

Fact Sheet for **“Six Kings”**
Jeremiah 21:1-23:8

Pastor Bob Singer
11/25/2018

Our word “pastor” is a translation of the word “shepherd.” There are two other terms that also describe pastors... elder and overseer (translated “bishop” six times in the KJV). The word “elder” emphasizes wisdom. The word “overseer” emphasizes administration. The word “shepherd” emphasizes care. But all of us have various shepherding rolls even though most do not have the title “pastor.” In a very real sense it can be said that parents shepherd their children. Sunday School teachers shepherd those who attend their class. Kings are to shepherd those in their country. All of us have rolls that call for us to care for others. And there is something that God says in this 10th message found in Jeremiah 21:1-23:8 that should challenge all of us in our shepherding rolls.

This is a message about 6 kings of Israel. It is *not* chronological. In this passage of Jeremiah God spoke of 4 of the 1st 5 kings in the present tense, while they were still on the throne. Jeremiah was a prophet during all of their reigns. But the 1st king had already died. The 5th was still on the throne. 2 had been exiled. 1 other king had died. Jeremiah pieced together this message from several times in his ministry. We will take them as they appear in Jeremiah.

#5 Zedekiah (21:1-22:9)

Zedekiah was last in the line of the kings of Judah before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, and the 5th of these six kings.

Read Jeremiah 21:1-2.

This Passur is not the same one mentioned in chapter 20. The LORD’s answer was not what Zedekiah wanted to hear.

Read Jeremiah 21:8-10.

In Jeremiah 17 God reminded them to obey the Sabbath and gave them the promise in verse 25 if they did. But they weren’t going to listen. God now told Zedekiah something with a similar promise.

Read Jeremiah 22:3-4.

But Zedekiah would not listen. Jerusalem would be destroyed. God ends His word to Zedekiah with this...

Read Jeremiah 22:8-9.

#1 Josiah and #2 Shallum (22:10-12)

Josiah was the 1st of the last 5 kings of Judah. Shallum was the 2nd. Jeremiah’s ministry began under Josiah’s reign (Jeremiah 1:2). Josiah was a good king (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chronicles 34-35). He purged the land from idols and repaired the temple in Jerusalem. The book of the Law was found, read, and a great Passover was observed. Then Josiah was mortally wounded in battle with the king of Egypt. Josiah was well loved.

ESV 2 Chronicles 35:25 Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a rule in Israel; behold, they are written in the Laments.

Shallum (also known as Jehoahaz), the 2nd of the las 5 kings, then became king. He was 23 years old and reigned 3 years (2 Kings 23:31). He did what was evil in God’s sight (2 Kings 23:32). He was taken into exile into Egypt and would die there.

The LORD said through Jeremiah...

ESV Jeremiah 22:10 Weep not for him who is dead (*Josiah*), nor grieve for him, but weep bitterly for him who goes away (*Shallum*), for he shall return no more to see his native land.

#3 Jehoiakim (22:13-23)

He was made King of Judah by the same Pharaoh that exiled Shallum. He was 25 years old and reigned 11 years (2 Kings 23:34, 36). He also did what was evil in God's sight (2 Kings 23:37). Jehoiakim was greedy and dishonest. He forced the poor to work on building his own palace without pay. God said of him...

ESV Jeremiah 22:19 With the burial of a donkey he shall be buried, dragged and dumped beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

#4 Jehoiachin (22:24-30)

Jehoiachin was also known as Coniah (Jeremiah 22:24). He was 18 years old when he became king and reigned for only 3 months (2 Kings 24:8). He also did what was evil in God's sight (2 Kings 24:9). This is what the LORD said about him...

Read Jeremiah 22:24-27.

Chapter 23 of Jeremiah begins with God's word about the last 6 kings. Pay close attention to what He says about shepherds.

Read Jeremiah 23:1-4.

We'll come back to this. Now we see the Good Shepherd. This 6th king is placed in the future.

Read Jeremiah 23:5-6.

This is obviously a reference to Jesus Christ, but what is described in these two verses has not occurred yet. It is still future to us. Here's an interesting tid-bit. Jesus is described by these words... "The LORD is our righteousness." In Hebrew this is a translation of the two words "Yahweh" and "tzedeck" (righteous). It is a reversal of the name of the 5th king Zedekiah, formed from "tzedeck" and "Yahweh," which means "Righteous is the Lord."

Let's go back to Jeremiah 23:4.

ESV Jeremiah 23:4 I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD.

In context these shepherds are those who will lead Israel. You have heard me say that in order to apply Scripture well you have to come across a bridge of something that was the same then as now. There is something here that fits this description. It is the meaning of shepherding. It emphasizes godly care for people. One of my rolls as Pastor is to be faithful in teaching the whole word of God, and modeling the word of God. If I were to preach politics, leadership theory, church growth, or anything else and back away from teaching the word of God, then I would not be a good shepherd of this congregation. If I were to put my free time, my bank account, my house (my palace), my professional reputation at the top of my priority ladder then I would not be a good shepherd.

But we all have shepherding rolls that God has given us. Every one of those rolls will cost us our hearts, our time, our resources, and our effort. What shepherding rolls has God given you? How are you doing in those rolls? And always remember... only God is the perfect shepherd. When you fail, as all of us will, be sure to keep close accounts with God.