

Jeremiah 37:1 – 39:18

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~ The prophet Jeremiah is often referred to as *“the prophet with a broken heart.”* Our previous sixteen reports from this prophetic leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Bible has highlighted the depths of Jeremiah’s hurting and despair; and the difficulties that his prophetic office presented as he took God’s terse message to the rebellious kings and people in the southern kingdom of Judah. Solomon had said, *“... because the judgment of God against an evil work is not executed speedily, it is in the hearts of the sons of men to do evil.”* That was the condition of the children of Israel during the days of Jeremiah; and such are the days that we live in as I type this report and you read it.

Beginning at chapter thirty-seven in Jeremiah - and continuing through the remainder of this book - we have a purely historical section. The tone changes dramatically now, and it will seem as if Jeremiah is saying, *“... I told you so.”* This man has now seen his excoriating and abrading prophetic message that the Lord gave him to give to Judah become literally fulfilled. The nation, people, and way of life that Jeremiah loved so dearly is gone, and has entered full-blown captivity; and the city of Jerusalem and the temple has been destroyed. So, instead of *“... I told you so”* this is really the heartbreaking cry of a true witness for God. Jeremiah’s sorrows and hurt reveals exactly how God felt about the situation, too.

Jeremiah had been about twenty years old when he was called and began his work as a prophet for the Lord. Now, at least thirty years have gone by, and we find him in prison – again. This particular imprisonment stemmed from Jeremiah’s advice to King Zedekiah; advising him not to make an alliance with Pharaoh Necho, and cautioning Zedekiah not to fight Nebuchadnezzar. In fact, Jeremiah told Zedekiah to surrender to Babylon – and Zedekiah was absolutely infuriated by that suggestion. Well, Zedekiah does the opposite of what God instructs him to do through Jeremiah. So, the Babylonian army subsequently besieged Judah for eighteen months. This section of Scripture looks back on the fall of Jerusalem; and it is

important to keep the historical perspectives from which we are viewing these three chapters covered in this report....

XXXVII

1 And king Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.

2 But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us.

4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison.

5 Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

6 Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

8 And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart.

10 For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among

them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

11 And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army,

12 Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, to separate himself thence in the midst of the people.

~ This section of Jeremiah can be difficult to understand. What has happened is this: Nebuchadnezzar was coming against Jerusalem for the third and final time. Previously, Nebuchadnezzar had only taken a certain number of the finest men away as captives – but hadn't completely leveled the city or decimated the people. He also placed Zedekiah on the throne as his vassal; but Zedekiah desperately wanted to get himself out from under Babylonian rule. After all, Zedekiah had promised Judah and their allies peace, but he was not able to deliver on that promise. So, Zedekiah made an overture to Pharaoh Necho in Egypt. Pharaoh took the bribe and decided to come up and attempt to help alleviate the problem Zedekiah was having with Babylon.

Of course, Pharaoh had an ulterior motive in helping Zedekiah; and that ulterior motive was to take Judah from Nebuchadnezzar and from Zedekiah into his own rule. It's all very convoluted – as politics are. So, the commanders from Babylon turned from besieging Jerusalem at that time, and went on an offense against Pharaoh. Alright, everything associated with world politics at this time in which we are studying is now in complete chaotic disarray; and it gave an appearance as if Jeremiah might have been wrong in all of his prophecies. I am sure Jeremiah was absolutely in doubt here. However, while all of this was happening, it afforded Jeremiah the opportunity to miraculously escape from prison, and get back to his home city of Anathoth in the tribe of Benjamin....

13 And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans.

14 Then said Jeremiah, It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes.

15 Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for they had made that the prison.

~ So, they accuse Jeremiah of escaping from prison to defect to the enemy. Then they beat Jeremiah and put him in another prison. That constitutes the fourth time Jeremiah has been arrested and thrown into prison. Unfortunately, it isn't his last time in prison, either. Notice, as we read on now, that King Zedekiah – who was an evil, brutal and monstrous king – and absolutely hated Jeremiah – also secretly brings Jeremiah to him because Zedekiah needed to hear from the Lord. See, friends, when you genuinely stand for the Lord, even your enemies will recognize it. Well, Jeremiah is going to give Zedekiah another message – but Zedekiah still isn't going to appreciate the Word of the Lord from the prophet. Do you think Jeremiah had some very real questions for the Lord, friends? I think he did. I think Jeremiah had a *LOT* of questions for God at this time....

16 When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon, and into the cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days;

17 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out: and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

18 Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison?

19 Where are now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land?

20 Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there.

21 Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

XXXVIII

1 Then Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live.

3 Thus saith the LORD, This city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it.

4 Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

5 Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you.

6 Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

~ I think it's safe to say this was the low point in Jeremiah's life. He is sinking in the mire of the dungeon, friends. I'm not sure if you know what that means – but it means Jeremiah was literally in the septic tank sewer of the prison. That's not very nice. Well, even in that horrible state of being, Jeremiah sends a message to Zedekiah to obey the Voice of God because the Lord was speaking through him. As we read on, we see God was telling Zedekiah to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar, and that resistance would be futile and fatal for the nation. I am absolutely sure Zedekiah knew there really was no other option; but, just as everyone who is in rebellion against God does, he refused to heed the message of truth, and stuck with the lies of the false prophets.

See, Zedekiah was entrenched in politics. His only desire was to please everyone all the time, and make peace at all cost. That, as a result, meant he pleased *NO ONE* and made peace with *NO ONE*. He is now dragging his own nation down to suit his pride and self-will; and that is how it always works out in this life, friends – every time – no exceptions. Further, if you go through this section of Scripture carefully, you will discover that womanhood in Judah was thoroughly corrupt at this time. When womanhood becomes corrupt in a nation, there is *NO POSSIBLE WAY* – not even a hope of a chance – that said society will recover on the moral plane. Today, almost every nation of the world is pickled in the marinara of saucy women — whose only desire is to be the next famous sexpot. All of that is wrapped up in this chapter. I'm not going to be tedious in developing that point — but I highly suggest you read all of this text very, very carefully....

7 Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

8 Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city.

10 Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

11 So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so.

13 So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

14 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the third entry that is in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me.

15 Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?

16 So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house:

18 But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

19 And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live.

21 But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath shewed me:

22 And, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back.

23 So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

24 Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die.

25 But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king, hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee:

26 Then thou shalt say unto them, I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there.

27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived.

28 So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was there when Jerusalem was taken.

XXXIX

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

2 And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up.

3 And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

4 And it came to pass, that when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him.

6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

7 Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God on a very frightful note. Witnessing everyone in your family, and all of your friends and colleagues, be murdered before they put your

eyes, is just not nice. This also marks the beginning of the era that Jesus Himself called *"the times of the Gentiles."* Jesus said, *"Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."* That's a remarkable statement; because we're still in it today. Most of you know I absolutely insist the current return of Israel to the land is *IN NO WAY* a fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy. Anyone who says Israel is back in the land according to prophecy is trafficking in sensationalism and emotionalism that stems from a hidden agenda – which is usually to raise money in a fraudulent way; and they are totally and completely ignorant of the Word of God, too. They like to say *".... bring the Jews back to Israel"* – but they never seem to get back. They're perpetually returning, according to prophecy-mongering. There is no religious freedom in that land today – except for the Muslim who worships Satan – Moslems have all the freedom of religion they want – because they are willing to murder and die for it. The Arab controls *ALL* of the holy places – Israel controls *NOTHING* in the *"holy land"* except the awful, horrible and dreadful Wailing Wall; the place where orthodoxy dashes their heads against the stones, and weeps uncontrollably and inconsolably. That's all the Jews have.

The judgment of God is a frightful picture, indeed; and it is nearly impossible for this generation that I am speaking to to accept. The one thing man does not like to hear is that God is going to judge them. Well, God's judgment comes upon nations, families and individuals – even upon His Own chosen people. For more than half of his life, Jeremiah had proclaimed the Word of Jehovah by denouncing the sins of these people. He called them to repentance. They refused. God had been patient for centuries - which perplexed the people. God's patience enabled the false prophets to mock Jeremiah and declare that his prophecies were not true; but God's patience with His people has now run out. It's simply too late for them. Remember the words of Solomon that this report opened with: *".... because the judgment against an evil work is not executed speedily the hearts of the sons of men are predisposed to do evil."*

I'll be honest with you dear readers – because I always am honest with you – there was a time in my life of wealth, luxury, and every good material thing anyone in this life could desire. I never thought God could or would judge me like He did. After all, I was saved at the very young age of seven. I

honestly believed God had blessed my life more than anyone else in the world, because I was so smart, so clever, and so anything and everything else. Well, you can take my word for whatever it's worth to you – probably not much to most – but God judges, and He judges severely and swiftly. When that day arrives, everything you once knew will blow away with the wind; and there won't be a thing in the world you can do to stop it — or even slow it down from happening.

The Greeks have a proverb that says, “... *the wheels of the gods grind slowly; but they grind exceedingly small.*” God allows us to continue in disobedience until there comes a day when there is no remedy. The difference between the lost and saved man is that God judges His children in love; whereas He reserves judgment for the children of the devil for a later day – when He will judge in wrath. When we see the bowls of wrath poured out in the New Testament, there is *NOTHING* that even comes close to such a horrible picture in the Old Testament. When we get to Jude and Revelation, I *PROMISE* you these safari reports are going to literally traumatize. So, those who say the Old Testament has the God of wrath, but the New Testament has the God of love – you just happen to be exactly inverted, my beloved. If you are a believer – you *WILL* be judged in this lifetime - because God punishes sin – you can just write that down. Jeremiah did....

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

9 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.

10 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

11 Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying,

12 Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.

13 So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rabsaris, and Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's princes;

14 Even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

15 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

16 Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee.

17 But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid.

18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD ~

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