

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

NOTES FOR THIS WEEK: 5/10-11/2021

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: *Jeremiah Chapters 39-41*

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS112, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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OPENING PRAYER – Introduction *Jeremiah Chapters 39-41*

God is faithful: To His Word! To obedient Jeremiah and trusting Ebed-Melech

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS! *Chisholm; Runyan – Fetke (2:40)*

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father; there is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not; as Thou hast been Thou forever will be.*

Refrain:

*Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed Thy hand hath provided; great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

*Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth. Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain*

THIS WEEK'S STUDY:

Chap. 39 – The Fall of Jerusalem - (vs. 1-10); Jeremiah Goes Free – (vs. 11-18); Chap. 40 – Jeremiah with Gedaliah the Governor – (vs. 1-16); Chap. 41 – Insurrection Against Gedaliah – (vs. 1-18).

The Fall of Jerusalem

Jer 39:1 In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem, and besieged it.

Jer 39:2 In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the city was penetrated.

- **The fall of Jerusalem!** The city is taken by storm; for how could it hold out when God Himself fought against it? Jeremiah has been warning the people for forty years that this was going to happen. It is sad to think that after forty years there really wasn't much fruit to his ministry, but the Lord told him that that would be the case. He tried to stand in the gap. He tried to warn the people, but they would not listen to the warnings of God and now Jerusalem is being taken.
- **Jerusalem was so strong a place that nobody would have believed the enemy could ever enter its gates,** but sin had provoked God to withdraw His protection, and then, like Samson when his hair was cut, it was weak as other cities.
- **The end of the books of II Kings and II Chronicles, as well as in Jeremiah chapter 52** give us more details of the story of the fall of Jerusalem.
- **The siege lasted one day short of eighteen months.** Now we are told in the other passages that by the time that the siege was coming to a close, the people were dying of starvation within the city of Jerusalem. Probably as many people died from starvation as did die from the Babylonian army. There was starvation, there was pestilence, the city was ravaged by these things in the last few months, before it finally fell to the Babylonians. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the fourth month, the ninth day, the city was broken up.

Jer 39:3 Then all the princes of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the Middle Gate: Nergal-Sharezer, Samgar-Nebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergal-Sarezzer, Rabmag, with the rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. (Jer 1:15) For behold, I am calling All the families of the kingdoms of the north," says the LORD; "They shall come and each one set his throne At the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, Against all its walls all around, And against all the cities of Judah.

- **In the middle gate** - there was really two walls that of the original city, around Ophel, the southern end, and then the expanded city into the northern end. Between where these walls came together, there was this gate that separated the two portions of this city. This is where the Babylonian officers set up their headquarters. It appears that perhaps they had conquered the northern part of the city first and had not yet fully conquered the southern part of the city, the area of Ophel where the king had his palace.
- The princes are here named, rough and uncouth names they are, to intimate what a sad change sin had made; there, where **Eliakim** and **Hilkiah**, who bore the name of the God of Israel, used to sit, now sit

Nergal-Sharezer, Samgar-Nebo, Sarsechim, and Nergal-Sharezer, who bore the names of the heathen gods. *Rabsaris* is not a name but means chief or head. *Saris* is of the chamberlains or the eunuchs, so in this passage Sarsechim, was the chief of the eunuchs, **and Nergal-Sharezer**, was the chief of the magicians (*mag*, magicians).

- **These names should have never been heard in Jerusalem.** It appears that this is the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. A change in the spiritual forces in the world. (**Luk 21:24**) *And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

Jer 39:4 *So it was, when Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, that they fled and went out of the city by night, by way of the king's garden, by the gate between the two walls. And he went out by way of the plain.*

- **When the Babylonians had conquered that part of the city**, it was obvious now that Jerusalem was going to go down. Now this gate, also known as the horse gate, was in the southern end of the portion of the city of Ophel. *Zedekiah and all the men of war* escaped where the Tyropoean and the Kidron valleys come together and went on down towards Jericho. Though Zedekiah did his best to escape, he could make nothing of it as he is going against God's judgment! He could not get forward, but in the plains of Jericho, he fell into the hands of the pursuers,

Jer 39:5 *But the Chaldean army pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. And when they had captured him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced judgment on him.*

- *Nebuchadnezzar was not with the army when the city fell, but in Riblah*, two hundred plus miles north of *Jerusalem*. Today *Riblah* is still in Syria, a rather poor little village way up in the northern part of Syria, continuing under basically the same name. That is where Nebuchadnezzar was encamped. They brought Zedekiah up there to him.

Jer 39:6 *Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah. (Jer 38:23) 'So they shall surrender all your wives and children to the Chaldeans. You shall not escape from their hand, but shall be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon. And you shall cause this city to be burned with fire.'*

- **Typical of victorious kings, Nebuchadnezzar, killed the leaders** of the conquered nation, in this case he **killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes in Riblah; the king of Babylon also killed all the nobles of Judah**. The last thing that Zedekiah saw was that of watching his own sons, likely very young or infants as Zedekiah was only about 32 years old, being killed! Then those nobles that fled with him, were also killed.

Jer 39:7 *Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon.*

- **Now Zedekiah came to a very cruel fate**, condemning him to darkness for life who had shut his eyes against the clear light of God's word. He would contact Jeremiah, sometimes secretly to hear the word of the Lord, but continued rejecting God's word all the way to the end! Jeremiah told him what God was saying. Don't resist the Babylonians but surrender to them and save the city. For if you will surrender, the city will be left intact, you will be okay, your family will be spared, and things will be much better for you if you just surrender. But like many today, he would not turn from his sin!
- **That was the word of the Lord to Zedekiah. But Zedekiah did not obey, he continued to rebel against the Babylonians.** He continued to try to resist the army of the Babylonians. Now, what God said would happen, did happen. The city has been destroyed. The Babylonian army systematically broke down the walls of Jerusalem. They burned major buildings. They left the place desolate. Zedekiah's family, like the Lord said, were slain. Zedekiah had his eyes put out and he was carried in chains to Babylon.
- **This is an interesting picture of what sin does.** As we saw with Samson. Sin blinds! Then it binds! Finally, it grinds! There's only one thing that can deliver a person from the power of sin, and that's the greater power of the Holy Spirit. Those that have been bound by sin, Jesus has set them free. But we see Zedekiah bound. We see him blinded. We see him now taken captive to die in the enemy's land. The sad results of not listening to the word of God.
- **Many people are like King Zedekiah, in that God has warned of certain consequences to sin.** God said to Zedekiah, "If you will continue to rebel, then you will be taken as a captive to Babylon",

and actually the prophet Ezekiel said, (*Eze 12:13*) *I will also spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there.* Jeremiah said, (*Jer 34:3*) *And you shall not escape from his hand but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you face to face, and you shall go to Babylon.* Because they seem to be diverse, Zedekiah said, “Well it is contradictory! The word of God is contradictory! God didn’t contradict Himself. The king put his eyes out. He was taken to Babylon, but he never saw it. They were both right.

- **Zedekiah cannot blame God for what has happened to him.** God warned him that this is what will happen if you don’t obey. He did not obey, this is what has happened! He could not justly blame God, he can only blame himself. God was faithful in warning him to turn from that path that was leading to that calamity. Zedekiah saw the word of God fulfilled.

Jer 39:8 And the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people with fire, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem.

- **Oh, Zedekiah, Zedekiah!** This you might have prevented if you would have taken God's counsel, repented and yielded in time.

Jer 39:9 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive to Babylon the remnant of the people who remained in the city and those who defected to him, with the rest of the people who remained.

- **The layer of ashes from the city being burned can be seen in Jerusalem today** as you go down the hillside from the dung gate to the Gihon spring.
- **Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, apparently was not in Jerusalem when the city was taken** but was probably up with Nebuchadnezzar. When news came that the city of Jerusalem had fallen, Nebuchadnezzar sent this captain of the guard, or the chief body guard, is literally what the Hebrew says, Nebuchadnezzar sent him down to take charge of the captives and to bring them back to Babylon. So Nebuzaradan, who was the chief body guard. He gathered together the captives, to take them to Babylon. He was overseeing them.

Jer 39:10 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah the poor people, who had nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time. (1Sa 2:5, 7) Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, And the hungry have ceased to hunger. Even the barren has borne seven, And she who has many children has become feeble. [7] The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up.

- **The rich had been proud oppressors, and now they were justly punished for their injustice;** the poor had been patient sufferers, and now they were graciously rewarded for their patience and amends made them for all their losses; for truly there is a God that judges in the earth, even in this world, much more in the other.

Jer 39:11 Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying,

Jer 39:12 "Take him and look after him and do him no harm; but do to him just as he says to you." (Jer 15:11) The LORD said: "Surely it will be well with your remnant; Surely I will cause the enemy to intercede with you In the time of adversity and in the time of affliction.

- **Jeremiah was looked upon as a reproach to Zedekiah and the princes of Israel. They put him in prison, and the king of Babylon and his princes took him out!** Evidently word had come to Nebuchadnezzar of Jeremiah’s prophecies of telling the people to surrender to the king of Babylon. Thus, he ordered that **Jeremiah** be given special treatment. “Let him do what he wants to do. If he wants to stay in the land, let him stay in the land. If he wants to come to Babylon, let him come to Babylon, and he’ll be taken care of.”

Jer 39:13 So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent Nebushasban, Rabsaris, Nergal-Sharezer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's chief officers;

Jer 39:14 then they sent someone to take Jeremiah from the court of the prison, and committed him to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should take him home. So he dwelt among the people.

- **We're told in chapter 52, that Jeremiah was taken from this prison at Ramah**, which was about five miles north of Jerusalem. It is the modern city of Ramallah today. There's where they gathered the prisoners of war. They were chained together, and they were to go from Ramah to Babylon. When the city was taken, he was put in chains, and he was taken then to the city of Ramah. When *Nebuzaradan* came down, they brought Jeremiah from Ramah to him. Now they took *Jeremiah* out of this court of the prison. This is not to be confused with the court of the prison that he was in, in Jerusalem. He is in Ramah, this court of the prison, with the other captives.

Jer 39:15 Meanwhile the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

Jer 39:16 "Go and speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be performed in that day before you.

- **Jeremiah was telling the people that they should surrender** to the Babylonians and spare their lives, the princes came to the King Zedekiah and said, "Jeremiah is demoralizing the troops. We need to get rid of him. So, Zedekiah said, "Well do what you want." So, they put him in this dungeon, and left him to die.
- **Now there was a servant of the king, Ebed-Melech and he said to Zedekiah**, "You know it's not right to just let him die in that dungeon. They're not giving him any bread, and he's just going to die there if we don't do something". And the king said, "Take thirty men and lift him out of the dungeon." So, this Ebed-Melech, came with thirty men, and they had rags and ropes and they tied the rags, or had Jeremiah tie the rags around himself and put the ropes under his arms; and they lifted him out of the dungeon.
- **Confirming again, that God's word was going to take place.** Jeremiah had been saying this for forty years. Thus, there were a lot of people who had begun to ridicule the prophet. They began to sort of scoff at his prophecies. Tell us something different." They were scoffing at Jeremiah. But Jeremiah is assuring this man, *Ebed-Melech*, that God's word is going to be fulfilled.

Jer 39:17 But I will deliver you in that day," says the LORD, "and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid.

- **Ebed-Melech, I'm going to deliver you**, though the city is going to be taken captive in that day. Though the city falls, you will stand. You are not going to be taken as a captive by the enemy.

Jer 39:18 For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be as a prize to you, because you have put your trust in Me," says the LORD.' "(Mal 3:16-17) Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name. [17] "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him." (Zep 3:17) The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing."

- **Ebed-Melech is promised that he's not going to go into captivity. His life is going to be spared.** Here is the promise to the servant of the king. ***Because you have put your trust in Me***, you're not going to be taken captive, your life will be spared. All you servants of the Lord, all of you who have put your trust in the Lord, "Though evil days are going to come".
- **God has promised us that His judgement is going to come upon this earth.** It will be a time of great tribulation, such as the world has never seen before, nor will ever see again. Unparalleled to the history of man, is the judgement that waits for the world right now.
- **Now, there is great news for all believers!** You're not going to be taken captive! "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who are alive and remain, will be caught up together with the Lord, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. The enemy won't take you captive. So, as the Lord promised this servant of the king, that he would not be taken captive, that God would deliver him, so God has promised you, that He will deliver you.

Jeremiah Remains in Judah

Jer 40:1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him bound in chains among all who were carried away captive from Jerusalem and Judah, who were carried away captive to Babylon.

- **Jeremiah was taken to Ramah, and there is where he was released from prison.** The Babylonians had been taken prisoners to Ramah, where they were gathering them together, chaining them, and getting ready to take them to Babylon. At that time Jeremiah was just another captive in Jerusalem. He was chained and taken to Babylon, but this Nebuzaradan, at the command of Nebuchadnezzar: Do good to Jeremiah! Let him go from the chains, in which he was bound.

Jer 40:2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him: "The LORD your God has pronounced this doom on this place.

- **Now, Nebuzaradan had heard Jeremiah's prophecies.** And he was just telling Jeremiah, what Jeremiah had been saying.

Jer 40:3 Now the LORD has brought it, and has done just as He said. Because you people have sinned against the LORD, and not obeyed His voice, therefore this thing has come upon you.

- **The Lord has kept his word!** It's a sad thing when the people of God are rebuked by the people of the world. When the world recognizes what the people of God don't recognize, and they are rebuked by the world. I think of the tragedies, and this of course is one of those difficult decisions that a person has to make, whether to obey God, or not. Here, this Babylonian chief body guard who is rebuking the people of God, having, having to tell them, "*It's because you haven't obeyed His voice, therefore this thing has come upon you.*"

Jer 40:4 And now look, I free you this day from the chains that were on your hand. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it seems wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, remain here. See, all the land is before you; wherever it seems good and convenient for you to go, go there."

- **Jeremiah, you're free!** Just imagine what Jeremiah must have been thinking. I've been faithful for forty years to the LORD, but here I am in chains! However, now he is told, Jeremiah, you're free to do what you want. If you want to come to Babylon, we'll take care of you, but if you want to just stay here, here's the whole land. Stay wherever you want. Go wherever. You've got total freedom to go where you want."

Jer 40:5 Now while Jeremiah had not yet gone back, Nebuzaradan said, "Go back to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people. Or go wherever it seems convenient for you to go." So the captain of the guard gave him rations and a gift and let him go.

Jer 40:6 Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people who were left in the land.

- **Jeremiah likely showed some uncertainty as to what he really wanted to do,** so he then was ordered to go back to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.
- **So, Jeremiah came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah,** in the middle of the land, in the area where they first set up the tabernacle. It was sort of the first capital of the nation, when they first came out of Egypt.

Jer 40:7 And when all the captains of the armies who were in the fields, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, children, and the poorest of the land who had not been carried away captive to Babylon,

- **When it was obvious the Babylonians were capturing Jerusalem, many of the people fled,** as well of much of the army. When Zedekiah went on down to Jericho, much of the army that went with him, fled when they saw the Babylonians coming, they just left the king. Every man for himself. They got out of there and a lot of them escaped. But now that they heard that Gedaliah was given charge. He was made governor by Nebuchadnezzar, these captains with their forces, which were in the fields.

Jer 40:8 then they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men.

Jer 40:9 *And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan (who had been with Josiah, when the word of God had been found), took an oath before them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.*

Jer 40:10 *As for me, I will indeed dwell at Mizpah and serve the Chaldeans who come to us. But you, gather wine and summer fruit and oil, put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken."*

- Gedaliah was saying basically what Jeremiah said before, "Just *serve the king of Babylon and it shall be well with you*. Live peaceably here. Don't try to rebel anymore against the Babylonians. Gedaliah urges his own example, for their welfare. There's plenty of fruit, the land is there before you, and so take the vessels and fill them with the summer fruits and so forth, the juices, and dwell in the city.

Jer 40:11 *Likewise, when all the Jews who were in Moab, among the Ammonites, in Edom, and who were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan,*

Jer 40:12 *then all the Jews returned out of all places where they had been driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruit in abundance.*

- There is a gathering. A spark of hope! Maybe there are some good things happening, are rising out of this! Those who had left Judah and had gone to Moab, Ammon and Edom, now they come back again. .

Jer 40:13 *Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields came to Gedaliah at Mizpah,*

Jer 40:14 *and said to him, "Do you certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to murder you?" But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam did not believe them.*

- We don't know where Jeremiah is right now, but Gedaliah is warned. "The king Baalis of the Ammonites, he has sent this guy Ishmael, to kill you. He's here, he's going to try and kill you. But Gedaliah didn't believe it.

Jer 40:15 *Then Johanan the son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah in Mizpah, saying, "Let me go, please, and I will kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no one will know it. Why should he murder you, so that all the Jews who are gathered to you would be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish?"*

Jer 40:16 *But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said to Johanan the son of Kareah, "You shall not do this thing, for you speak falsely concerning Ishmael."*

- Gedaliah is being warned that Ishmael is out to kill him, and he doesn't believe it. This is so typical, just like people often are warned of the calamity that is going to come upon them. They need to take some kind of an action to avert it, and they say, that'll never happen, I don't believe it. Thus was the case of Gedaliah.

Gedaliah Murdered

Jer 41:1 *Now it came to pass in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the royal family and of the officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. And there they ate bread together in Mizpah. (1Sa 24:4-6) Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.' " And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. [5] Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. [6] And he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD."*

- It's hard to believe Ishmael was a blood descendant of King David! His conduct is so, so far from David's, who had such respect and fear of harming the anointed of the LORD!

Jer 41:2 *Then Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him, arose and struck Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword, and killed him whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.*

- **It looked like, we're back to the good times.** Gedaliah is going to co-operate, and things are going to be alright. There is hope among the people. But now, this murderous act by Ishmael! It wasn't that Gedaliah wasn't warned, he was. It wasn't that there was no way out, there was. But he just didn't believe it. Thus tragedy, because he wouldn't believe the warnings that came. Unbelief!

Jer 41:3 Ishmael also struck down all the Jews who were with him, that is, with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans who were found there, the men of war.

- **A remnant of the Babylonian army** had been left to oversee things. *The men of war.* He killed those too.

Jer 41:4 And it happened, on the second day after he had killed Gedaliah, when as yet no one knew it,

Jer 41:5 that certain men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, eighty men with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to the house of the LORD.

- **The tabernacle had been put there in Mizpah,** the place of worship, and so these men were coming to worship the Lord!

Jer 41:6 Now Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went along; and it happened as he met them that he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam!"

- **Ishmael, tragically, was a good actor.** These eighty men had come to worship the Lord, so he goes out just weeping as he's going along, coming up to them, saying, *Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam,* when he had already killed him! How very treacherous and evil!

Jer 41:7 So it was, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah killed them and cast them into the midst of a pit, he and the men who were with him.

Jer 41:8 But ten men were found among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for we have treasures of wheat, barley, oil, and honey in the field." So he desisted and did not kill them among their brethren.

Jer 41:9 Now the pit into which Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, because of Gedaliah, was the same one Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel. Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with the slain.

- **This big pit.** They dumped all of the bodies, Gedaliah and all these other men.

Jer 41:10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive and departed to go over to the Ammonites.

- **Ishmael was really KGB or CIA operated from Ammon,** to attack and to do this evil to the people. This Baalis, the king of the Ammonites had put him up to this.

Jer 41:11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah and all the captains of the forces that were with him heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,

Jer 41:12 they took all the men and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah; and they found him by the great pool that is in Gibeon.

Jer 41:13 So it was, when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, that they were glad.

- There was rejoicing

Jer 41:14 Then all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan the son of Kareah.

Jer 41:15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and went to the Ammonites.

Jer 41:16 Then Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with him, took from Mizpah all the rest of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of

Nethaniah after he had murdered Gedaliah the son of Ahikam—the mighty men of war and the women and the children and the eunuchs, whom he had brought back from Gibeon.

Jer 41:17 And they departed and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is near Bethlehem, (It was the route going to Egypt) as they went on their way to Egypt,

Jer 41:18 because of the Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had murdered Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor in the land.

- **They were fearful at this point.** Johanan seems to be a fairly decent fellow. But he's fearful that when word gets back to Babylon, of the things that Ishmael had done, that the Babylonians would send their army back to retaliate and would utterly wipe them out. This was the fear that they had.
- **It was a time of real mixed emotions among the people.** There was hope and then there was despair. Then hope and despair, and things are in a sort of state of flux. And now the dastardly deed has been done by Ishmael, and they're afraid that the Babylonians will come and retaliate. So, they're camped near Bethlehem, and sort of planning to just flee for safety to Egypt, to escape from Nebuchadnezzar.
- **Interestingly, the Lord hasn't spoken through Jeremiah.** I'm amazed that Jeremiah didn't warn Gedaliah about this. Maybe the Lord didn't reveal this to Jeremiah. This is an area in which it's just sort of recording the events and Jeremiah is seemingly silent through this period. But now, they call for Jeremiah, in order that Jeremiah might give to them the word of the Lord as to what they should do.
- **A good sign. "Call for the prophet. Let's get God's word."** Hopeful, and as you read on, there's disaster. You know you're on this emotional roller coaster, "Alright we're going to make it now!", then "Oh no!" So that's the experience you're going to get when you read the next chapter. "Alright!"
- **Many, many lessons for us to glean from history.** Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat the mistakes. These things were all written for our examples, that we might have warning. That we would not fall in the same error. God is faithful. God is faithful in warning what's going to happen, and God shows us the results of disobedience, as well as the fruit of trusting in Him.
- **(Mic 6:8) He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?** He has shown you the way of righteousness and truth, and then He has said, "Walk in this way and I will be with you, and I will deliver you, and I will strengthen you. Forsake my ways, and disaster will follow."
- **It's up to us to determine whether or not we're going to listen and obey the voice of God or listen and go our own way.** Tragically, many people are of the latter category, who listen but then, go their own way. May that be not so among us tonight. May we be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.

Application:

- **Zedekiah was curious of what God was telling him to do. But he continued to ignore God and followed his own plan to the very end.** The result here, as always, is that it cost him everything – His country, his family, his eyesight and his freedom. What is the nature of our relationship with the LORD? Curiosity or obedience?
- **A perfect example of what continuing in sin does. Like Samson. Sin blinds! Then it binds! Finally, it grinds!** The sad results of not listening to the word of God. There's only one thing that can deliver a person from the power of sin, and that's the greater power of the Holy Spirit.
- **God's word shall come to pass, it shall be fulfilled, and you will be on one side or the other.** God was faithful in warning Zedekiah to turn from that path that was leading to that calamity, but he refused to obey! Those that obeyed were delivered! Those who disobeyed, reaped the consequences.
- **Jeremih's faithfulness is being rewarded!** While all Judah is being conquered through God bringing judgment through the Babylonians, Jeremiah is being given total freedom. He is treated so very kindly by King Nebuchadnezzar, much better treatment than his own country men had given him!
- **Ebed-Melech's faithfulness, -- he is promised that he's not going to go into captivity. His life is going to be spared.** Here is the promise to the servant of the king. *"Because you have put your trust in Me, says the LORD!"* Likewise, all of you servants of the Lord, all of you who have put your trust in the Lord, "Though evil days are going to come".

- **God has promised us that His judgement is going to come upon this earth. Now, there is great news for all believers!** You're not going to be taken captive! "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who are alive and remain, will be caught up together with the Lord, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
- **Gedaliah's murder by Ishmael** - It wasn't that Gedaliah wasn't warned, he was. It wasn't that there wasn't a way out, there was. But he just didn't believe it! The tragedy of unbelief! How prone are we to unbelief?
- **God has shown us** the way of righteousness and truth! He has said, "Walk in this way and I will be with you, and I will deliver you, and I will strengthen you. Forsake My ways, and disaster will follow."
- **It's up to us to determine whether or not we're going to listen and obey the voice of God or listen and go our own way.** Tragically, many people are of the latter category, who listen but then, go their own way. May that be not so among us! May we be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.

Closing Prayer:

Lost episodes Devotional Daily -

<https://drkenyncureton.selz.com/item/556a49aab79872054c569bad>

June 11

On Sunday, June 11, 1775, Founding Father John Adams wrote his wife Abigail regarding the sermon he had just heard from Rev. Mr. George Duffield.

"I Have been this morning to hear Mr. Duffield, a preacher in this city, whose principles, prayers, and sermons more nearly resemble those of our New England clergy than any that I have heard. His discourse was a kind of exposition on the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. America was the wilderness, and the solitary place, and he said it would be glad, 'rejoice and blossom as the rose.' He labored 'to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees.' He said to them that were of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you,' 'No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, but the redeemed shall walk there,' etc. "He applied the whole prophecy to this country, and gave us as animating an entertainment as I ever heard. He filled and swelled the bosom of every hearer. I hope you have received a letter, in which I enclosed you a pastoral letter from the synod of New York and Philadelphia; by this you will see, that the clergy this way are but now beginning to engage in politics, and they engage with a fervor that will produce wonderful effects."

John Adams' account of Rev. George Duffield's sermon from Isaiah 35 as applied to America is a lost episode in American history.

Read and Reflect: Read Isaiah 35:1-10 and reflect that passage in comparison with the remembrances of Rev. Duffield's message as recorded by John Adams.

Prayer: Father, we are grateful for the Patriot Pastors of the Revolution, who took your word and made application to our situation in America and provided the biblical basis for resistance against an unrighteous and tyrannical governmental authority. Raise up pastors in our day who will do the same, pointing to the Highway of Holiness (Isa. 35:8), in Jesus' Name, Amen.

*** Lost Episodes pg 214** *Source Citation: Charles F. Adams, ed., Familiar Letters of John Adams with His Wife Abigail Adams, During the Revolution with a Memoir of Mrs. Adams (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1875), 65.