

Jeremiah Study

Chapters 34-38 (~40 min) ...

- ~586 BC: Chapters 34-38 deal with Jerusalem falling

Chapter 34

- ~586 BC Jerusalem is under siege

(34:3) "your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon"

- Some people (who try to disprove the Bible) point to this as conflicting with Ezekiel 12:13 where God says that Zedekiah will not see Babylon. However, as we will see later, Zedekiah does see King Nebby, who then puts out Zedekiah's eyes which blinds him *before* he is taken into Babylon. So while Zedekiah does go & die in Babylon, he never "sees" it.

(34:8-22) The people went back on what God told them to do.

- They were under siege. God said "free your slaves", so they did.
- Then, Babylon got caught up in an unexpected battle in Egypt & King Nebby pulled his army from Jerusalem to knock that down.
 - The people in Jerusalem then decided they wanted their slaves back.

Chapter 35

~ Somewhere around 609-598 BC

This chapter is short, but we see an example where people obeyed (even inconveniently) the orders of their fathers, yet, they did not hear nor obey the word of God.

(35:18-19) We do see that God places honor on the loyalty that was shown through obedience to Jonadab.

Chapter 36

~606 BC

(36:2) This would be ~ 21 years of God's Words to Jeremiah

Inspiration of the Word:

(36:3) "It may be"

- Does God, who knows the beginning from the end, not know how the people will react before He gives this direction? Of course He knows. Yet, he is faithful to give people every chance to change their ways. (God's enduring patience)

(36:4-8) Jeremiah is still "confined" (perhaps in prison?), so he has Baruch write this down & instructs him to read it during the fast. (Reminder, they are in the 4th year of Jehoiakim's reign)

- The "fast" was a bit of a prophesy in itself.

Proclamation of the Word

(36:9-10) in the 5th year, Jehoiakim proclaims a fast. Baruch reads the scroll in the House of the Lord

Reaction to the Word

(36:11-19) This provokes fear, but perhaps not fear of what God is saying but rather fear at the displeasure of leadership.

- They know they need to tell this to the King, but they tell Baruch & Jeremiah to hide.
 - Being ~ 1 year later, it's unclear if Jeremiah was out of prison at this time, or, if he was freed because of this.

(36:20-26) Jehoiakim cuts the scroll & throws it in the fire. He doesn't want to hear God's words. He doesn't head God's words. Instead, he wants to seize the messengers.

- Notice However: (v25) Elnathan, Delaiah & Gemariah did not want the king to burn the scroll. Perhaps, *some* did hear (if not completely head) the Words of God.

God's Words Will Never Fade

(36:27-33) God has Jeremiah & Baruch write another scroll with all the words that were in the previous, plus more.

- God cannot be silenced.
- God makes a proclamation against Jehoiakim
 - (See 2 Chronicles 36:5-8) He gets capture by King Nebby

Chapter 37

- Zedekiah's Reign: 597 - 586 BC
- Jehoiakim's branch is broken.
 - Jehoiakim 609-598 BC
 - His son Jehoiachin 598-597 (only 3 months)
 - Nebby tries to establish the other son Coniah
 - Zedekiah (brother of Jehoiakim) reigns 597-586 BC (when Jerusalem finally falls)

See 1 Chronicles 3:15-16 (NIV)

The sons of Josiah:

- Johanan the firstborn,

- **Jehoiakim** the second son,
- **Zedekiah** the third,
- Shallum the fourth.

The successors of **Jehoiakim**:

- Jehoiachin his son, (only 3 months)
- Then **Zedekiah**. (his brother)

(37:1-2) They still aren't listening to the Word of the Lord (not changing their ways)

(37:3) Yet, they send the priests and prophets to inquire of God.

(37:4) We've seen that Jeremiah had been in prison in prior chapter timelines, however, he is free at this point.

(37:5) This is the same point in time of Chapter 34 where we saw them release their slaves & then try to get them back.

- On the surface, this probably looked like God was relenting.
 - Zedekiah sends to the religious leaders to pray
 - The Siege army just pulls out and leaves
- But God gives Jeremiah the words to answer that they will be back.

(37:11-21) Back in Prison

- Jeremiah goes to claim the land that he purchased in chapter 32
- Irijah accuses Jeremiah of defecting to the Chaldeans
- They put him in prison (again)
- Zedekiah secretly asks Jeremiah to inquire to the Lord.
 - Clearly, Zedekiah believes that Jeremiah on some level.
- Jeremiah pleads with Zedekiah to not send him back the prison where he was.
 - Zedekiah transfers him to the Court of the Prison & declares that he be fed.

Chapter 38

(38:1-6) The Affliction of Jeremiah

- While Zedekiah *appeared* to have some minor mercy for Jeremiah in the last chapter, he is not sticking his neck out at all for him in front of others.
- Jeremiah is lowered down into a pit where he is submerged in muck up to his neck.
- See Lamentations 3:55 for what Jeremiah was thinking at this time

(38:7-10) Intercession for Jeremiah

- Ebed-Melech is not Jewish, but even he calls this "evil" what they have done to the "prophet" and he sticks his neck out to intercede on behalf of Jeremiah to the king.

(38:11-13) The king grants this ask & Ebed-Melech takes great care not to hurt Jeremiah as he is rescued from the pit.

Fun Fact:

In Chapter 39 (verse 18) we will see where God promises to protect Ebed-Melech "because he put his trust in God".

(38: 14-16) Zedekiah is asking Jeremiah for guidance again. Notice he promises not to kill him, or hand him over to those that wish to kill him, but he never says that he will actually *listen* to the words.

(38:17-28) Zedekiah is afraid of the wrong thing

- Instead of fearing God he fears “the people”
 - God promises that these people will not deliver him if he just obeys the voice of God and surrenders.
 - God tells him what will happen if he *doesn't* surrender:
 - His children will be murdered in front of him
 - He will be taken
 - The city will be burned with fire
- Zedekiah either doesn't “believe” God, or he doesn't “trust” God. He keeps asking for a word from God, but when the message is not what he wants to hear, he seems to disregard it.

(38:23-28) Secrets

- Zedekiah doesn't want anyone to know that he was talking to Jeremiah about this, nor does he want anyone to know what God said. He basically asks Jeremiah to lie if asked.
 - And of course, the princes ask...
 - Does Jeremiah lie here? (v27) - Maybe not. Previously Jeremiah did ask Zedekiah not to send him back to prison. We also know that Jesus was the only person to lead a completely sinless life, so we probably shouldn't get too hung up on trying to hang Jeremiah for a half truth here.