Jer. 21-24, Condemnation of King and Prophet
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Overview

1. Historical Context: the Last Kings of Judah

Name	In	How?	Out	How?
a) Josiah	640		609	Died (Necho)
b) Jehoahaz (Shallum) s.Josiah	609	People	609	Egypt
c) Jehoiakim s.Josiah	609	Egypt	597	Died
d) Jehoiachin (Coniah) s.J'kim	597	(People)	597	Babylon
e) Zedekiah s.Josiah	597	Babylon	586	Babylon

2. The sections:
   The references to the kings in these sections, as well as
   explicit dates, show that the king's mission is actually AFTER
   the utterances of ch. 22-24. This order emphasizes the disbelief
   of the king. Even after Jer. has come to him and given him
   explicit warning, he still persists in his vain hope of
   salvation.

   a) 21:1-10, The King's Request, late in the reign of Zedekiah,
      ca. 588 BC. "Tell us what's going to happen." Why come to Jer.
      now? Because he hasn't listened to him before, and he finally
      sees that the false prophets have been wrong. This request
      sets the scene for the rest of 21-24.

   b) 21:11-23:40, Earlier oracles against the Civil and Religious
      Leaders. Zedekiah, you should already know the answer.

      1) 21:11-23:8 "Concerning the Royal House:" I have already
         warned you of judgment; you did not heed me. Shallum has
         already been taken captive, and Jehoiakim is not yet dead,
         so this is during the reign of Jehoiakim.

      2) 23:9-40 "Concerning the Prophets" (includes condemnation of
         the priests): Those whom you did heed are not trustworthy,
         and you have already been warned about that!

   c) 24:1-10, Back to the time of Zedekiah. Is this in answer to
      the request in 21? It does show that God will indeed be
      gracious to his people, but Zedekiah will be destroyed. Even
      this oracle seems to be earlier than the request: the
      deportation of Jehoiakim, mentioned in v.1, begins Zed's
      reign. Zed really should have known the answer to his question
      before he asked it!

3. NOTE: Distribution of king, prophet, and priest in Jer.

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          ....,....|....,....|....,....|....,....|....,....|.  T
   a) Prop 13 12112    14   1 1  x 255x7  2 11253   211121 111  81
   b) Prie 22 111 2    11   1111 3  4124 1121  1          11  1 38
   c) King 3111   2 2  2 1 3 326812x7x651 7192x8x65512416 1646x
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   It seems that 23:9-40 is focused against both priests and

prophets, though the emphasis is more on the prophets. So the
real division is not king vs. prophet, but civil leader vs.
religious leader.

    4. Inner structure of 21:1-10
      a) The king sends a delegation with a question, and Jer. answers
         them.
      b) The answer has two parts:
         1) one to the king;
         2) one to the people.

A. **1-2, The Request**
   The King sends to ask Jer. to intercede for the city.

   1. The date and circumstances: Zedekiah is already king, thus
      597-586. Furthermore, Neb. is currently fighting against the city
      (v.2), and is said to have besieged it (v.4), so we are
      catapaulted to the final attack against Jerusalem, which began in
      588 and ended 18 months later in 586. This is Zed's attitude
      toward the very end.

   2. The messengers: Pashur is not the same as in 20:1, since he has a
      different father.

   3. The message: Ask God what is going to happen. Perhaps he will
      deliver us (as he delivered Hezekiah from the Assyrians 140 years
      before).

      They do not repent, or even ask for intercession, but simply want
      to know what is going to happen. But Jer. has already told them,
      over and over again, what is going to happen. They refuse to
      believe the simple message of judgment that he has brought.

      Application: So people today refuse to believe the simple message
      of judgment that characterizes the gospel. They insist on
      listening to the false prophets of our time who assure them of
      their safety, while the tempest of God's wrath is gathering
      against them every moment.

B. **3-7, The Answer to the King**
   Tell the King that I will give the city over to siege and slaughter.
   The Lord describes the course of the battle in two stages. First
   (4-6) he tells what he will do, ending (6) "I will smite." Then (7)
   he tells what Neb. will do, ending "he shall smite."

   1. 4-6, The Lord Smites.
      The Lord is the subject of the main verbs in this section.

      a) 4, He will drive their defensive forces back into the city.
         Move comma from after "Chaldeans" to after "you." "Without the
         walls" tells where they are fighting. Their weapons (and the
         men who wield them) are currently outside of the city, trying
         to chase the Babylonians away, but God will turn them

back--make them bounce off the enemy as off of armor--and drive the defenders into the city, in a state of siege.

b) 5, a terrible blow. Not only will God not deliver them; he will not even stand silently by. He himself will oppose Judah. Three things to note.

   1) "I myself." Emphatic repetition of the personal pronoun to emphasize that God is the agent.

   2) "With an outstretched hand and with a strong arm" is a quotation from earlier times: Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 26:8. 800 years before, this was how God delivered them from Egypt. But here the phrases are reversed, to emphasize that God's strength now works in the reverse direction. The same strength that once saved the nation from one pagan lord now beats it into submission to another master.

   3) "In anger and in fury and in great wrath." From Deut. 29:28 (Heb. 27), describing the judgments to come on the nation if they turn away from the Lord. That time has come. Moses' predictions have been fulfilled, and the nation now feels God's wrath.

c) 6, With the siege in place, pestilence breaks out, as God's blow on both man and beast.

2. 7, Nebuchadnezzar smites.
   The only thing the Lord does here is to deliver the nation into the hands of Neb., who then smites them. Note:

   a) The extensiveness with which he catalogs all who are left. No one escapes.

   b) The terrors that they have already experienced under the Lord's hand: pestilence, sword, famine. These recall Lev. 26, the curses of the covenant, that we studied under ch. 14. Like the ref. to Deut. 29 in v.5, this reminds the hearers that this judgment fulfills the warnings through Moses centuries before.

   c) Neb's ruthlessness. There will be no quarter.

C. **8-10, The Answer to the People**
   Tell the people to surrender or die, because the city is doomed.

   1. 10, God has condemned the city. It cannot be saved.

   2. 8-9, Therefore the people have only two choices: surrender or die.
      The choice is framed in echos of Deut. 30:15-19. There, the choice of life vs. death was to obey God rather than worship other gods. But they have spurned that opportunity. Now the only option is to surrender or be slain.

NB: We will hear this advice to surrender again. It gained for Jer. the reputation as a traitor, and led to increased persecution for him.

Application

1. God is faithful to his promises--of judgment as well as of forgiveness. Note the repeated quotations from Deut.

2. The Lord is not a morning-after remedy. If you haven't followed him right along, don't expect his help at the end. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Imagine Zed's agony when he learns that it is "too late," and resolve never to be caught in that condition yourself.

3. For you who have served the Lord, while the world around you ignores him: Take encouragement. For years Jer. was a voice crying in the wilderness. No one would listen to him. Now, at the end, they recognize that he was right after all. God will vindicate us if we are faithful to him, even though the world at present ignores and even hates us.

352, "Jesus, I my cross have taken"

Analysis
21:1-10 interchange p: The king sends representatives to Jer.

A. iu: quote p: The King sends to ask Jer. to intercede for the city.
  1. quote f: 21:1 HA/D.FBFR):A$ER-HFYFH)EL-YIR:M:YFHW. M"/)"T Y:HWFH B.I/$:LOXA)"LFY/W HA/M.ELEK: CID:QIY.FHW.)ET-P.A$:XW.R B.EN-MAL:K.IY.FH W:/)ET-C:PAN:YFH BEN-MA(:A&"YFH HA/K.OH"N L"/)MOR
  2. quote:
     a) 21:2 D.:RF$-NF) BA(:AD/"NW.)ET-Y:HWFH
     b) K.IY N:BW.KAD:RE)C.AR MELEK:-B.FBEL NIL:XFM (FL"Y/NW.
     c))W.L/AY YA(:A&EH Y:HWFH)OWT/FNW. K.:/KFL-NIP:L:)OTFY/W
     d) W:/YA(:ALEH M"/(FL"Y/NW. S

B. cu: quote p: Jer. reports that the city will be destroyed, and the people should surrender.
  1. quote f: 21:3 WA/Y.O)MER YIR:M:YFHW.):AL"Y/HEM
  2. quote: coordinate p

     a) quote p: Tell the King that I will give the city over to plague and slaughter
        1) quote f: K.OH TO)M:RUN)EL-CID:QIY.FHW.
        2) quote: quote p
           a> quote f: 21:4 K.OH-)FMAR Y:HWFH):ELOH"Y YI&:RF)"L
           b> quote: succession p: I will give the city over to plague and slaughter
              1> item: sequence p: siege and plague
                 a: HIN/:NIY M"S"B)ET-K.:L"Y HA/M.IL:XFMFH):A$ER B.:/YED/:KEM):A$ER)AT.EM NIL:XFMIYM B./FM

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                    )ET-MELEK: B.FBEL W:/)ET-HA/K.A&:D.IYM HA/C.FRIYM
                    (:AL"Y/KEM MI/XW.C LA/XOWMFH
           b: W:/)FSAP:T.IY )OWT/FM )EL-T.OWK: HF/(IYR HA/Z.O)T
           c: 21:5 W:/NIL:XAM:T.IY ):ANIY )IT./:KEM B.:/YFD
                    N:+W.YFH W./BI/Z:ROW(A X:AZFQFH W./B:/)AP
                    W./B:/X"MFH W./B:/QECEP G.FDOWL
           d: ampl. p
               1: text: 21:6 W:/HIK."YTIY )ET-YOW$:B"Y HF/(IYR
                    HA/Z.O)T W:/)ET-HF/)FDFM W:/)ET-HA/B.:H"MFH
               2: ampl: B.:/DEBER G.FDOWL YFMUTW.
        2> item: seq. p: conquest and slaughter
           a: 21:7  W:/)AX:AR"Y-K"N N:)UM-Y:HWFH )ET-."N
                    )ET-CID:QIY.FHW. MELEK:-Y:HW.DFH W:/)ET-(:ABFDFY/W
                    W:/)ET-HF/(FM W:/)ET-HA/N.I$:)FRIYM B.F/(IYR
                    HA/Z.O)T MIN-HA/D.EBER MIN-HA/XEREB
                    W./MIN-HF/RF(FB B.:/YAD N:BW.KAD:RE)C.AR
                    MELEK:-B.FBEL W./B:/YAD )OY:B"Y/HEM W./B:/YAD
                    M:BAQ:$"Y NAP:$/FM
           b: ampl p
               1: text: W:/HIK./FM L:/PIY-XEREB
               2: ampl:
                    A. LO)-YFXW.S (:AL"Y/HEM
                    B. W:/LO) YAX:MOL
                    C. W:/LO) Y:RAX/"M

   b) quote p: Tell the people to surrender or die, because the city
      is doomed.
      1) quote f: 21:8  W:/)EL-HF/(FM HA/Z.EH T.O)MAR
      2) quote: quote p
         a> quote f: K.OH )FMAR Y:HWFH
         b> quote: reason p: Surrender or die, because the city is
            doomed.
            1> text: ampl p: You have two choices: surrender or die.
               a: text: HIN/:NIY NOT"N LI/P:N"Y/KEM )ET-D.EREK:
                    HA/XAY.IYM W:/)ET-D.EREK: HA/M.FWET
               b: ampl:
                   1: way of death: 21:9  HA/Y.O$"B B.F/(IYR HA/Z.O)T
                        YFMW.T B.A/XEREB W./BF/RF(FB W./BA/D.FBER
                   2: way of life: seq p
                        A. W:/HA/Y.OWC") W:/NFPAL (AL-HA/K.A&:D.IYM
                            HA/C.FRIYM (:AL"Y/KEM {YIX:YEH} [W:/XFYFH]
                   3: W:/HFY:TFH-L./OW NAP:$/OW L:/$FLFL
            2> reason: the city is doomed.
               a: 21:10  K.IY &AM:T.IY PFN/AY B.F/(IYR HA/Z.O)T
                    L:/RF(FH W:/LO) L:/+OWBFH N:)UM-Y:HWFH
               b: B.:/YAD-MELEK: B.FBEL T.IN.FT"N
               c: W./&:RFP/FH. B.F/)"$ S
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