

The Curse of Jeconiah, Also Known as Jehoiachin or Coniah

22: 20-30

DIG: What happened to Jehoiachin during his reign as king? Why was he like a broken pot, cast aside? Did any of his descendants sit on the throne of David (Second Kings 24:15-17)? Why or why not? Zedekiah ruled next. If you were Zedekiah, what would you conclude from this sad replay of your family history? Through how many reigns had God been patient? Why did YHWH wait so long to end the line? From Manasseh on, what does this teach us about parenting? How could Josiah have such ungodly sons? What was the consequence of their turning away from God and to other gods?

REFLECT: As in Jeremiah's day, leaders today usually set a tone for others. What national leader have you seen destroy his country? Whether from incompetence or an outside invasion, did that country ever recover? What positive tone or atmosphere are you setting in your home, job, school, shul or church? Where might you have a negative impact? What are you counting on? In whom do you put your hope?

598 BC during the three-month reign of Jehoiachin

Concerning Jerusalem: This section begins and ends with Lebanon. Lebanon is a geographical reality that refers to a far boundary; as a metaphor it refers to pride and security. Go up to Lebanon (north of Judah) and cry out. Spoken to the people collectively; hence the use of the feminine in Hebrew. Let your voice be heard in Bashan (north-east of Judah), cry out from Abarim (south-east of Judah), for all your allies are crushed. Abarim is part of the mountains of Moab and Mount Nebo from which Moshe saw the Land, is the highest peak of the Abarim. The reason for her morning was that all her supposed political allies like Egypt had deserted her (see the parallel in Hosea 8:9). The reason for the judgment comes next: I warned you when you felt prosperous and secure, but you said: I will not listen (Hebrew: *shama*). This has been your way from your youth; you have not obeyed (Hebrew: *shama*) Me (22:20-21)! It had been the habitual action of the Jews throughout their history. Rather, the Israelites had trusted in the gods of the surrounding Gentile nations.

However, this reference to **Lebanon** is in fact a reference to **Y'hudah**. **The wind will drive all your shepherds away**. These supposed **shepherds** were **Judah's leaders** and they would be sent into exile, particularly in 597 BC during the second deportation (**Second Kings 24:22 to 25:7**). But it wasn't only **Judah's leaders** who would go into captivity, but **her lovers, her allies** would also go into exile. **Then you will be ashamed and disgraced because of all your wickedness**. You who live in **Lebanon**, who are nestled in cedar buildings, how you nestled in cedar buildings, how you will groan when pangs come upon you, pain like that of a woman in labor (**22:22-23**). **Y'hudah** believed that **she** could count on other gods and nations, but in the end **she** was shamed by them. The great city of **Jerusalem** would be useless when judgment came. A harsh, inescapable judgment was coming, pain like childbirth, only now they would be pangs of death.

Concerning Jehoiachin: The name **Coniah** is a shortened form or **Jeconiah**. Also called **Jehoiachin** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Du - Jehoiachin Ruled For 3 Months in 598 BC**), was one of the last kings of **Judah** before the Babylonians took **Judah** into captivity. The name **Coniah** is used only in **Jeremiah**. He dropped from **Coniah's** name the part that means **ADONAI** or **the LORD**. Because **he** hardly lived up to the name **ADONAI establishes**, or **the LORD will firmly establish**, **Jeremiah** prefers to call **him Coniah** rather than **Jeconiah**. All three forms of the name have this same basic meaning.

As the result of his wickedness, the judgment of **Jeconiah** became irreversible. **The LORD's** patience with the Jews had about run its course when **Jeconiah** became king at the age of 18 (**2 Kings 24:8-16a**). This young king did evil in the sight of **God** because **he** resisted Babylonian control of **Judah** that **YHVH** had commanded (**27:5-11**). "**As surely as I live,**" declares **the LORD**, "**even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on My right hand, I would still pull you off (22:24)**. The signet of the king was one of his most prized possessions (see the commentary on **Esther Aw - The King Gave His Signet Ring to Haman**). His name, **ADONAI establishes** was ironically not true. **Coniah** would *not* be *established*. **He** would reign a mere three months, then taken away to **Babylon**. Instead of being a figure of hope, and keeping the thread of royal promise alive, **he** became only an object of deep pity.

I will hand you over to those who seek your life, those you fear - to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to the Babylonians (22:25). For this, he was taken captive by **Nebuchadnezzar**, who carried him away to **Babylon** together with all the treasures of the Temple. **I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth? (Queen Mother Nehushta in Second Kings 24:8) into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. You will never come back to (shuwb) the Land you long to return (shuwb) to"** (**22:26-27**). **This and the following verses, which assume the exile to have already begun, are spoken in prophetic anticipation**. There **he** remained in prison for 37 years before **he** died.

Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot, an object no one wants? The metaphor is a broken pot not valued. In the **second symbolic action** of the potter and the clay (see Cw- [At the Potter's House](#)), the potter shattered his pot and once again formed the marred clay into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him (18:4). Of course it was Y'hudah and not the king who is the clay in Chapters 18 and 19. Here, however, the handling of the clay is more specific. It is Jehoiachin, king of Judah.

Why will he and his children be hurled out, cast into a land where they do not know? Ha'Shem pronounced a curse upon him in the days of Jeremiah. The curse has several facets to it, but the last one is so significant that God called the whole earth three times over to hear it (22:28-29).

God weeps over the Land and king. O Land, Land, Land, hear the word of the LORD! When something is repeated three times it is meant to be emphatic. This is what ADONAI says: Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime. The Bible says, as if childless. In First Chronicles 3:17-18 we are given a list of his sons that he fathered later in life. So in this context, childless means that he would not prosper in his lifetime, in other words he would not be restored to the throne of David (although Zerubbabel, his grandson, spearheaded the effort to lay the foundation of the Second Temple after the return from Babylon after the exile).

Then the curse is spelled out: No descendant of **Jeconiah** will ever have the right to sit on the throne of David (Jeremiah 22:30). Until Jeremiah, the first requirement was membership in the house of David. But with Jeremiah, that requirement was limited even further. One still had to be a member of the house of David, but he had to be apart from **Jeconiah**. Yosef was a descendant of David, but in the line of **Jeconiah**; therefore, he was disqualified. If Jesus had been the real son of Joseph, He too would have been disqualified from ever sitting on the throne of David. If a Jew looked at Matthew's genealogy, he would have thought to himself, "If Yeshua really was Joseph's son, He couldn't be the Mashiach." That is why Matthew begins his Gospel with the genealogy, addressed the "**Jeconiah** problem," and solved it by means of the Virgin Birth (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Ai - The Genealogies of Joseph and Mary](#)).