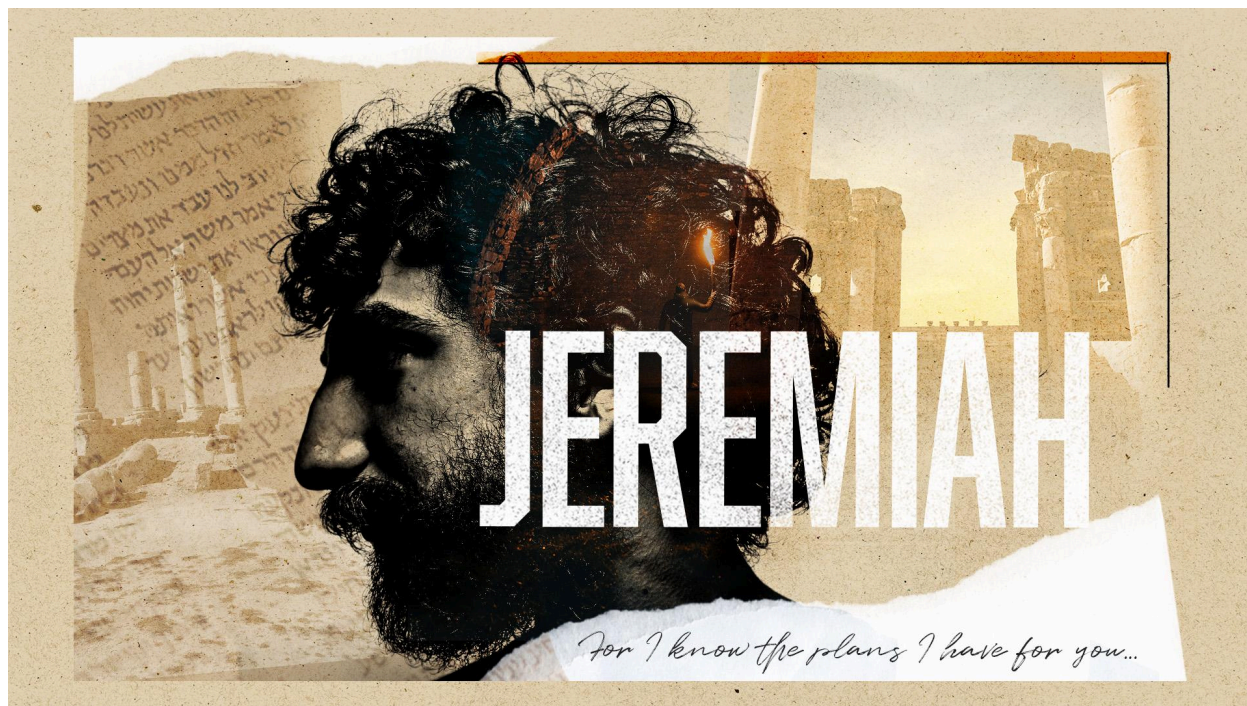


# Jeremiah 34-39



## Study Guide

### Introduction

God raised up Daniel as ruler in Babylon 18 years before the siege of Jerusalem (Daniel 2:46)!!! It was totally fine to give up control and surrender as Jeremiah said, but Zedekiah and the people in Jerusalem would not yield control over to God.

### I. Give up Control.

#### A. ...by Doing the Right Thing - False Repentance (34:9-22)

Read Jeremiah 34:8-9 and 17. Notice that Judah did what was convenient to them, but not what was obedient to God. Under siege they freely gave up their slaves because they didn't need them anymore. During a break in the siege they enslaved the people they had set free. God would judge them for this.

Discuss times when we are tempted to obey God only when it is convenient for us. What does that look like to only give up partial control? Why is that so hard for us?

#### A. ...by Doing the Right Thing - Mindful Obedience (35:1-19)

The Rechabites freely obeyed their earthly Father, yet Judah despite so many warnings would not obey their heavenly Father. Discuss how being part of a Community Group can help you be mindful in obeying God. Discuss.

#### B. ...by Accepting God's Word (36)

The King cut the word of God piece by piece and threw it in the fire. How has our culture done that with the Bible? Share what your journey was like in accepting the Bible as God's authority in your life.

## II. When we Don't Give up Control.

### A. ...Duplicitous (37)

Zedekiah leans on Jeremiah to pray for him, he then threw Jeremiah into a dungeon, and then called him back to ask whether he had a word from God. Notice how duplicitous that is. Discuss times when people who depend on God for every breath, pretend like He doesn't exist. What have you observed?

### B. ...Malicious (38:1-13)

The four princes have Jeremiah thrown into a muddy cistern to die. Discuss why you think people can become malicious against hearing the words of God. Why is that?

### C. ...Fear-driven (38:14-28)

Zedekiah admits (v.19) that if he surrenders to God, he will be harmed by other Judeans. Jeremiah assures him of his safety, but it's not enough to lead him to surrender. What are some of the fears we have of giving full control over to God? Discuss.

## III. The Fate of it All (39)

Notice that Zedekiah flees, and is captured 15 miles away, in the plains of Jericho. His sons are killed in front of him and then his eyes are plucked out. He is taken away into captivity in Babylon. On the contrary, the soldiers are told to do no harm to Jeremiah (v. 12).

What do you think Jesus meant when He said this:

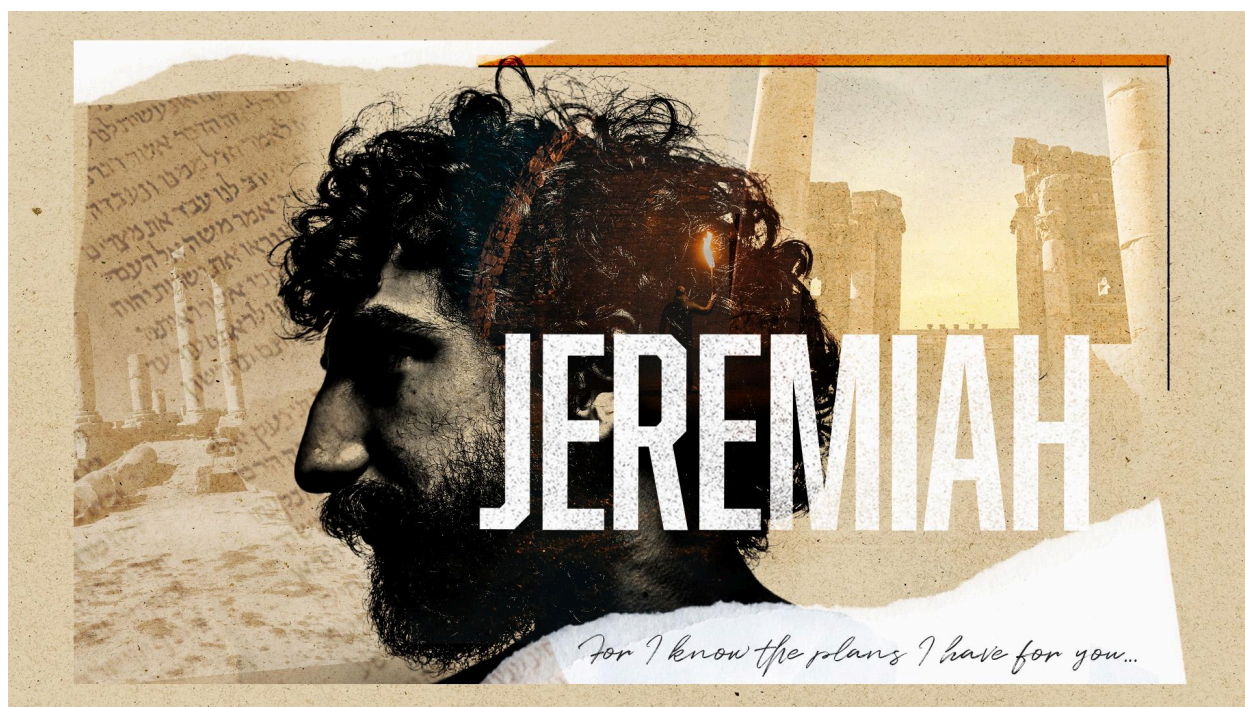
**Mark 8:35**

"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."

### Application

Take some time in silent prayer and ask God to reveal an area that you need to give up control over. Consider meeting a friend later and telling them what God seems to be showing you. Set up a plan with that person to not take back control of that 'thing' once you have given it up.

## Jeremiah 34-39



### Sermon Notes

Tim Keller: Counterfeit Gods

"Sometimes God seems to be killing us when He's actually saving us."

Big Idea: Give up control to God!

Jeremiah 34:1

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms of the earth under his dominion and all the peoples were fighting against Jerusalem and all of its cities:

607-586 BC -Fighting and deportations.

586 BC- Jerusalem is breached and burned.

604 BC – Nebuchadnezzar meets the God of the Jews.

Daniel 2:46

"Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, ... "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings.

Daniel 3:29

"Decree:... Any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins, ..."

Jeremiah 39:11-12

"Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave command concerning Jeremiah ... saying, 'Take him, look after him well, and do him no harm, but deal with him as he tells you.'"

I. Give up Control.

A. ...by Accepting God's Word (34:2-7)

<sup>2</sup>"... 'Thus says the Lord: Behold, I am giving this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. <sup>3</sup>You shall not escape from his hand but shall surely be captured and delivered into his hand. You shall see the king of Babylon eye to eye and speak with him face to face. And you shall go to Babylon.' ... 'You shall not die by the sword. <sup>5</sup>You shall die in peace.

B. ...by Doing the Right Thing - False Repentance (34:9-22)

<sup>8</sup>The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them, <sup>9</sup>that everyone should set free his Hebrew slaves, male and female, so that no one should enslave a Jew, his brother.

B. ...by Doing the Right Thing - False Repentance (34:9-22)

<sup>17</sup>"Therefore, thus says the Lord: You have not obeyed me by proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and to his neighbor; behold, I proclaim to you liberty to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine, declares the Lord. I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth.

B. ...by Doing the Right Thing - Mindful Obedience (35:1-19)

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord ...: <sup>2</sup>"Go to the house of the Rechabites and speak with them and bring them to the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers; then offer them wine to drink."

<sup>6</sup>But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for ... our father, commanded us, 'You shall not drink wine, neither you nor your sons forever. <sup>7</sup>You shall not build a house; you shall not sow seed; you shall not plant or have a vineyard; but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn.'

B. ...by Doing the Right Thing - Mindful Obedience (35:1-19)

<sup>14</sup>...they have obeyed their father's command. I have spoken to you persistently, but you have not listened to me.

<sup>15</sup>I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, 'Turn now every one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land ...'

<sup>18</sup>But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said, ...the son of Rechab shall never lack a man to stand before me."

C. ...by Accepting God's Word (36)

<sup>2</sup>"Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, ... <sup>3</sup>It may be that the house of Judah will hear ..., so that every one may turn from his evil way, and that I may forgive their iniquity ..."

<sup>23</sup> Whenever Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a scribe's knife and threw them into the firepot, until the entire scroll was burned in the fire.

C. ...by Accepting God's Word (36)

Matthew 24:35

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

II. When we Don't Give up Control.

A. ...Duplicitous (37)

... <sup>3</sup>King Zedekiah sent Jehucal ...to Jeremiah ..., saying, "Please pray for us to the Lord our God."

<sup>5</sup> Pharaoh's army ...marched out of Egypt, and when the Babylonians who were besieging Jerusalem heard the report about them, they withdrew from Jerusalem.

B. ...Malicious (38:1-13)

"Now 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: <sup>2</sup>"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.

B. ...Malicious (38:1-13)

<sup>8</sup>Ebed-melech ... said to the king, <sup>9</sup>"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."

C. ...Fear-driven (38:14-28)

<sup>19</sup>King 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."

<sup>20</sup>Jeremiah 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.

Image- Buffalo Storm

III. The Fate of it All (39)

### A. Zedekiah

<sup>2</sup>In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city.

<sup>6</sup>The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes, and the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. <sup>7</sup>He put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains to take him to Babylon. <sup>8</sup>The Chaldeans burned the king's house and the house of the people, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem.

### B. Jeremiah

<sup>12</sup>"Take him, look after him well, and do him no harm, but deal with him as he tells you."

### C. Ebed- melech

<sup>16</sup>Go, and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, ...<sup>17</sup> 'I will deliver you on that day, declares the Lord, and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. <sup>18</sup>For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword, but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have put your trust in me, declares the Lord.'

**Big Idea:** Give up control to God!

**Mark 8:35**

"For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it."