

# Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF JAN 10 - JAN 16 •

## MONDAY // 2 KINGS 17-18

God made a covenant with Abraham that He reiterated to Isaac and Jacob. It included plans for a portion of land where God's people would live. However, because of the people's repeated disobedience, they lost inheritance of the promised land. Through countless judges, prophets, and other leaders, God warned the people to turn back to Him, but they abandoned His invitation, causing God to allow them to be taken captive by the Assyrians. At the same time, King Hezekiah attempted to reform the southern kingdom of Judah by leading the people back to God. These chapters remind us that God's judgment is serious, but it is never without just cause: God had shown His people incredible grace, but they refused to turn to Him. Furthermore Hezekiah is a reminder for us that no matter how tempted or pressured we may feel to turn our backs on God, we can always trust in His goodness and sovereignty over our lives.

## TUESDAY // 2 KINGS 19-21

Hezekiah was a man of God, as evidenced through his prayers. Hezekiah prayed to God for deliverance from Assyria, and God delivered the city. Later, when Hezekiah was suffering from a terminal illness, he prayed for God to remember his faithfulness, and God added 15 more years to his life. However, Hezekiah wasn't perfect, and when he acted prideful over his treasures (which were blessings from God that Hezekiah took for granted), the prophet Isaiah warned him that eventually Judah would experience a fate like Israel's, and all his treasures would be gone. After Hezekiah died, the nation was ruled by two of its most wicked kings to date. God warned that His judgment was pending. While God's grace and patience for His people is limitless, we all come to a place where we must face the consequences of our sins. In those moments, it is crucial to remember that God never holds his love and grace for us. We are the ones who have drifted from Him.

## WEDNESDAY // 2 KINGS 22-23

King Josiah stood in sharp contrast to his father Amon and his grandfather Manasseh, and as a result, significant cultural changes began to take place during Josiah's reign. While God's temple was being repaired, the Book of the Law—Genesis to Deuteronomy—was discovered, and upon hearing it read, Josiah realized the nation was guilty of breaking the covenant and in danger of divine wrath. God's Word has always had the power to bring sin to light and turn hardened hearts toward repentance. Josiah renewed the covenant before the people and initiated a spiritual reform movement that rid the nation of idolatry and renewed times of worship and celebration before God. While these were all positive changes, Josiah was the last righteous king of Judah. His death paved the way for the judgment against sin that God's prophets had warned against. Josiah's example reminds us that our obedience to God is rooted in our relationship with Him and our acceptance of the authority of His Word in our lives.

## THURSDAY // JEREMIAH 1-3:5

Jeremiah became God's prophet during the reign of King Josiah and remained a prophet through the last of Judah's kings. This was a tumultuous time in the nation's history, and God had stern warnings He wanted His people to hear through His prophet. It is no surprise that Jeremiah was hesitant to obey God's calling. Jeremiah tried to avoid God's call with various excuses, but God revealed to the prophet that He had chosen him before birth for this very task. Idolatry—a violation of the first and second Commandments—was again revealed as the major sin the people were guilty of, which in turn created a rift in their relationship with God. Through Jeremiah, God offered the people yet another chance for repentance, but He also warned of the judgment that was coming. Like Jeremiah, our task as God's representatives today is to listen to His Word, obey His call, and share the truth of His love and the need for repentance with others.

## FRIDAY // JEREMIAH 25; 29

For 23 years Jeremiah delivered the same call of repentance to the people of Judah time and time again, but the people refused to listen. Unfortunately, the time for God's judgment had come, and Jeremiah told them that the nation was about to be overpowered by the Babylonians. Jeremiah described a cup of God's wrath that all the wicked nations would drink as punishment from God, imagery that brings to mind Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane prior to His crucifixion: "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will" (Matt. 26:39). By going to the cross, Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath, taking all sin of humankind on Himself in order to satisfy God's divine justice. In Jeremiah 29, we also read that God used the prophet to provide hope to some of the people of Judah who had been taken into exile in Babylon. Jeremiah sent a letter to them, encouraging them to make the best of their situation because the exile would last for seventy years. Jeremiah warned the exiles not to listen to false promises and to find their hope instead in the Lord.

## WEEKEND // FINISH UP ANY YOU DIDN'T DO