



Jeremiah 39-41

Tape #7301
Jeremiah 39-41
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Jeremiah, chapter thirty nine, as we continue our journey through the word of God. I love just journeying through God's word! The thirty ninth chapter begins with the story of the fall of Jerusalem. For forty years Jeremiah has been warning the people that this was going to happen. He had been prophesying now for forty years. Sort of sad to report, after forty years there really wasn't much fruit to his ministry, but the Lord told him that that would be the case. God said, "I want you to speak to them, but they're not going to listen." And that basically was 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.

A little more full details of the story of the fall of Jerusalem, are given in the end of the book of II Kings, the end of the book of II Chronicles, and also in Jeremiah chapter fifty two. So to really get the whole story, you should read the last chapters of II Kings, of II Chronicles, and chapter fifty two of Jeremiah.

[We are told here], *In the ninth year of Zedekiah the king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all of his army against Jerusalem, and he began the siege. And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up (39:1-2).*

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

And all of the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and they sat in the middle gate, [Now, there was really sort of two walls that the original city, and then the expanded city. 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 sort of separated the two portions of this city. This is where the Babylonian officers set up their headquarters, and it would appear 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. These guys had some pretty rugged names, that were the Babylonian officers.] Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, [Rabsaris is not a name, Rabsaris is the word Rab was chief and saris is of the chamberlains or the eunuchs, so in this passage Sarsechim, was the chief of the eunuchs, and .] Nergalsharezer, [Who was the chief of the magicians, Rab, chief, and the magi of magicians.] Rabmag, so with all of the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon. And it came to pass, [when they had conquered that part of the city, and it was obvious now that Jerusalem was going to go down] that when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all of the men of war, and so he fled, and he went forth 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 the way of the plain (39:3-4).

Now this gate that he went out, was known then as the horse gate. It was in the southern end of the portion of the city of Offel, and he escaped out through the where the Tyropian and the Kidron valleys come together, out that way and went on down towards Jericho.

But the Chaldeans army pursued after them, and it overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgement upon him (39:5).

Now Nebuchadnezzar was not with the army when the city fell. Nebuchadnezzar was way north, in the northern part of what is today Syria, in this city of Riblah, which exists to the present day. It's a wretched little village way up in the northern part of Syria. But it continues today under basically the same name. There is where Nebuchadnezzar was encamped. So they brought Zedekiah up there to him in this area of the

northern part of Syria.

And the king of Babylon killed all the nobles of Judah. [Well, first of all] the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: [He watched his own sons being killed. Then those nobles that fled with him, they also were killed.] Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon. (39:6-7).

Now Zedekiah came to a very cruel fate and a very cruel man. This is a man who, last week in our studies, we found secretly coming to Jeremiah to hear the word of the Lord. He didn't want Jeremiah to let others know that he was curious to hear the word of God. But it is hard. There was a curiosity to know what God was saying. The problem was when Jeremiah gave him the word of the Lord, he didn't follow it. Just like today there are a lot of people that are curious of what God has to say. But they don't follow what God has to say. There's just that curiosity. "What does God have to say? Tell me Jeremiah what is God saying?" And Jeremiah told him what God was saying. Basically what God was saying was, "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." 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.

In that you have sort of an interesting picture of what sin does. Sin is very blinding. Paul the apostle in fact, speaks of how, "The god of this world has blinded their eyes". I'm amazed at how blind people are, who are in sin. They are destroying themselves but they can't seem to see it. They are destroying their families, but they can't seem to see it. Sin, it brings an eerie kind of a blindness to a person, to the truth that's going on. "But then they bound him with chains", and I see how binding sin can be. I see how sin can get a hold on a person's life and they cannot get free, though many times they struggle desperately. They are caught in it's vice. They try to extricate themselves to no avail.

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. Giving your life to Jesus Christ, and experiencing His freedom. "For whom the Son sets free, is free indeed." He came to set at liberty those he said, that were bound. "To open the prison doors to the captives." Those that have been bound by sin, Jesus has set them free. But we see the king 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.

Now, herein is a interesting thing, in that many people are like king Zedekiah, in that God has warned of certain consequences to sin. God has declared that certain sins have certain consequences. God has said, "The wages of sin is death". God said to Zedekiah, "If you will continue to rebel, then you will be taken as a captive, you will be taken to Babylon", and actually the prophet said, "you won't see it", so if you really follow it carefully, his eyes will be out. Because you see there were two prophecies. One said, "You'll be taken to Babylon". The other said, "The king will never see Babylon." Because they seem to be diverse, Zedekiah said, "Well it is contradictory! The word of God is contradictory! I can't believe it. Because He contradicts. Here's one prophet saying I'm going to be taken as a captive to Babylon, here's a prophet says I'll never see Babylon. So they contradict. God contradicts Himself, so I don't believe it."

Well, 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. And many times, supposed contradictions in the bible can be explained. When you get all of the knowledge and all of the facts. You find out that it isn't a contradiction, it indeed was true, just as the prophets both said, though what they said seemed to be contradictory.

Now, at this point in chains, a captive, his children slain, the city of Jerusalem destroyed. Does he have a right to blame God as not being fair, for what happened to him? Can he blame God rightly for what has happened? Can he say, "God why did you do this to me?" No. He cannot blame God. God tried to warn him, God did warn him that this is what will happen if you don't obey. He did not obey, this is what has happened, but he cannot really justly blame God, he can only blame himself. There are people who want to

blame God for the calamities that come in their lives. They want to shake their fists at God, and they want to blame God and find fault with God because of calamities that had come. When in reality, God was faithful in warning them to turn from that path that was leading to that calamity. So Zedekiah saw the word of God fulfilled.

And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, [verse eight] the houses of the people, with fire, [As I've mentioned before, those who will be going in a couple of weeks with us over to Jerusalem, as we go down the hillside from the dung gate, to the Gihon spring, we'll point out the ash, the layer of ash in the Strata there, which dates back to the time that we read of here; when they burned with fire, the city, the king's house and all.] they broke down the walls of Jerusalem. And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard [Now this is the man that was in, was the captain of the guard, and it would appear that he was not in Jerusalem when the city was taken, but he was probably up with Nebuchadnezzar. When the city of Jerusalem, 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] carried away the captives to Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that had fallen away, those of them that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained (39:8-9).

So, he gathered together the captives, to take them to Babylon. He was overseeing them.

But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and he gave them vineyards and fields at the same time. Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had given charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say to you (39:10-12).

Evidently word had come to Nebuchadnezzar of Jeremiah's prophecies. And he realized that Jeremiah was 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."

So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, [who was at this time the chief chamberlain, it's now probably a month or so later] and Nergalsharezer, [who was at that time was the chief musician, magician, not musician, magician], and all the king of Babylon's princes; Even they sent, and they took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and they committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people (39:13-14).

Now, this prison that Jeremiah was taken from, from another passage in chapter fifty two, we find that he was there at Ramah. Now Ramah was about five miles north of Jerusalem. It is the modern city of Gernata today. There's where they gathered the prisoners of war, there at Ramah. They were chained together and they were to go from Ramah to Babylon. So when the city was taken, he was put in chains, and he was taken then to the city of Ramah, then when this chief body guard, Nebuzaradan came down, they brought Jeremiah from Ramah to him. Now they took Jeremiah out of this court of the prison. But that's 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.

Now, shift gears. Verse fifteen, we're gonna go back now to an episode that was skipped over. You remember that towards the end, when 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. He is telling them that Babylon is going to take this place. 'There's no sense of trying to resist, that they're just going to be defeated anyhow, and they ought to surrender', and that's treason and we need to get rid of him. He's demoralizing the people!" So Zedekiah said, "Well do what you want." So they put him in this dungeon, and left him to die. The dungeon just had this layer of mud in the bottom, and he was sinking in the mud, and he was left there to die in those miserable conditions.

Now there was a servant of the king, and his name indicates that, Ebedmelech, and Ebed is servant, and Melech is king, so he was servant of the king, who was an Ethiopian, 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 gonna die there if we don't do something". And the king said, "Take thirty men and lift him out of the dungeon." So

this Ebedmelech, 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. He was then imprisoned in the court of the king, in the prison there in the court of the king. So, probably just shortly after this, is when this particular prophecy was given.

So, you have to go back in your mind, and in Hebrew writing, there's no problem with inserting these things at all. But, in our English chronological mind, it wants things right in order, you know, we have trouble with this, but it's typical in Hebrew literature. So, let's go back a few months now, before the city was taken.

The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, which said, Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, and say, Thus saith Jehovah 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 you 39:16).

Confirming again, that God's word was gonna take place. Now remember, again, 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. "Ahh come on! We've heard that for forty years! Change your tune man! Tell us something different." They were scoffing at Jeremiah. But Jeremiah is assuring this man, Ebedmelech, that God's word is going to be fulfilled. "The evil is going to come upon the city. The future is going to be bad, not good. God is going to accomplish those things that He said".

But [The Lord said to Ebedmelech] I will deliver you in that day, saith the Lord: ["Though the city is going to be taken captive in that day, I'm going to deliver you. Though the city falls, you will stand."] and you will not be given into the hands of the men of whom you are afraid (39:17).

"You are not gonna be taken as a captive by the enemy. I'm going to deliver you so that you'll not be taken captive."

For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword, [So, "I'm gonna spare your life, and your life will be spared] because thou has put thy trust in me, saith the Lord (39:18).

The servant of the king is promised, but he's not going to go into captivity. His life is going to be spared.

God has promised 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. As the cup of the indignation of God's wrath is being filled. Soon it will overflow, and the world will see the indignation of God poured out against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth of God in unrighteousness.

Now, here is the promise to the servant of the king. "Because you have put your trust in the Lord, you're not going to be taken captive, your life will be spared." 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".

I have good news for you! 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. Jesus, when He was talking about these days of great tribulation that are coming, said, "Pray ye always, that you'll be counted worthy to escape these things, that shall come to pass on the earth, and stand before the Son of Man." 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. "Blessed", the Lord said, "Are those in Philadelphia, who had kept His word, for He would keep them from the great tribulation that was coming to try men who dwell upon the earth."

So, the wonderful promise to the servants of the King, who have put their trust in the Lord. Great tribulation will come. If you are here when it happens, surely it won't be fair to blame God. God has warned you. God has told you to turn from evil, to trust in Him, to live for Him, to put away the ungodliness and the unrighteousness. And God has warned if we do not, the judgement, that shall come.

So you have the king who would not listen to the word of God, you have the servant of the king who put his trust in God. The king saw the word of God fulfilled, when he was taken captive. The servant of the king was delivered.

Chapter 40

Now in chapter forty, we have,

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, [You see, he was taken to Ramah, and there is where he was released from prison.] when he had taken him from being bound in chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon (40:1).

So, the Babylonians had been taken five miles north of Jerusalem, where they had gathered, 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, let him go from the chain, in which he was bound there at Ramah.

And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place (40:2).

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

Now the Lord hath brought it, [In other words, the Lord has kept his word] and done according as he hath said: because you have sinned against the Lord, and you have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you (40:3).

Now it's interesting that even this pagan chief body guard of Nebuchadnezzar realized that these people were being judged for their sins. "It's because you've sinned against the Lord, and you didn't obey his voice, and therefore God has done these things that he said he was going to do." It's a sad thing when the people of God are rebuked by the people of the world. You know, that's a sad day. 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.

Several years ago, I was given information, documented information on some of the ministries that had wide exposure as a result of television. This documented information was about some of the things that they were doing. Some of the crooked deals and some of their activities. The person that gave me all of this documentation encouraged me to write a book, exposing these things. I wrestled with that, whether or not I should write the book exposing these people. I was thinking, "You know God won't let them get by with it, and they're going to be exposed." Now, I knew that there were those who were planning to make public exposure of these things, and what I had to wrestle with is, should I from within the church, expose it with the endeavor of sort of cleaning house, or should I just wait and let it be exposed by the world.

Naturally you know what the result was, I decided to wait and let it be exposed by the world, so I knew these things several months in advance. I had to sort of carry that in my heart, knowing that it was there, and knowing that it would be exposed. I talked to some of my friends, and they encouraged me not to expose it. Because, they said, "Why should you get into the center of a controversy?"

I listened to them, and I still don't know whether or not I did the right thing. But it is a sad day, when the world has to stand up and rebuke the church. And here's this Babylonian chief body guard who is rebuking the people of God. Having to tell them that, "It's because of your sin. God warned you this was gonna happen, and it's because of your sin. Because you haven't obeyed his voice, so all of this calamity has come upon you." And now he says, talking to Jeremiah,

Behold, I am going to free you this day from the chains [or the shackles that were on your hands] that were on your hands [more literally] and if it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, then come, [on] and I'll take care of you, I'll take good care of you: but if you don't want to do that, it's alright, behold, here's all the land before you and wherever seems good [and convenient] for you, you can go there (40:4).

In other words, "Jeremiah, you're free! Free to do what you want. If you want to come to Babylon, we'll take care of you. 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."

Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam [Now, you see, you've got a period of time here and it would seem that Jeremiah was really a little reluctant, just really

didn't know. Probably showed some uncertainty as to what he really wanted to do, so he then was ordered to go back also 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 [still the freedom] go wherever you want. Whatever seems convenient. So the captain of the guard gave him food and gave him a reward, [a present] and he let him go. So Jeremiah came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; [Mizpah was sort of in the middle of the land, in the area where they first set up the tabernacle. Where the, it was sort of the first capital of the nation, when they first came out of Egypt. It was one of the first capitols.] and he dwelt with the people that were in the land (40:5-6).*

Now when all of the captains of the forces were in the fields, [Now, when the Babylonians, when it was obvious, the people, a lot of them fled. A lot of the army fled. When Zedekiah went on down to Jericho, a lot of the army went with him, and when they saw the Babylonians coming, they just left the king. You know, every man for himself, and 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] with their men, they heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and they committed unto him the men, the women, and children, and the poor of the land, and those that weren't taken as captives to Babylon (40:7);

So they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, and even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kereah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, [and you know, what difference does it make on all these names?] and so they all came with their men. (40:8).

And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Don't be afraid to serve the Chaldeans: just dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will be well for you (40:9).

So, Gedaliah was just saying basically what Jeremiah said before, "Just serve him, and all, and it will be well."

As for me, behold, I am going to dwell here in Mizpah, and I will serve the Chaldeans which will come unto us: but gather wine, summer fruits, and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that you have taken (40:10).

So, "Just go ahead and live here. Live peaceably here. Don't try to rebel anymore against the Babylonians. 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.

Likewise when all the Jews that had escaped over to Moab, and those that had gone to Ammon, and those that had gone to Edom, and were in the countries round about, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and he had sent Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan over them; Even all of the Jews returned out of all the places where they were driven, and they came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, in Mizpah, and they gathered wine and summer fruits very much [plenty for everybody]. Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, And he said to him, Do you not know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to slay you? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not (40:11-14).

Now, he 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." "Ah come on! That's not going..." He didn't believe it.

So Johanan the son of Kareah spoke to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, and he said, Let me go, I pray you, and I'll kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, no man will know it: for why should he slay you, and all of the Jews that are gathered unto you would be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, You shall not do this thing: for you speak falsely of Ishmael (40:15-16).

Here's the case, the fellow's being warned that Ishmael is out to kill him, and he doesn't believe it. 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, "Ah that'll never happen, ah don't believe it." Thus was the case of Gedaliah.

Chapter 41

[So we read] *Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and then they did eat bread together in Mizpah. Then Ishmael arose, the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and they slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land (41:1-2).*

It looked like, “Hey, this is good, you know, good times.” Here’s Gedaliah he’s gonna cooperate and things are gonna be alright, and there’s 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 wasn’t a way out, there was. But he just didn’t believe it. Thus tragedy, because he wouldn’t believe the warnings that came.

So, Ishmael also slew all of the Jews that were with Gedaliah, those in Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that those remnant of the Babylonian army [That were there sort of overseeing things. He killed those too. The men of war] And so it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and nobody knew it, [That is, those in the round about areas.] That there came certain men from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, even eighty, and they had their beards shaved, and their clothes were torn, and they had cut themselves, and they were coming with offerings and incense in their hands, to bring them to the house of the Lord. (41:3-5).

They had put the tabernacle there in Mizpah, the place of worship, and so these men were coming to worship the Lord.

And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, weeping all along as he went: [So the guy was a good actor. Here came these eighty men to worship the Lord, so he goes out just weeping as he’s going along, coming up to them] when he met them, he said to them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. [Well, he’d already killed him, but the guy is really a treacherous rat!] And it was so, that when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him. But ten men were found among them that said to Ishmael, Don’t kill us: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of barley, and of honey. So he did not slay them with their brothers. Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain because of Gedaliah, it was the one that the Asa, the king had made for fear [way back when] Baasha the king of Israel was attacking them: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with those that were slain (41:6-9).

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

Then Ishmael carried away captive all of the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king’s daughters, and all of the people that 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 (41:10).

So he was really KGB operated from Ammon to you know, to attack and to do this evil to the people. This Baalis, the king of the Ammonites had put him up to this.

Now Johanan [the one who had warned Gedaliah about him] the son of Kareah, and all of the captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all of the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, They took all of the men, and when they went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and they found him by the great waters that were in Gibeon. Now it came to pass, that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all of the captains of the forces that were with him, then they were glad. [There was rejoicing.] So all of the people that had carried away captive from Mizpah, they turned and they came back and they went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and they went to the Ammonites. Then Johanan took the son of Kareah, [Or Johanan, the son of Kareah] he took all the captains of the forces that were with him, and all of the remnant of the people who he had recovered from Ishmael, and after he had slain Gedaliah, even the mighty men of war, and the women, the children, the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham, which is near Bethlehem, [It was the route going to Egypt.] Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor in the land (41:11-18).

So, 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.

So, 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.

So, interestingly enough, 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 gonna make it now!", then "Oh no!". So that's the experience you're gonna get when you read the next chapter. "Alright! Looks good!", "Oh no!". So we'll continue our study next week, taking the next couple of chapters. So, read them over, and we'll continue our journey through the bible. Lord bless this word to our hearts tonight. Shall we stand?

So many, 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.

He has shown you o man what is good, 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 gonna 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 not be so among us tonight. May we be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves.

May we know that God's word shall stand. And though God may be patient and longsuffering, and wait for forty years, while Jeremiah is warning the people. Until the people are beginning to scoff, because it's been so long and nothing has happened. The wheels of God's justice grind slowly, but exceedingly fine, and the judgement did come, and the word of God was fulfilled, just as God did say. And God's word shall come to pass, it shall be fulfilled, and you will be on one side or the other. Those that obeyed were delivered. Those who disobeyed, had reaped the consequences.

May the Lord be with you. May the Lord bless you, may He strengthen you with His love and with His presence, each day this week, as you look to Him, and as you walk in His path, and as you follow in obedience to His commands. God bless you and make it a wonderful week. In Jesus' name.