

# The End of the Line

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of choosing the kingdom of God and the consequences of rejecting God, highlighting the end of the line for Jeconiah and the eternal destiny of each individual.*

**Duration:** 40:20

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 28:1-14, Psalm 90:1-6, Psalm 90:12, Psalm 90:14, Psalm 90:17

**Topics:** "Babylon"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the current conditions in the Middle East and the world, stating that they indicate that we are coming to the end of the line. He mentions the development of a chip that can be implanted in people, which he sees as a part of the final end times scenario. The preacher also talks about the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land and how they initially made a covenant with God but became fearful and rebellious when they reached the border. He emphasizes the need for people to get right with God and live a life of full commitment to Jesus Christ, as time is short and the end is near.

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## Transcript

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Psalm 90 for the Scripture reading today. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses, and Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the even-numbered verses through the 90th Psalm. And shall we stand as we read the Word of God? Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hast formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

Thou carryest them away as with a flood. They are as a sleep in the morning, and they are as grass that groweth up. In the morning it flourishes and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth.

For we are consumed by Thine anger, and by Thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. For all of our days are passed away in Thy wrath.

We spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is there strength, labor, and sorrow, for it is soon cut off, and we fly

away. Who knoweth the power of Thine anger? Even according to Thy fear, so is Thy wrath.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Return, O Lord, how long, and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants. O satisfy us early with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Make us glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us.

Yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it. Let's pray. Lord, we pray that You will help us to realize just how frail we are, upon what a thin thread our life often hangs, that we might number our days, and realize, Lord, that You indeed have numbered our days, that we might live according to wisdom.

Live, Lord, for the things that are eternal, rather than the things that are temporal. Guide us, Lord, today, we pray, Your blessing upon the study of the Word, the opening of our hearts to Your truth, and, Lord, the challenging, again, by Your Holy Spirit, of how we are to live in these last days. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

You may be seated. Tonight we finish 2 Kings. And so, chapters 24 and 25, and we will finish 2 Kings.

Next week we start the book of 1 Chronicles. Now, lest you become weary in well doing, I would encourage you to just skip the first nine chapters, because it's filled with a lot of names that you can't pronounce, and it's just the genealogies. In our study next Sunday night, I'll bring out the highlights of the genealogies, things that are important.

But rather than you wading through it all, start your reading with chapter 10 and go through chapter 12 of 1 Chronicles next week, as we again will be looking at the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, the southern tribe, as we begin the book of Chronicles. So, this morning, we'd like to draw your attention to the 24th chapter of 2 Kings, verse 15. The nation of Israel has come to the end of the line.

They are being taken as captives to Babylon. They shall cease to occupy the land that God gave to them. King Jehoiakim, Chim, has come to the end of his line.

And with it, the David's dynasty through Solomon has come to the end of the line. This is the finish. It's finished for Jeconiah.

It is finished for the nation of Israel. It is finished for the dynasty from Solomon. The nation of Israel actually began with high hopes and promises of glory.

The children of Israel had been in Egypt for some 400 years. There had been a real change of attitude towards them through this 400 year span of time. Whereas at one time, when Joseph was second in command in Egypt, they were highly favored.

Now, over a period of time, the Jews have become despised, they are hated, and they have become enslaved to the Egyptians. Their lives were now filled with abject misery. Their masters were cruel, and they were born a slave, and no hopes of ever being anything else other than a slave.

Between birth and death, they knew nothing other than hard labor. And there was no hope for their improvement. This was their lot in life, and they were helpless to do anything about it.

Then one day, the Lord sent Moses to the Pharaoh to demand their release. Moses said, Thus saith Yahweh the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they might hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And the Pharaoh answered him, saying, Who is Yahweh, that I should let Israel go to worship him? I do not know Yahweh, and neither will I let Israel go.

I imagine that the Pharaoh came to rue the day that he said, I don't know Yahweh, because he came to know Yahweh in a short while, as God began to bring the plagues upon the Egyptians, almost wiping them out financially and agriculturally and all, the plagues of God upon the Egyptians, and that final plague of the death of the firstborn son, so that as they became acquainted with Yahweh, he wished really that he had never said, I don't know him, and I'm not going to obey him. So the children of Israel were released from their bondage, and they began their journey toward the land that God had promised to Abraham, their father. And as they journeyed into the wilderness, they first came to the area of Mount Sinai, where God gave to them the rules, the commandments, by which they were to live and thus become His people.

God said, this is the way that you should relate to me. This is the way you should relate to each other. And so the laws dealt with their relationship with God and their relationship with each other.

And God said, if you will keep these laws, I will be your God, you will be my people, and I will prosper you wherever you go. I will bless you when you go in, I will bless you when you come out. And these are the rules that God set down for them, in order that they might know the blessings of God and the protection of God upon them.

And so the people made the covenant with God. They vowed before the Lord that they would keep His laws and His statutes, His judgments, and things went well for a while. But they soon came to the border of the promised land.

And at that point, they became fearful to enter in. And some of them began to rebel against the Lord and against Moses. And they felt that they were not able to take this land.

They had received a report from some of the spies of the difficulties. And they were looking at the difficulties rather than looking at the promises of God and the greatness of God, a mistake that we so often make. As we are faced with problems in life, we're so prone to focus upon the problems and the greatness of the problems, rather than focusing upon the greatness of the God that we serve, who is able to help us to surmount every problem.

And so when they saw the problems, they in fear said, we can't go in, and they halted. And so the Lord said, all right, if you don't want to enter in, you can just roam in this wilderness for 40 years, until this whole generation passes away. And your children, which you said would be the prey to the enemy, they will go in and take the land.

And so the children of Israel began that 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. And a journey that should have taken no more than three weeks, actually ended up to be a 40 year trek through the wilderness. But finally, when that generation had died off, Joshua took the reins and the leadership in Israel from Moses.

And Joshua led the people in to the promised land. And as they began to occupy the land, again, it was a period of high hopes and great expectations. They experienced the blessings of God and they saw how God conquered their enemies.

But a unfortunate pattern developed. They began to turn away from God because they became so occupied with building new homes, planting gardens, and in the material things of life, that they began to forsake God. And as a result, they broke their covenant with God and God took away his hand of protection.

And soon they were being oppressed by the enemy nations. And when they would be subdued and oppressed by the enemy nations, then the people would call upon God. They would turn to the Lord.

There would be a time of revival and turning to God and God would respond and he would deliver them from their enemies and he would prosper them and bless them. But then in their prosperity, again, they would forget God and turn away from God until again, they went into bondage and then would cry unto God and God would deliver. And this was a vicious cycle.

Seven times over in the book of Judges, they turned away from God and went into bondage and then sought God and were delivered. Finally, after 305 years of being ruled by the judges, they came to Samuel, the judge and the prophet of God, and they said, we want you to appoint a king over us that we might be like the other nations. And so, uh, God said to Samuel, go ahead and appoint them a king.

They haven't rejected you. They've rejected me from reigning over them. And so Samuel anointed Saul to be the king over Israel.

And they reduced from a theocracy to a monarchy ruled by man. The first king, Saul was a great disappointment. He had the potentials, but pride got in the way and being anointed as the king, he soon was lifted up in pride and began to abuse the position of authority that God had given to him.

He rebelled against God and against the commandments of God. And so God said, you've rejected me from ruling over you. I now reject you from ruling over my people.

And Samuel was told by the Lord to go down to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem and to anoint one of his sons to be the king over Judah and over Israel, actually the whole nation at that time. And so he anointed David, the youngest son of Jesse to be the king over Israel. And David had a heart for God and a heart after God.

In fact, God called David a man after my own heart, because that's exactly what David was. He was a man who was after the heart of God. He wasn't a perfect person.

He was far from sinless, but yet basically in his heart, he loved the Lord and sought to follow after the Lord. One day, the Lord promised David that there would never cease to be one of his descendants reigning upon the throne of Israel. David understood this promise of God to make, to be a reference to the Messiah, and that David would actually be in the lineage of the Messiah.

The Messiah would come from David's lineage. And David was overwhelmed at this announcement from God that the Messiah should come from him. David, of course, passed away.

His son Solomon took the kingdom to the apex of its glory, sort of riding on the victories of his father. And unfortunately, though, toward the end of his life, Solomon turned from the Lord and began to worship other gods and build temples to other gods there on the Mount of Olives. And it was a tragic end to a man who started so well.

Solomon's son, Rehoboam, he was an arrogant young man. And when he took the throne, because of his arrogance, it caused him to lose the major portion of the kingdom. At this point, the nation of Israel was divided into a northern and southern kingdom.

The northern kingdom was known as Israel. The southern kingdom was known as Judah. The northern kingdom comprised ten tribes.

The southern kingdom comprised two tribes, Judah and Benjamin. The northern kingdom was ruled over by Jeroboam and the southern kingdom by Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. The northern kingdom immediately turned away from God, turned to apostasy, and they built altars in the north.

They set up golden calves and they began to worship the golden calf as their God, the Deliverer, who brought them out of Egypt. And the northern kingdom deteriorated very rapidly and did not have one godly king. However, the southern kingdom continued worshipping Jehovah, but gradually they were going downhill.

There would be times when they would have a good king that would bring sort of a spiritual renewal to the people, but it was a, if you would see it on the graph, you would see a leveling, then a down, maybe leveling, slide up, down, but the whole thing was ultimately going down, further and further, until we get to the place of our text. And we have now Jehoiachin, a descendant of Solomon, called Jeconiah by Jeremiah, and they've hit the bottom. They've come to the end of the line.

Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, has been taken now to Babylon as a captive with his wives and with the other people, and they've come to the end of the line. They have turned their backs upon God and have gone down so far that there is no recovery at this point. They've gone over the line, you might say, as far as recovery is concerned.

End of the line for the nation of Judah. They're going to be in captivity now in Babylon. End of the line for Solomon's descendants sitting upon the throne.

End of the line for Jeconiah. Now, Jeremiah was prophesying at this particular period of their history. As they were declining and going down, Jeremiah was there calling the people back to God.

Calling, however, in vain, for they would not listen to his pleas. They would not hearken to his warnings that you're going away from God so far. You're going to be destroyed, but they wouldn't listen.

And as a result, Jeremiah spoke against Jeconiah. He called him just Coniah, and he prophesied concerning him in Jeremiah 22-28. This man, Coniah, is a despised and broken idol.

He is a vessel wherein is no pleasure. Therefore, they are cast out, he and his descendants. They are cast into a land that they know not.

Oh, earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, write this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days, for none of his descendants shall prosper or sit upon the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah. The end of the line.

None of his descendants. Now, the word childless means that his child will not ascend to the throne. None of his descendants will ever sit upon the throne of Israel forever.

And thus, God's declaration concerning Coniah, who was a descendant of Solomon, the line is cut off. None of his descendants will sit upon the throne. As we look at the New Testament, there is an interesting situation in that both Matthew and Luke give us the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

And people wonder why two genealogies, and more than that, why do they differ as far as the genealogy is concerned? Because you find that the genealogy of Luke's gospel is different from David to Jesus than is the genealogy of Matthew. The answer is this. Matthew gives you the genealogy of Joseph, who he said was supposed to be, the people thought he was the father of Jesus.

He was the supposed father of Jesus as far as the people were concerned. But Luke's gospel gives us the genealogy of Mary. It starts off with Joseph and it should read the son-in-law of Heli.

So we have in Luke's gospel the genealogy of Mary. Now the interesting thing about Matthew's genealogy of Joseph is that Joseph was a descendant of Jehoiakim or Jeconiah, same fellow. And was thus under that edict from God that though he was of the royal seed and had a right to the throne, yet because God had declared that none of his seed of Jeconiah would ever sit upon the throne of Israel, had Jesus been the son of Joseph, he would not be able to sit upon the throne of David and rule over the world.

So as we go to Luke's genealogy, he takes Mary's family back to David again. She was also of the royal seed of David. However, not through Solomon, but through David's son Nathan.

And that's why the two genealogies, the one that dealt with Solomon's genealogy to Jeconiah and of course on down to Joseph, but then the genealogy of Mary through David to Mary's father. So that problem that many people see in the difference in the genealogies is solved by the fact that one is the genealogy of Mary and the other of Joseph. So Jeconiah come to the end of the line, not only for him but for his descendants as far as ever reigning upon the throne of Israel again.

Each one of us will one day come to the end of the line. Sooner or later we'll come to the end of our road. Our pilgrimage here on earth will come to an end.

But it's important to realize that though my pilgrimage here on earth in the present form has come to an end, it is not the end of my existence. When I come to the end of my earthly pilgrimage, my eternal pilgrimage will begin. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 9 27, for it is appointed unto man once to die.

You'll come to the end of the line. But after that, after death, the judgment. It is a fatal mistake that many people make thinking that death is the end.

Not so. After death, the judgment. Daniel writes, and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt.

Everlasting life or shame and contempt. There is two places as far as eternal destiny is concerned. Jesus in talking about his return to the earth in Matthew 25 said, When the Son of Man shall come in his glory and all of his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him will be gathered all of the nations, and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

And he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. And then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the earth. Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed into

everlasting fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels, and these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous unto eternal life.

The end of the line physically in my earthly pilgrimage, but then the future either into everlasting life or everlasting shame and contempt. Either into the kingdom of God that was prepared from the foundations of the world for those that would follow God or into that place that God had prepared for Satan and his angels. Jesus said in John 5 28, Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves will hear my voice and shall come forth.

They that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Paul, writing on the same subject, said, And to you who are troubled, rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all of them that believe in that day. Today you are living in the kingdom of God or in the kingdom of Satan.

Today you are actually determining which kingdom you will spend eternity in. If you live in the kingdom of God and delight to live in the kingdom of God, then eternally you can live in the kingdom of God. If you don't desire to live in the kingdom of God, desire to rebel against God, the word of God and the commandments of God, then God will honor your choice and you will spend eternity separated from God in the kingdom of darkness and death, the kingdom that is ruled by Satan.

In that day, when you come to the end of the line and you take your last breath, where will you be through eternity? What will be your eternal destiny? Do you know for sure? You say, Well, Chuck, nobody can know for sure. Oh, yes, you can. The Bible assures us that you can know.

In fact, the Bible encourages us to make your calling and election sure. And John, when he wrote his little epistle, said, These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you might know that you have eternal life. God wants you to know and be assured of eternal life.

And if you're not sure, something that is of this great import should not be neglected by you for another day, for another moment. You need to get right with God. The prophet Amos cried out, Prepare to meet thy God.

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, but prepare to meet your God. And you need preparation if you're going to meet God on the right terms. And the only way we can meet God on the right terms is by meeting him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life, and no man can come to the Father, but by me. Chuck and I had come to the end of the line. He had failed.

He's taken away captive. You're going to come to the end of the line. I'm going to come to the end of the line.

What will be my destiny? Someone said, Well, Chuck, you've really become strong in your preaching of late. Yes, that's true. And the reason I have become so strong is because of the conditions in the Middle East and in the world in which we live today.

And we've come to the place where the world is coming, I believe, to the end of the line. The things that the Bible has predicted of the last days are happening before our eyes. The new chip that they are talking about implanting in people, the chip is developed, applied digital.

They're in Florida. It's the size of a grain of rice and to be implanted in people. In fact, the first implants have already been made.

It's all just so a part of the final end time scenario. The present conditions in the Middle East where it is threatening to blow up at any moment. The conditions of the world where we are faced with this threat of terrorism right here in the United States.

We're no longer immune. The wickedness that has prevailed and the blasphemies against God. So many indications that we've come to the end of the line.

And because of that, we need to get right with God. We need to forsake the ways of the world and start living a life of full and complete commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. Time is short.

We've come to the end of the line and I want to be ready when He comes to meet Him. And as He said, pray that you'll be accounted worthy to escape the things that will come to pass upon the earth and to stand before the Son of Man. And that's my prayer today.

Lord, we've come to the end of the line. I want to be ready when you come to meet you and to be caught away, to be with you in your kingdom forever. And I believe that the time has come where no more playing around or playing games with God.

Time to get serious in your relationship with God. Because we're coming very fast to the end of the line. At the time, Jehoiachin or Jeconiah, people were probably saying, oh, you know, well Babylon, you know, that's not going to happen.

You know, and just, you know, life goes on, not realizing how close they were to destruction. And today, people just are oblivious of how close we are to the end, to the destruction of our nation, to the destruction of our world as we know it now. But how close we are to the hope of the new beginning in the new world that we will have in Christ Jesus when he comes to set up his kingdom.

Where will you be? Two destinations when you come to the end of the line. As Jesus said, enter into the joy of the Lord or depart ye workers of iniquity. One of the two.

Father, we thank you today for the fact that you have not left us to grope in darkness, but you have given light to the path. You've given us a map so that we know where we're going. And Lord, you've sort of given us the score so we know where we stand.

And we ask you, Lord, today that you'll help us, as Paul said, to realize that it is high time to awake out of our sleep, because now is our salvation so much closer than when we first believed. And so, Lord, I pray today that for those who are not walking with you, as they approach the end of the line, Lord, they might realize the most important thing is being right with God when our Lord returns. Help us, Lord, to get right with you today.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we stand? The pastors are standing down here at the front this morning to pray for you.

If you need to get right with God and you want to get right with God, they're here to pray for you, to pray with you. And you can experience today the washing and the cleansing of your sin, and you can be born again into the family of God. You can become a child of God today and you can have the assurance that if you come to the end of the line before the week is over, you'll be with Him throughout eternity.

Your choice. Interesting. Your destiny is your choice.

It can go either direction, but it's your choice. And you are determining by your choice where you will spend eternity. I would encourage you, think it over seriously.

And I pray that God by His Holy Spirit will help you to make the right choice today. Amen.

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