

Jeremiah 37:1-21 **Babylonians Withdraw – Jeremiah Imprisoned**

Zedekiah's wicked reign (2 Kings 24:17; 2 Chronicles 36:10)

1 Now King Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.

2 But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land gave heed to the words of the Lord which He spoke by the prophet Jeremiah.

Zedekiah's request for prayer

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 to the Lord our God for us."

4 Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for they had not yet put him in prison.

Approach of Pharaoh's army from Egypt – Babylonian army departs

5 Then Pharaoh's army came up from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

Yahweh responded to the departure of the army of Babylon

6 Then the word of the Lord came to the prophet Jeremiah, saying,

7 "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Thus you shall say to the king of Judah, who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army which has come up to help you will return to Egypt, to their own land.

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

9 Thus says the Lord: 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely depart from us," for they will not depart.

10 For though you had defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans who fight against you, and there remained only wounded men among them, they would rise up, every man in his tent, and burn the city with fire.'"

Jeremiah Imprisoned

11 And it happened, when the army of the Chaldeans left the siege of Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, 12 that Jeremiah went out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin to claim his property there among the people.

13 And when he was in the Gate of Benjamin, a captain of the guard was there whose name was Irijah the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are defecting to the Chaldeans!"

14 Then Jeremiah said, "False! I am not defecting to the Chaldeans." But he did not listen to him. So Irijah seized Jeremiah and brought him to the princes.

15 Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison.

16 When Jeremiah entered the dungeon and the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days,

17 then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out. The king asked him secretly in his house, and said, "Is there any word from the Lord?"

And Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he said, "You shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon!"

18 Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "What offense have I committed against you, against your servants, or against this people, that you have put me in prison?"

19 Where now are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, "The king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land"?

20 Therefore please hear now, O my lord the king. Please, let my petition be accepted before you, and do not make me return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there."

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

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Facts Revealed:

Zedekiah's wicked reign (2 Kings 24:17; 2 Chronicles 36:10)

✧ Now King Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah.

But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land gave heed to the words of Yahweh (the Lord) which He spoke by the prophet Jeremiah. [Jeremiah 37:1-2]

✧ All the kings of Judah, following the last good king Josiah, did evil in the sight of Yahweh bringing on the judgment of God against Judah.

✧ The Babylonian army came against Jerusalem during the three month reign of Coniah (Jehoiachin). [2 Kings 24:8-12]

✧ Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers went out to the king of Babylon; and the king of Babylon, in the eighth year of his reign, took him prisoner. [2 Kings 24:12]

✧ Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah. [2 Kings 24:17]

✧ In the ninth year the tenth month of Zedekiah the Babylonians laid siege to the city of Jerusalem. [2 Kings 25:1-2, Jeremiah 52:4, Ezekiel 24:1-2]

Zedekiah's request for prayer

✧ 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 to Yahweh Eloheynu (the Lord our God) for us."

Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for they had not yet put him in prison. [Jeremiah 37:3-4]

✧ Apparently Jeremiah prayed and Yahweh allowed a reprieve.

Approach of Pharaoh's army from Egypt – Babylonian army departs

✧ Then Pharaoh's army came up from Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they departed from Jerusalem. [Jeremiah 37:5]

✧ This was a temporary reprieve.

Yahweh responded to the departure of the army of Babylon

✧ Then the word of Yahweh (the Lord) came to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Thus says Yahweh Elohey Yisrael (the Lord, the God of Israel), 'Thus you shall say to the king of Judah, who sent you to Me to inquire of Me: "Behold, Pharaoh's army which has

come up to help you will return to Egypt, to their own land.

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

Thus says Yahweh (the Lord): 'Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely depart from us," for they will not depart.

For though you had defeated the whole army of the Chaldeans who fight against you, and there remained only wounded men among them, they would rise up, every man in his tent, and burn the city with fire.'" [\[Jeremiah 37:6-10\]](#)

✧ Yahweh informed them that though the army of the Babylonians had gone away when they heard of the approach of the Egyptian army, the army of Egypt would return home and the Babylonians would return and destroy Jerusalem and burn it with fire.

Jeremiah Imprisoned

✧ And it happened, when the army of the Chaldeans left the siege of Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, that Jeremiah went out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin to claim his property there among the people. [\[Jeremiah 37:11-12\]](#)

✧ During the reprieve with the army of Babylon departed, Jeremiah decided to go to Anathoth his home town to claim the land he had purchased as a sign that the people would again return to Israel and buy and sell property. [\[Jeremiah 32:6-15\]](#)

✧ And when he was in the Gate of Benjamin, a captain of the guard was there whose name was Irijah the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are defecting to the Chaldeans!"

Then Jeremiah said, "False! I am not defecting to the Chaldeans." But he did not listen to him.

So Irijah seized Jeremiah and brought him to the princes.

Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison. [\[Jeremiah 37:13-15\]](#)

✧ Irijah and the princes seized and imprisoned Jeremiah thinking he was going to defect to the Babylonians as he had advised the people to do. [\[Jeremiah 21:8-9, 27:1-11, 28:14, 29:1-14, 38:4-6\]](#)

✧ When Jeremiah entered the dungeon and the cells, and Jeremiah had remained there many days, then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out. The king asked him secretly in his house, and said, "Is there any word from Yahweh (the Lord)?"

And Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he said, "You shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon!"

Moreover Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "What offense have I committed against you, against your servants, or against this people, that you have put me in prison?"

Where now are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land'?"

Therefore please hear now, O my lord the king. Please, let my petition be accepted before you, and do not make me return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there."

Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah to the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread from the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was gone. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison. [\[Jeremiah 37:16-21\]](#)

- ✧ Zedekiah brought Jeremiah out of the dungeon to the king's house and asked if there was a message from Yahweh.
Jeremiah repeated the message that all would fall to the Babylonians.
- ✧ Zedekiah kept Jeremiah in prison in the court of the king's house and provided food for him as long as it lasted. [[Jeremiah 37:16-17, 38:7-28](#)]