

Jeremiah 34:1-22 **Jerusalem & Zedekiah will fall to the Babylonians** **Treacherous release of Slaves**

Zedekiah Warned by God

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army, all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem and all its cities, saying,

2 "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, 'Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

3 And you shall not escape from his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you face to face, and you shall go to Babylon.'"

4 Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the Lord concerning you: 'You shall not die by the sword.

5 You shall die in peace; as in the ceremonies of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they shall burn incense for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, lord!" For I have pronounced the word, says the Lord.'"

6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem,
7 when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for only these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah.

Treacherous Treatment of Slaves

8 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were at Jerusalem to proclaim liberty to them:

9 that every man should set free his male and female slave — a Hebrew man or woman — that no one should keep a Jewish brother in bondage.

10 Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let them go.

11 But afterward they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves.

Yahweh's Response

12 Therefore the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying,

13 "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying,

14 "At the end of seven years let every man set free his Hebrew brother, who has been sold to him; and when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you." But your fathers did not obey Me nor incline their ear.

15 Then you recently turned and did what was right in My sight — every man proclaiming liberty to his neighbor; and you made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name.

16 Then you turned around and profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and

female slaves, whom he had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.'

17 "Therefore thus says the Lord: 'You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,' says the Lord — 'to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.

18 And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it —

19 the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf —

20 I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. Their dead bodies shall be for meat for the birds of the heaven and the beasts of the earth.

21 And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army which has gone back from you.

22 Behold, I will command,' says the Lord, 'and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.'"

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Facts Revealed:

Zedekiah Warned by God

✧ The word which came to Jeremiah from Yahweh (the Lord), when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army, all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem and all its cities, saying,

"Thus says Yahweh Elohey Yisrael (the Lord, the God of Israel):

'Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and tell him, "Thus says Yahweh (the Lord):

'Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

And you shall not escape from his hand, but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand; your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you face to face, and you shall go to Babylon.'"

Yet hear the word of Yahweh (the Lord), O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the Lord concerning you: 'You shall not die by the sword.

You shall die in peace; as in the ceremonies of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they shall burn incense for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, Adown (lord)!" For I have pronounced the word, says Yahweh (the Lord)."

Then Jeremiah the prophet spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and Azekah; for only these fortified cities remained of the cities of Judah. [\[Jeremiah 34:1-7\]](#)

✧ Timing, The chronological order of this chapter was before chapter 32 because Zedekiah referred to it in chapter 32. [\[Jeremiah 32:1-5\]](#)

- ✧ Judah and Jerusalem were under attack by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
- ✧ Jerusalem and the cities of Judah will certainly fall to the Babylonians and be burned.
- ✧ Zedekiah her king will be taken and see the king of Babylon face to face, will not be slain by the sword, but will die in peace with a royal burial.

Treacherous Treatment of Slaves

- ✧ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh (the Lord), after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people who were at Jerusalem to proclaim liberty to them: that every man should set free his male and female slave — a Hebrew man or woman — that no one should keep a Jewish brother in bondage.

Now when all the princes and all the people, who had entered into the covenant, heard that everyone should set free his male and female slaves, that no one should keep them in bondage anymore, they obeyed and let them go.

But afterward they changed their minds and made the male and female slaves return, whom they had set free, and brought them into subjection as male and female slaves. [Jeremiah 34:8-11]

- ✧ Temporary obedience to the laws of Yehowah is hypocrisy, not obedience at all.
- ✧ God looks at the heart.

Yahweh's Response

- ✧ **Therefore** the word of Yahweh (the Lord) came to Jeremiah from Yahweh (the Lord), saying,

"Thus says Yahweh Elohey Yisrael (the Lord, the God of Israel): 'I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying,

"At the end of seven years let every man set free his Hebrew brother, who has been sold to him; and when he has served you six years, you shall let him go free from you." But your fathers did not obey Me nor incline their ear.

Then you recently turned and did what was right in My sight — every man proclaiming liberty to his neighbor; and you made a covenant before Me in the house which is called by My name.

Then you turned around and profaned My name, and every one of you brought back his male and female slaves, whom he had set at liberty, at their pleasure, and brought them back into subjection, to be your male and female slaves.'

"**Therefore** thus says Yahweh (the Lord): 'You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,' says Yahweh (the Lord) — 'to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.

And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it —

the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf —

I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life. Their dead bodies shall be for meat for the birds of the heaven and the beasts of the earth.

And I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army which

has gone back from you.

Behold, I will command,' says Yahweh (the Lord), 'and cause them to return to this city. They will fight against it and take it and burn it with fire; and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation without inhabitant.'" [\[Jeremiah 34:12-22\]](#)

- ✧ Yahweh reminded the people of the original Law of release of Hebrew slaves every seven years. [\[Exodus 21:1-2\]](#)
- ✧ Your fathers failed to obey Yahweh's commandments.
- ✧ You now have done worse than your fathers by setting free your slaves according to My laws and in the house called by My Name, making a blood covenant before Me when you cut the calf in two and passed between its parts, and then you brought them back under bondage.
- ✧ Thus the Name of Yahweh has been profaned.
- ✧ Therefore Yahweh will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.
- ✧ Yahweh will deliver you into the hand of those who seek your lives and your dead bodies will be food for the birds and the beasts.
- ✧ Though the Babylonian army has gone back from you, Yahweh will bring them back and deliver Zedekiah and his princes into their hands. [\[Jeremiah 37:5\]](#)
- ✧ Jerusalem and the cities of Judah will be turned into a desolation without inhabitants.