

Today:
November 9, 2014

Scripture Focus: 2 Kings 18-19, 22-25; Jeremiah 18-19, 21-25

It was during his reign that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded the country. Jehoiakim became his puppet. But after three years he had had enough and revolted. God dispatched a succession of raiding bands against him: Babylonian, Aramean, Moabite, and Ammonite. The strategy was to destroy Judah. Through the preaching of his servants and prophets, God had said he would do this, and now he was doing it. None of this was by chance—it was God’s judgment as he turned his back on Judah because of the enormity of the sins of Manasseh—Manasseh, the killer-king, who made the Jerusalem streets flow with the innocent blood of his victims. God wasn’t about to overlook such crimes.

In the eighth year of his reign Jehoiachin was taken prisoner by the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar emptied the treasuries of both The Temple of God and the royal palace and confiscated all the gold furnishings that Solomon king of Israel had made for The Temple of God. This should have been no surprise—God had said it would happen. And then he emptied Jerusalem of people—all its leaders and soldiers, all its craftsmen and artisans. He took them into exile, something like ten thousand of them! The only ones he left were the very poor.

In the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, on the seventh day of the fifth month, Nebuzaradan, the king of Babylon’s chief deputy, arrived in Jerusalem. He burned The Temple of God to the ground, went on to the royal palace, and then finished off the city—burned the whole place down. He put the Babylonian troops he had with him to work knocking down the city walls. Finally, he rounded up everyone left in the city, including those who had earlier deserted to the king of Babylon, and took them off into exile. He left a few poor dirt farmers behind to tend the vineyards and what was left of the fields.

(2 Kings 24:1-4, 12-14; 25:8-12, Message)

Notes from Worship:

How did God catch your attention? To what is God calling you this week?

Questions for Discussion:

- In looking back on your own life, what was the crisis of all crises? How so?
- When you go through difficult situations, do they tend to make you bitter or better?
- How can you hold onto your faith in God even through difficult exile experiences?

This Week: **November 10-15**

Scripture Readings:

Monday 11/10	Tuesday 11/11	Wednesday 11/12	Thursday 11/13	Friday 11/14	Saturday 11/15
Deuteronomy 16-19	Deuteronomy 20-23	Deuteronomy 24-27	Deuteronomy 28-30	Deuteronomy 31-34	Joshua 1-2; Ps. 105

Questions for Reflection:

These questions are meant to help get you thinking about the readings for each day. Feel free to also use this space to jot down other questions and insights gleaned from your reading.

Monday

Does anything strike you about the instructions for Kings in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (especially when you think about some of Israel's Kings)?

Tuesday

What does it mean to "purge the evil from Israel" and why is that so important?

Wednesday

Where do Israel's tithes go (see Deuteronomy 26)? Where do our tithes go today?

Thursday

What strikes you about the blessings and curses listed in Deuteronomy 28? Why does the covenant need to continually be renewed (see Deuteronomy 29)?

Friday

What catches your attention in Moses' song (Deuteronomy 32)?

Saturday

What does it mean for Joshua to be strong and courageous (Joshua 1)?

Taking Scripture to Heart:

As we focus on the prophetic voice, our memory text turns to **Micah 6:6-8**. In only a few verses, this passage summarizes the heart of what many of the prophets teach to God's people during the time of the kings. That being said, there are many other powerful passages throughout the prophetic literature, which you could also take to heart.

Next Sunday: November 16

Theme: Exile adaptations

Scripture Focus: Jeremiah 7, 32-33, 39; Ezekiel 2-3, 11:14-21, 18, 36-37; Ps. 137