

#1134 The Curse of Jehoiakim and the Lineage of Jesus Christ – Zedekiah, the final King of Judah, part I

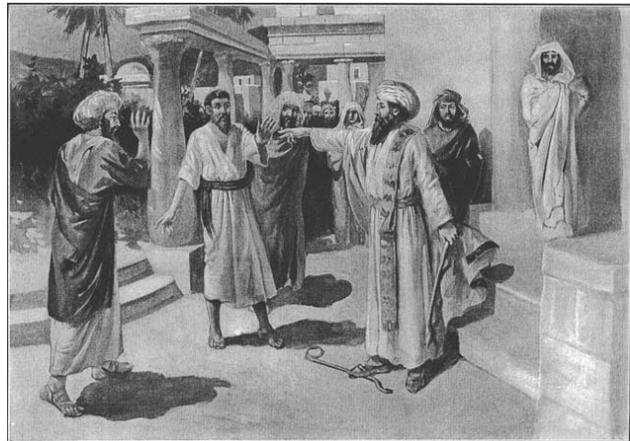
Before we get back to the issue of the claim of Jesus Christ to the throne of David despite the curses upon Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin (Jeconiah, Coniah), let's first discuss Zedekiah, the final king of Judah (597-586 B.C).

Key Understanding: Zedekiah. Zedekiah succeeded the cursed Jehoiachin who succeeded the cursed Jehoiakim, but was not a descendant of either. He was a son of Josiah and the half-brother of Jehoiakim.

2 Kings 24:17-18 (KJV) And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's [Jehoiakim's] brother king in his stead, and changed his name to ZEDEKIAH. 18 ZEDEKIAH was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

This Unsealing consists of a summary (from another source) of Zedekiah and his reign. The next Unsealing contains a part of the scriptural account about Zedekiah in 2 Kings chapters 24 and 25.

Zedekiah After Jehoiachin had reigned only three months, he was deposed and carried off to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar installed Zedekiah on the throne as the puppet king and made him swear an oath that he would remain loyal (2 Chronicles 36:13; Ezekiel 17:13). Although he reigned in Jerusalem for 11 years, Zedekiah was never fully accepted by the people of Judah as their king. Because Zedekiah was a weak and indecisive ruler, he faced constant political unrest. Almost from the first he appeared restless about his oath of loyalty to Babylon, although he reaffirmed that commitment in the fourth year of his reign (Jeremiah 51:59). However, he was under constant pressure from his advisors to revolt and look to Egypt for help. A new coalition composed of Edom, Moab, Ammon, and Phoenicia was forming against Babylon, and they urged Judah to join (Jeremiah 27:3). Adding to the general unrest was the message of false prophets who declared that the yoke of Babylon had been broken (Jeremiah 28).



False prophets declared the yoke of Babylon over Judah to be broken

Jeremiah 28:9-11 (KJV) Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon:

10 For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.

11 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

Zedekiah revolted. In his ninth year Zedekiah revolted against Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah and besieged Jerusalem. While Jerusalem was under siege, other Judean cities were falling to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 34:7). The final months of the siege were desperate times for Zedekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The king made frequent calls on the prophet Jeremiah, seeking an encouraging word from the Lord. However, Jeremiah's message consistently offered only one alternative: surrender to Nebuchadnezzar in order to live in peace and save Jerusalem. Zedekiah regarded God's prophetic word superstitiously and "did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 36:12).

In July 586 B.C., the wall of Jerusalem was breached, and Zedekiah fled the city. The army of the Babylonians pursued the king, overtaking him in the plains of Jericho. He was brought before Nebuchadnezzar and forced to watch the slaying of his sons. Then his own eyes were put out and he was led away to Babylon (2 Kings 25:6-7). Zedekiah died during the years of the captivity of the Jewish people in Babylon. His reign marked the end of the nation of Judah as an independent, self-governing country. [Source: Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary]



Zedekiah's children were killed before his eyes, depicted in a painting by François-Xavier Fabre (1766-1837)

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