

Title: A ray of hope

Speaker: Marcus Site: CC Bible reference: 2 Kings 25:1-30 Overview

1 and 2 Kings has aptly been called “how to lose a kingdom in 400 years” because it depicts Israel’s decline and disobedience under the leadership of a series of mostly bad kings. It starts well enough, with Solomon ascending to the throne after David, but by the end the northern Kingdom of Israel has been defeated by the Assyrians and the Southern kingdom of Judah is exiled in Babylonian. King Jehoiachim had ignored God’s warnings and looked to Egypt for help against the Babylonians. He died and his son Jehoiachin was imprisoned in Babylon. Zedekiah, who had been put in place as another puppet king, also did evil in God’s sight and so the Lord sent Nebuchadnezzar and his army back to Jerusalem as the instrument of his judgment upon Israel. Zedekiah is blinded. The LORD’s house, the king’s house and the other houses are burnt down. The city walls are broken down. The temple is looted, and the priests put to death. All but a few of the poorest people are taken into captivity. It’s a very dark time, but right at the end of 2 Kings, there is a small ray of hope. While man’s strength and ability has come to nothing, God is still at work. His judgment has come as promised, but his promised grace will just as surely also come. Look at the last four verses which speak about a key, a seat and a table.

A key

1. Verse 27: A new Babylonian king ascended to the throne and set Jehoiachin free from prison. In what sense has/could Jesus set you free? (hints: Revelation 1:18, free from God’s judgment against sin, free from slavery to sin...)

A seat

1. Verse 28a: The new Babylonian king spoke kindly to Jehoiachin. Why/how does God speak kindly to you? What does he say? (Romans 8:16; Isaiah 12:1; John 10:27-28; Isaiah 40:2; 1 Corinthians 14:3; John 8:11...)

2. Verse 28b: Jehoiachin was seated above all the other kings. What does it mean to be seated with Christ in heavenly places? (Ephesians 2:6; a place of rest and ruling; resting from our works, and authority to extend God’s kingdom through prayer, words and actions, Genesis 1:26...)

A table

1. Verse 29a: Jehoiachin changed his garments. In what sense has your (or a Christian’s) garments changed since being born again? (Col 3:12-15; Isaiah 61:10; Philippians 3:9; Luke 15:3-32)

2. Verse 29b: Jehoiachin dined regularly at the king’s table. How do you/can you “dine regularly at the king’s table”? (John 6:35; John 7:37-38; Is 55:1-2 1; Corinthians 11:26; meditating on God’s word, praising God, breaking bread, receiving the Spirit....).