the full consequences of her sin.
2. There was no hope for deliverance from Babylon.
3. Babylon would prosper.
4. Jeconiah reigned only three months. He wasn’t any worse of a sinner than his forefathers. Jeconiah was taken away into Babylonian captivity (2 Kings 24:8-16).
5. The false prophets of Jeremiah’s day were preaching peace (**Jer.6:14; 8:11; 14:13; 28:9**), while Jeremiah was preaching destruction and 70 years of captivity. Jeremiah was telling the people to live “peaceful” lives in Babylon (**Jeremiah 29:1-11** [Note the mention of Jeconiah!]).
6. Hananiah the false prophet said that Jeconiah would return back from Babylon after two years (**Jeremiah 28:1-17**).
7. It is in this context of false hope, false comfort, and false prophecy about Jeconiah’s return that Jeremiah gives his prophecy about Jeconiah. Jeremiah’s point in 22:24-30 was to say that the false prophets were dead wrong. Neither Jeconiah, nor any of his sons would return to Jerusalem. God’s judgment on apostate Jerusalem was irreversible.
8. The Davidic kingship was cut down in Jeremiah’s day. But it would sprout up again (see “branch” and Ezek.17:22-24).

B. Interestingly, Jeremiah had prophesied in **36:30-31** that Jehoiakim would not have any seed reign and yet he did! Jeconiah was his son who reigned for three months.

C. What is the significance of Jeconiah in the context of Matthew?

1. Jeconiah was the end of the Davidic kingship. He was the last king to reign before Jerusalem fell to Babylon.
2. After Jeconiah, his uncle Mattaniah reigned, but he was a puppet king appointed by Nebuchadnezzar.
3. Matthew will emphasize that Jesus is the New Covenant King as prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 30:20-22; 33:14-17).
 - a. Jer.30:20 is a play on Jeconiah’s name. Jeconiah means “establish.”
 - b. Jer.30:21-22 points to the ruler (same ruler mentioned in Micah 5:2).
4. Matthew’s mention of “Jeconiah” is another instance of the scandal of the Davidic monarchy leading up to the Babylonian captivity. Note the mention of the Babylonian captivity in Matthew 1:11,12,17).

ISAIAH IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

A. Explicit references to Isaiah in Matthew

1. Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:23
2. Isa 40:3 in Matt 3:3 (cf. Mark 1:2//Luke 3:4)
3. Isa 9:1-2 in Matt 4:15-16
4. Isa 53:4 in Matt 8:17
5. Isa 42:1-4 in Matt 12:18-21
6. Isa 6:9-10 in Matt 13:14-15
7. Isa 29:13 in Matt 15:8-9
8. Isa 56:7 in Matt 21:1
9. Isa 5:1-2 in Matt 21:33
10. Isa 13:10 in Matt 24:29

Did you know?

“The New Testament quotes the book of Isaiah more often than it does the works of all the other prophets combined” (John Skilton).

B. Allusions or Echoes of Isaiah in Matthew

1. “He will be called a Nazarene” (Matthew 2:23 with Isaiah 11:1)
2. “[T]he blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matthew 11:5 with Isaiah 35:5-6; 61:1).
3. “And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day” (Matthew 11:23 with Isaiah 14:13,15).
4. “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased” (Matthew 3:17 with Isaiah 42:1 with Psalm 2:7). This forms something of an *inclusio* with Matthew 3:3//Isaiah 40:4.
5. Parable of the vineyard (Matthew 23:33-46 with Isaiah 5:1-7).
6. “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth” (Isaiah 53:7 with Matthew 26:63; 27:12,14).

NOTE: I am beginning to think that parts of Isaiah are “Messianic History.” By this, I mean that Isaiah spoke of the events of his day with an eye on *the Day*. Isaiah spoke of the events of judgment and deliverance (i.e. salvation) in his day (8th century B.C.) using the language of the ultimate deliverance and judgment Jesus Christ would bring about.

Examples of what I mean by “Messianic History.”

Isaiah 24-27 is commonly called “Isaiah’s Apocalypse” and these chapters are the conclusion of the judgments beginning in Isaiah 13 onward, including Jerusalem. Chapters 24-27 of Isaiah look forward to **the Day** of God’s universal judgment of the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below (Isa.24:1ff.21), the salvation of the nations (24:13-16a; 25:3), a feast for all peoples (Isa.25:6), the death of death (25:7) and the Sovereign LORD wiping away the tears from all faces (25:8).

Isaiah spoke of the judgment of the nations (Isaiah 13-24). There were many “interim fulfillments” of these judgments. But the ultimate judgment Isaiah was anticipating was that of **the day of Messiah** – the Day that is still future for us.

APPLICATION: SEEING OUR HISTORY “MESSIANICALLY”

What did natural disasters mean in Isaiah’s day? (Isaiah 45:5-7,9,10)

*What do natural disasters mean for us today, which is also **the day**?*

What did unrest and judgment of nations mean in Isaiah’s day?

*What does unrest and judgment of nations mean in our day, which is also **the day**?*

“C.S. Lewis in one of his books said that God has three ways of speaking to people: conscience in God’s whisper, Scripture is God’s voice, and calamity is God’s shout. And when people are deaf to the whisper and will not listen to the voice, sometimes God flags them down with a shout of calamity, to remind us that as a nation we cannot do it alone, we cannot really live without God” (taken from J.G. Vos, *Studies in the Book of Revelation* Lesson 28 pp.21,22).

How are the wildfires in California relevant Scripturally?

What is it in our lives that we need to throw away? What is it on the Day of Judgment that God will burn away from our lives? (1 Corinthians 3:9-15)

SUMMARY: Isaiah looked at the history of his day in terms of the coming King. Matthew looked at the history of his day in terms of it being **the Day of the coming King**. Remember our theme? “Behold your King is coming to you” (Zech.9:9; Mt.21:4-5)

In the 21st century, if we are to have a biblical worldview of world events, we must look at them as the prophets, Gospels, the Apocalypse. We live in a world that is sin cursed. And the message that we as Christ’s church have to offer is the message of repentance (cf. Luke 13:1-9). All of the wars, rumors of wars, terrorism, fires, natural disasters – they are Jesus Christ’s warning of the coming judgment. They are a call to repentance.

FOR NEXT WEEK: READ MATTHEW 3

What is the significance of John the Baptist’s ministry?

Who are the Mandaeans?

In what sense are New Testament saints greater than the greatest of the Old Testament prophets?