

Oracles to the Judean Monarchy (21:1-23:8)

ORACLES ABOUT THE FATE OF ZEDEKIAH AND THE CITIZENS OF JERUSALEM (21:1-10)

The unit begins with a narrative account that takes place during the beginning of the Babylonian siege against Jerusalem (588 B.C.). Two messengers are sent by king Zedekiah to Jeremiah, to request a positive response from the Lord regarding the siege. Jeremiah sends the messengers back, but with no hopeful oracle. The Lord's response to Zedekiah is Jerusalem and its citizens will surely be given into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. Finally, Jeremiah is given an oracle to speak to the people, calling them to surrender and save their lives.

Oracle to Zedekiah (21:3-7)

Message-reception Formula/Occasion (v. 1)

Request for Intercession by Zedekiah's Messengers (v. 2)

Jeremiah Commands the Messengers to Speak to Zedekiah (v. 3)

Oracle: The Lord will Curse the People of Jerusalem; Nebuchadnezzar will Kill the Rest (vv. 4-7)

Oracle to the People in Jerusalem (21:8-10)

The Lord Commands Jeremiah to Speak to the People (v. 8a)

Salvation Through Surrender (vv. 8b-9)

The Lord will Give Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar, and He will Burn it with Fire (v. 10)

JUDGMENT UPON JERUSALEM FOR THEIR COVENANT DISOBEDIENCE (21:11-14)

The second unit begins with an oracle against the house of David, which is an exhortation for the kings to execute justice, and includes a warning that, if they neglect to do so, the Lord's wrath will pour forth like fire (vv. 11-12). This is followed by a judgment oracle against Jerusalem and its citizens pronouncing all that is around it will be burned with fire (vv. 13-14), likely signaling the kings' failure to do what they were commanded.

Oracle to the House of David: A Call to Execute Justice (21:11-12)

Addressee of the Oracle(s) (v.11a)

Call for the King to Hear (v. 11b-12a)

Call to the King to Execute Justice Lest They Face the Wrath of the Lord (vv. 12bc)

Judgment Oracle Against Jerusalem for Its Sins (21:13-14)

The Lord Against Jerusalem (v. 13)

The Lord will Punish Its Citizens and Burn Its Forests (v. 14)

THE FAILURE OF THE MONARCHY AND THE RESULTING CONSEQUENCES (22:1-9)

Like the previous section, this begins with a call to the king to execute justice (v. 3), along with the promise of blessing for obedience (v. 4) and a warning if they disobey (v. 5). Similarly, a judgment oracle follows, indicating that the kings did indeed disobey the command from the Lord (vv. 6-7).

Oracle to the King: A Call to Execute Justice (22:1-5)

Command to Jeremiah to Speak to the King (22:1-2a)

Call for the King and Those Around to Hear (22:2b)

Oracle to the King (22:3-5)

Messenger Formula (v. 3a)

Call to Execute the Duties of the King (v. 3b)

Blessing for Covenant Obedience (v. 4)

Curses for Covenant Disobedience (v. 5)

Judgment Oracle Against the House of the King (22:6-7)

Message Formula (v. 6a)

The Lord will Bring Desolation and Burn the Palace (vv. 6b-7)

Recognition that Covenant Disobedience Led to Disaster (22:8-9)

ORACLES TO NAMED KINGS (22:10-30)

The fourth section contains four units, three of which contain oracles to three successive kings of Judah. Also included is an oracle against personified Jerusalem, included here because of the emphasis on shepherds (i.e., Jerusalem's leaders) (v. 22), as well as the allusion to cedars (i.e., the palace and rich houses) (v.23).

Concerning Shallum/Jehoahaz (22:10-12)

Poetic Lament for the Exiled King (22:10)
Oracle Concerning Jehoahaz' Exile (22:11-12)
Messenger Formula/Context (v. 11ab)
Oracle (vv. 11c-12)

Concerning Jehoiakim (22:13-19)

Accusation: Jehoiakim's Oppressive and Violent Rule (22:13-17)
Woe Oracle: Jehoiakim's House Built on Corruption (vv. 13-14)
Jehoiakim Compared with Josiah (vv. 15-17)
Sentence: Jehoiakim's Exile (22:18-19)
Message Formula (vv. 18a)
Oracle: No Lamentation or Burial for Jehoiakim (vv. 18b-19)

Judgment Oracle Against Jerusalem (22:20-23)

Call to Lament (22:20)
Accusation: They Refused to Listen (22:21)
Sentence: They Will Be Exiled (22:22)
Anticipation of Future Lamentation (22:23)

Concerning Coniah/Jehoiachin (22:24-30)

Divine Affirmation of Jeconiah's Exile (22:24-27)
Jeconiah will have No Heir on the Throne (22:28-30)
Two Rhetorical Questions (v. 28)
Call to the Land to Hear (v. 29)
Judgment Upon Jeconiah: No Heir on the Throne (v. 30)

RESTORATION UNDER THE RIGHTEOUS KING (23:1-8)

This last section begins with a woe oracle against the evil shepherds, followed by a pronouncement of judgment upon them (vv. 1-2). God Himself will gather the scattered flock and appoint good shepherds over them (vv. 3-4). This promise is followed by two more oracles of hope. The first promising that a Davidic King will be raised up to save and protect Judah (vv. 5-6) and the promise of a new beginning in the return from exile (vv. 7-8).

Judgment and Restoration (23:1-4)

Judgment Against the Evil Shepherds (23:1-2)
Accusation: Woe to the Evil Shepherds (v. 1)
Sentence: God will Punish Them for Their Abuse of the Flock (v. 2)
The Lord will Raise Good Shepherds (23:3-4)
The Lord Will Be Their Shepherd (v. 3)
He will Appoint Good Shepherds Over Them (v. 4)

The Lord will Raise Up a Righteous Branch (23:5-6)

A New Exodus (23:7-8)