Lesson 5 · Judah Alone

Main sentence

God's promise is greater than “Assyria”

Scope

722 – 609 BC · 2 Kings 18–23, 2 Chronicles 29–35, Isaiah 20–66, Micah 5–7, Proverbs, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah 1–6

- Hezekiah · 715 – 686 BC
- Manasseh and Amon · 686 – 640 BC
- Josiah · 640 – 609 BC

Before & after

- Previous: God's promise is greater than “northern Israel”
- **This lesson: God's promise is greater than “Assyria”**
- Next: God's promise is greater than “Babylon”

Discussion

- Facing the Assyrian army, Hezekiah spread the letter out before the LORD and prayed (2 Kgs 19:14). What is your first reaction when you face overwhelming trouble?
- Manasseh repented and found mercy at his very worst. What does that say to the idea that someone is beyond saving?
- Josiah's reform swept away generations of idols, yet after his death Judah quickly went back. How long can one person's devotion hold up a whole community?

Person

Isaiah

Key verse

Isa 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Five key events

1 · Hezekiah and the Assyrian Siege

- Hezekiah cleanses the temple and restores the Passover
- When Sennacherib besieges Jerusalem, Hezekiah spreads Assyria's letter before the LORD and prays
- In one night 185,000 die in the Assyrian camp

2 · The Servant Songs

- Isaiah 40–66: the LORD will use Cyrus to free the exiles
- The LORD's servant will be a light for the nations, “pierced for our transgressions”
- God will create new heavens and a new earth
- The clearest prophecy of the cross in the Old Testament

3 · Manasseh's Fall and Repentance

- Judah's worst king sheds innocent blood and burns his son as an offering
- Taken captive to Babylon, he repents in his distress, and God brings him home
- Yet his evil has already sealed Judah's judgment

4 · Josiah's Reformation

- When the Book of the Law is found during temple repairs, Josiah tears his clothes, leads the nation in renewing the covenant, removes every idol, and keeps a Passover like none before it
- Zephaniah and the young Jeremiah are called in these years

5 · Megiddo: The Last Good King

- In 609 BC Josiah tries to stop the king of Egypt at Megiddo and is killed by an arrow
- Over the next 23 years Judah has four kings, all of them evil, until the exile