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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Various information and topics that help the reader of the Bible understand the apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ's teachings.

Jeremiah 38.

(2010).

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Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Jeremiah 38.

The following is a brief overview of the main topics.
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Jeremiah tell the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go to Babylon.

Jeremiah 38:1-3 ----- ¹Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people, ²"Thus says the LORD: He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live. He shall have his life as a prize of war, and live. ³Thus says the LORD: This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and be taken."

Jeremiah tells the inhabitants of Jerusalem, if they submit to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and go into the city of Babylon they will live, but if they remain in Jerusalem they will be killed. Shephatiah, Gedaliah, Jucal and Pashur were all chief officials of Zedekiah king of Judah who caused Jeremiah to be imprisoned for prophesying and later sought have him put to death.

King Zedekiah's officials tell the King to put Jeremiah to Death.

Jeremiah 38:4 ----- ⁴Then the officials said to the king, "Let this man be put to death, for he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm."

The inhabitants of Jerusalem are deceived they believe the remaining soldiers they have in the city are going to be able to hold off the Babylonian armies. Poor Jeremiah he is trying to warn the inhabitants of Jerusalem that they will be killed if they don't do what the LORD says, but rather than the people obeying God they accuse Jeremiah of demoralising their soldiers.

Jeremiah is lowered into a Hole full of Mud.

Jeremiah 38:5-6 ----- ⁵King Zedekiah said, "Behold, he is in your (the officials) hands, for the king can do nothing against you." ⁶So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

The King gives Jeremiah into the Hands of His Officials and they cruelly lower him into a deep, dried up well that is full of mud at its bottom.

Ebed-melech Pleads to King Zedekiah to Rescue Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 38:7-9 ----- ⁷When Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern—the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate—⁸Ebed-melech went from the king's house and said to the king, ⁹"My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern, and he will die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city."

The Kings officials believed Jeremiah was deserving of death (v4) Jeremiah would probably have died in the pit and mud, if it was not for the goodness and compassion of Ebed-melech.

Ponder for a moment; the courage of Jeremiah, so far nothing good has come to him for proclaiming the word of the LORD, his ministry has constantly brought him trouble, scorn and harm. Imagine the joy he must have brought to the heart of God as the LORD looked upon such a faithful man who put the people of God and God Himself before his own well-being, truly his reward is not in this temporal world, but a heavenly crown will be granted him in the new and eternal world.

King Zedekiah answers Ebed-melech: -

Jeremiah 38:10 ----- ¹⁰Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, "Take three men with you from here, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies."

King Zedekiah had more compassion than his cruel officials.

Jeremiah is lifted out of the Pit of Mud.

Jeremiah 38:11-13 ---- ¹¹So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a wardrobe in the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. ¹²Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Put the rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes." Jeremiah did so. ¹³Then they drew Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

The Court of the Guard; the court of the guard means the same as the court of the prison, it refers to a limited area that allows those under guard to walk freely around and mingle with the people, while prison refers to a dark room and sometimes a deep hole in the ground where there is no freedom of space for the one imprisoned.

King Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 38:14-15 ---- ¹⁴King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah the prophet and received him at the third entrance of the temple of the LORD. The king said to Jeremiah, "I will ask you a question; hide nothing from me." ¹⁵Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I tell you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you counsel, you will not listen to me."

Jeremiah feels he is in a no-win situation; if he tells Zedekiah what the LORD has declared rather than the king taking notice he will have him killed.

Zedekiah makes a Secret Promise to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 38:16 ----- ¹⁶Then King Zedekiah swore secretly to Jeremiah, "As the LORD lives, who made our souls, I will not put you to death or deliver you into the hand of these men who seek your life."

Notice; it almost appears Zedekiah is afraid of his officials they seem to be the ones with the power. In (v5) Zedekiah said of his officials, "the king can do nothing against them."

Jeremiah tells Zedekiah the Word of the LORD.

Jeremiah 38:17-18 ---- ¹⁷Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If you will surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. ¹⁸But if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand."

- This is a good example of the saying, "God ways are not always our ways."

Jeremiah is telling the King of Judah, if he surrenders to the king of a pagan nation who believes in many gods then the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will spare his life and the city of Jerusalem, but if he does not surrender to his enemy Jerusalem will be burned and Zedekiah will be taken into Babylon.

The LORD uses Secular Nations.

The LORD uses secular nations, kings, and people to achieve His plans and purposes, sometimes to bless and other times to bring judgment and punishment (discipline) at this time God is using Babylon (who the LORD calls His Great Army) to bring judgment on Judah.

Zedekiah replies to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 38:19 ----- ¹⁹King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, lest I be handed over to them and they deal cruelly with me."

How amazing is this; Zedekiah king of Judah fears going into Babylon because the Jews that are already there may harm him. He knows he would have no authority over them in Babylon and his officials would not be there to protect him.

Jeremiah replies to Zedekiah.

Jeremiah 38:20 ----- ²⁰Jeremiah said, "You shall not be given to them. Obey now the voice of the LORD in what I say to you, and it shall be well with you, and your life shall be spared.

Jeremiah tells Zedekiah if he obeys the word of the LORD he will be safe.

Jeremiah replies to Zedekiah continued: -

Jeremiah 38:21-23 --- ²¹But if you refuse to surrender, this is the vision which the LORD has shown to me:
²²Behold, all the women left in the house of the king of Judah were being led out to the officials of the king of Babylon and were saying, " 'Your trusted friends have deceived you and prevailed against you; now that your feet are sunk in the mud, they turn away from you.' ²³All your wives and your sons shall be led out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but shall be seized by the king of Babylon, and this city shall be burned with fire."

Jeremiah tells Zedekiah if he does not obey the word of the LORD: -

- Babylon will defeat him.
- The women left in his house will be saying, your officials have deceived you.
- His trusted friends will forsake him.
- His wives and sons will be led out to the Babylonians.
- He will not escape from the king of Babylon.
- The city of Jerusalem will be burned.

Zedekiah replies to Jeremiah: -

Jeremiah 38:24-26 --- ²⁴Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Let no one know of these words, and you shall not die.
²⁵If the officials hear that I have spoken with you and come to you and say to you, "Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you; hide nothing from us and we will not put you to death,' ²⁶then you shall say to them, 'I made a humble plea to the king that he would not send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.'

King Zedekiah tells Jeremiah to tell his officials nothing of their conversation, but simply say he asked the king not to send him back to the prison in the house of Jonathan and leave him to die (Jer 37:15).

The Kings Officials come to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 38:27-28 ---- ²⁷Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and asked him, and he answered them as the king had instructed him. So they stopped speaking with him, for the conversation had not been overheard. ²⁸And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

Jeremiah tells the officials what Zedekiah had told him.

The Court of the Guard.

The court of the guard means the same as the court of the prison.

It refers to a limited area that allows those under guard to walk freely around and mingle with the people, while prison refers to a dark room and sometimes a deep hole in the ground where there is no freedom of space for the one imprisoned.

End.