

## Chapter 17: The Kingdom's Fall



### Discussion Questions

1. List out what Manasseh did that was against God's commands.
  - a. What particularly stands out to you as sad and/or heinous?
  - b. What ways does idolatry like Manasseh's affect the world we live in now?
2. When you see that Manasseh was twelve, (during the fifteen years of extra life Hezekiah had) what do you think was not transferred or done to bring Manasseh to faith at a young age?
  - a. Why don't children of believing parents follow their faith?

3. What were the consequences for Judah because of Manasseh's sinful leadership?
  - a. What were his particular consequences?
  - b. How did Manasseh respond?
  - c. Why do you think Amon wasn't eager to keep the changes Manasseh made at the end of his life?
4. Josiah was eight years old when he took the throne and reigned thirty-one years.
  - a. What was a distinction of his reign?
  - b. How did it conclude?
  - c. Why is it harder to reform what has been in place for a long time?
5. After Josiah the next 14 years were decline after decline until Babylon finally conquered Jerusalem & all Judah.
  - a. What was the reason for this conquest? Was it just imperial expansion of Babylon or was it something much deeper?
  - b. When we experience setbacks or trials what do you immediately attribute them to?
  - c. How do you respond to those trials?
6. Nebuchadnezzar took ten thousand people (leaving the poorest behind) what do you think was the expectation of what would happen next for God's people of promise? (given that Israel, the northern ten tribes, had essentially been assimilated by wherever they had gone?)
7. What was Ezekiel's job at the time of the exile?
8. What was Ezekiel's initial reaction to the presence of God?
  - a. What did God call him to do?
  - b. How would you react if you were given the same job description?

9. What was the hope that God gave Ezekiel to share with those he was to prophesy to?
10. What was the name of the other prophet God called at this time?
  - a. What was his initial excuse?
  - b. Why do we often think our inexperience or deficiencies will keep us from being useful to the one who created us?
11. What is the descriptor often given to Jeremiah?
  - a. Why is he called this?
  - b. Would you be any different if you were in his sandals?
12. The conquest of Judah still qualifies as "the mercies" of the Lord – How?
13. Jeremiah asked if "a nation has ever changed its gods?" We live in a time that is rightly called 'post-Christian.'
  - a. When we think of this as a parallel how can we expect God will treat our own country?
  - b. What should we be praying for?
  - c. What ways should we be acting?
14. What does it mean to put trust in something other than God?
  - a. What was Judah trusting in?
  - b. What do people today put their trust in?
  - c. How can we increase our trust in God's plan and pattern for living?
15. In your experience, when do you do what you KNOW you ought to do, before or after you've been corrected? Why do you believe this is true?
16. Rebellion has lots of negative effects.
  - a. What ways have you seen them in your life?
  - b. What about in the lives of those close to you?

17. Standing alone for what is right is a difficult place to be. Describe a time when you were the lone voice of godliness in your class, workplace, or family?
18. Zedekiah was seeking God to deliver Jerusalem out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. What was Jeremiah's response?
  - a. How likely are you to help those who have disregarded every instruction and correction you've given them?
  - b. What do you believe Jeremiah's emotions were during this time?
19. Even in the midst of the destruction of Jerusalem Jeremiah could have hope. What assurances did Jeremiah have of a future for his people?
20. Remember all of Judah's experience of God's wrath was caused by a persistent and continuous practice of sin (idolatry and all it entails),
  - a. What was the promise of God to those who had been recently conquered?
  - b. Why was God going to do this?
21. What do you think God's prophets would say to His followers today?
22. The striking visual of Ezekiel prophesying to bones in a valley is one of hope?
  - a. What happens?
  - b. What does this represent?
  - c. What are the implications for God's plan for redeeming his people and creation?
23. What does it mean to know that the Lord has accomplished something?