

# A Covenant Broken

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian church

How important is it in keeping our word? When a person gives his word he is entering into a covenant. It may be a vow to the Lord, or an agreement with men. Either way the person who agrees to the conditions in the covenant and gives his word is to be bound to the agreement.

A person who lightly gives his word with no intention of keeping it is foolish. He shows himself to be a liar, without respect for himself, the other party to the covenant, and even for God.

Zedekiah was made king in Jerusalem by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The land had been conquered and God had given Babylon the victory because of their sins. **Ezekiel 17:13-14**, "And hath taken of the king's seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land: That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand." Zedekiah made a covenant with Nebuchadnezzar that he would be in submission to him. He even swore by God that he would abide by the agreement. He gave his word and even

called on the name of God as a witness. Zedekiah didn't seem to think that keeping this agreement was important, or that calling on God as witness was serious either.

I don't know how long he kept the agreement, but after awhile he sent to Egypt and asked Pharaoh for help. Thinking that with the help of Egypt he would defeat Babylon he moved ahead with his plans without thinking of God and the oath he had made. Any time a person goes ahead with his plans, or wants, without seeking God's counsel he is looking for trouble. God had allowed the Babylonians to conquer Jerusalem because of their sins. This was a punishment for the purpose of causing them to consider their ways and to turn back to God. They did neither for they thought that they could escape God's punishment. The Lord would not let man change his plans for the people of Jerusalem. In fact Zedekiah made the punishment worse by his refusal to listen to Jeremiah. **2 Chronicles 36:11-13**, "Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel."

The Lord was angry that Zedekiah would swear in his name and then break his oath without fear of the consequences. **Ezekiel 17:18-19**, "Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head." God hates lies and those who tell them. In breaking his word Zedekiah brought shame on the Lord and gave the ungodly the impression that God's people were no better than the idol worshippers.

Today the unsaved mock the church when they see Christians do the same as the lost. We may make mistakes for we are human, that is not the same as doing something wrong on purpose. Zedekiah broke his oath knowing exactly what he was doing. He just didn't realize that God was not going to let him get away with his rebellion. No, he didn't get away with anything, but caused a lot of suffering for a lot of people. He was defeated and the last thing that he saw was his sons being killed in front of him, and then they blinded him. He was carried captive to Babylon and died there. This would not have happened if he had kept his word. We need to think before we give our word and make sure that we keep it when we give it.

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