

Ebedmelech
(JER 38-39)

I. The Time, Place and Circumstances.

- A. This was during the last years of the last O.T. king of Judah.
- B. This was just prior to the fall of the city of Jerusalem and the subjugation of the Jews by the Babylonians.
- C. Much of Judah had already been taken captive by the Babylonians.
- D. Jerusalem had been greatly reduced by sin, then by Babylon.
 - 1. Life was cheap. Truth and judgment had departed. **JER 4:31; 5:1-4.**
 - 2. The people were only wise to do evil. **JER 4:22; 9:3.**
 - 3. They abused their fullness religiously and morally. **JER 5:7-8.**
 - 4. Judgment took a back seat to gain. **JER 5:26-28.**
 - 5. False religion propped up the system. **JER 5:30-31; 6:13; 7:8-11.**
 - 6. Children became expendable. **JER 7:31; 19:5.**
 - 7. They thought themselves untouchable. **JER 5:12; 6:14.**
 - 8. Under siege, food became very scarce. **JER 37:21; 38:9.**
 - 9. The situation was about to deteriorate to horrendous levels. **LAM 4:3-10.**
- E. The cup of Judah's iniquity was full: too late for remedy and neither the prayer of the wicked or of the righteous would avail. **2CH 36:16; JER 14:11-12.**

II. The Key Characters.

- A. Jeremiah. His name means "whom Jehovah has appointed."
 - 1. He is known as the weeping prophet.
 - 2. He was ordained a contentious prophet not only to Judah, but to the nations. **JER 15:10; 1:5.**
 - 3. In a time of general apostasy he was apart from the crowd, thus manifesting his approval. **JER 15:16-17 c/w 1CO 11:19.**
 - 4. He preached that resistance of the Babylonians was futile; that Judah's demise was imminent and deserved; and that the only sensible option was to go into captivity and take their licks. **JER 37:9-10; 38:2.**
 - 5. Though he was sorely tempted to silence, he couldn't keep his mouth shut about the truth. **JER 20:7-9.**
 - 6. He received more honour from a Gentile king than from his own king and country. **JER 39:11-12 c/w MAR 6:4.**
 - 7. His ministry much paralleled that of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. Both were ill received by their own countrymen. **JOH 1:11.**
 - b. Both rebuked the management of the temple. **JER 7:11; MAT 21:13.**
 - c. Both were accused of being unpatriotic risks. **JER 37:13; 38:4; JOH 7:12; 11:48.**
 - d. Both lamented the inevitable misery of Jerusalem. **LAM 1:16-17; LUK 19:41-44.**
 - e. Both were men of contention to Jew and Gentile. **ACT 4:26-28.**
 - f. Both were cast into the earth for a season but were delivered to witness again.
- B. Zedekiah. His name means "Jehovah is righteous."
 - 1. He was the last king of Judah until Christ came.
 - 2. His reign marked the overthrow of the royal covenant lineage from David of father to son. **2KI 24:15-17.**

3. His predecessor, Jehoiachin/Jeconiah/Coniah, was so wicked that God cut his family line out of royalty and Christ's ancestry. **JER 22:28-30.**
4. Zedekiah's wickedness was remarkable. **EZE 21:25-27.**
5. His name was originally Mattaniah, which means "gift of Jehovah." This last king was a gift from Jehovah in the same genre as was their first king. **HOS 13:11.**
6. Ironically, it was the pagan Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, who renamed him Zedekiah. By this time Daniel had been in captivity for over ten years, so Nebuchadnezzar was probably now well acquainted with Jehovah. **DAN 1:1-3; 2:47; 4:34-37.**
7. The end of Zedekiah's life is fitting testimony to the justice and irony of God (and that history is really HIS story).
 - a. At the time of Israel's entry into Canaan, the land of their inheritance, their first leader SAW the land, but could not enter it and died outside its borders. **DEU 34:4.**
 - b. At the time when Israel/Judah would lose the land of their inheritance, their last leader dwelt in Canaan, but through fulfillment of a curious prophecy, would not SEE the land of his captivity and death outside of Canaan's borders. **EZE 12:13 c/w JER 39:6-7.**
 - c. Bless God that the promised land believers now can't see, they will see, and death will be no impediment. **ISA 33:17-24; 1TH 4:15-18.**