



Evil Leaders Can Lead to God's Punishment 2 Kings 24:18–25:9

For because of the anger of the LORD it came to the point in Jerusalem and Judah that He cast them out from His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon” (2 Kings 24:20—ESV).

We have seen the mistakes of the kings of Israel and Judah and other leaders repeated throughout history and perhaps even in our own lifetimes. Some promoted the godless worldly culture that prevailed during their father's or their grandfather's reign, while others turned their nation back to the LORD. King Zedekiah did evil as did his grandfather, while his father was good King Josiah. In his devotion to God, King Josiah brought about religious reforms. Because his father was an evil king, King Josiah became king when only eight years old, and from an early age he learned the Scriptures and followed the Law of God. King Zedekiah turned from God and did evil as did his brother, King Jehoiakim, despite both being the sons of good King Josiah. Sometimes, not even the wisest kings continue in the footsteps of their devout fathers. King Solomon, the son of King David, disobeyed the LORD and married foreign wives who turned his heart from the true God to worship their idols and build temples for them in high places. As punishment for their sins and as discipline to turn some from doing evil and back to obeying the LORD, God will cast some from His presence and let them make unwise decisions. When the LORD cast the ungodly Jews and evil King Zedekiah from His presence, unknown to them because they had first turned from the LORD to practice evil, King Zedekiah unwisely rebelled against the king of Babylon. His decision led to the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah, Jerusalem, and the temple they had profaned. He saw his sons killed, and immediately afterward he was blinded, so before he died, the last thing he saw was the destruction of his family. Among those who lived, many benefitted from the discipline of the LORD; for when they went into exile in Babylon, they turned back to the LORD and to a life of joyful obedience to their loving, just, gracious, and merciful God.