

Shelley L. Birdsong

The Last King(s) of Judah

Zedekiah and Sedekias in the Hebrew and Old Greek Versions of Jeremiah
37(44):1–40(47):6

[Die letzten Könige von Juda. Zedekia und Sedekias in der hebräischen und altgriechischen Fassung von Jeremia 37(44):1–40(47):6.]

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Zedekiah ben Josiah was the last king of Judah, and under his leadership, in 586 BCE, Jerusalem was destroyed. Interestingly, the Hebrew and Old Greek versions of Jeremiah present very different portrayals of Zedekiah, prompting a variety of literary and historical-critical questions. In this study, Shelley L. Birdsong uses a multi-critical approach to highlight the two unique characterizations of Zedekiah and address their relationship text- and form-critically. She argues that the Greek text depicts Zedekiah as a manipulative and mysterious Machiavellian prince, whereas the Hebrew presents him as a hesitant and kind king who metaphorically mirrors the fall of his capital. Following this literary comparison, the author employs several scholarly methods to substantiate the claim that the Hebrew text is a later edited text. Overall, she demonstrates the importance of doing character studies in Septuagint scholarship and using multiple methods to create a more comprehensive picture of biblical characters.

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