**Jeremiah 35 (Lesson 19a)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 35 – The Rechabites (2.5 min. to read)**

A. The Rechabites Obeyed Their Father (35:1-11)

1. Jeremiah undertakes another physical action to demonstrate the spiritual state of Judah (cf. 13:1-11; 19:1-13; 27:1-6).

2. The Rechabites descend from the Kenites, relatives of Moses’ father in law (cf. 1Chron. 2:55; Judges 1:16; 1Sam. 15:6; 27:10; 30:29).

3. He takes them into one of the chambers along the wall of the temple complex (cf. 1Kgs. 6:5; 1Chron. 28:12), belonging to Hanan’s (*“man of God”* – cf. Dt. 33:1; 2Kgs. 1:13) family and offers them wine to drink.

4. They abstain as a result of Jonadab’s commandment. Jonadab worked with Jehu to purge the house of Ahab 240 years prior to this (cf. 2Kgs. 10:15, 23). His influence obviously was effective as the people still followed his ascetic, nomadic, abstinent lifestyle (cf. Nazirite, Amish).

5. So, why were these nomads in Jerusalem? Babylon had recently won at Carchemish and had taken Ashkelon, so they were seeking temporary shelter from Nebuchadnezzar (4:5f; 8:14; cf. 2Kgs. 24:1f; Ezek. 19:8).

B. Judah Should Have Obeyed Their Father (35:12-19)

 1. The Rechabites had obeyed their earthly father for hundreds of years; Judah would not obey their heavenly Father, the LORD of hosts (cf. Heb. 12:9; Mal. 1:6; Is. 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 31:9). This rebellion was all the more offensive given God’s repeated efforts to turn them around via the preaching of the prophets (cf. 25:4-7; 26:4f; 29:19).

 2. Their refusal to heed the prophets will swiftly bring the exact destruction they warned of (cf. 5:14-17; 8:13-17; 16:10-13; 29:18; Lev. 26:33; Dt. 28:64; Prov. 1:24-27). *“The Rechabites will be blessed for their fidelity, but their contemporaries in Jerusalem will face the horrors of the coming slaughter.”* (Harrison, 149)

 3. The faithfulness of the Rechabites will be rewarded by God by giving them a similar prize to that characterized by the Messianic era (cf. 33:14- 26). Some Arabian tribes claim descendance from the Rechabites, but this is debated (e.g. Keil, Volz, *Smith’s Bible Dictionary,* III, 2681).

4. *“The point of the chapter is that moral obligation and fidelity are indeed possible to maintain, as the Rechabites have shown, but that the nation of Israel has fallen far short as far as God is concerned.”* (Humph., 381)

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 35**

A. Was Jeremiah/God tempting the Rechabites? *“Jeremiah was not tempting the Rechabites; instead, he used their fidelity to illustrate a lesson to the others.”* (Harkrider, 96)

B. Where did the Rechabites come from? Were they Israelites?

C. How long had the Rechabites observed their father’s personal commands?

**III. Applications For Chapter 35**

A. Apologetics: Rechabites not only denied the offer of wine, but explained their heritage & moral choices. When we deny something, we should explain why.

B. Influence: We must be a “living rebuke” to a faithless and disobedient nation.

C. Priorities: Let not our observance of customs & values outdo our service to God.

**Jeremiah 36 (Lesson 19b)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 36 – Jehoiakim Burns The Scroll (4 min. to read)**

A. Scroll Commissioned & Read In Temple (36:1-10) – Baruch, see Harrison, 150

1. Dates to 605/4 B.C. Jeremiah has been preaching 23 years, warning of God’s judgments against Israel, Judah, and nations (1:9f; 25:3, 15-26). He is given the task of writing an anthology of his preaching. It is evidently shorter than what we have given its being read 3x/1 day.

2. This anthology would preserve the message (cf. 30:2; Hab. 2:2; Is. 8:1; 30:8), provide encouragement and exhortation (cf. Is. 40:1; 34:16) ,and also serve as evidence (cf. Is. 41:4, 21-23; 42:8f; 43:12; 44:6f; 45:21; 46:10; 48:3; Ezek. 6:10; 33:33). Baruch writes (32:12; 45:1).

3. Jeremiah is restrained/hindered from entering the temple, so he sends Baruch with the message for the people (cf. 45:1-3) during a fast day, perhaps initiated b/c of national crisis (2Kgs. 23:34f; cf. Joel 1-2). Likely, he is forbidden due to previous teaching there (cf. 7:14).

4. Baruch obliges, reading in the chamber of Gemariah, brother of Ahikam (cf. 26:24), near the new gate (cf. 26:10).

B. Scroll Read In The Palace (36:11-19) – see also, Jer. 41:1; 2Kgs. 25:25

 1. Michaiah, Gemariah’s son, is concerned w/ the message & shares it w/ several princes in the scribe’s chamber of the king’s palace.

2. Some leaders were interested in the truth but were overruled in their pleas to do what was right (cf. 38:4). One man present, Elnathan, son of Achbor, had already played a significant role in killing one of the prophets (26:22f). Even so, here they seem favorably disposed (v. 19).

 3. Princes request Baruch come & read message himself. They fear (cf. 46:2).

C. Scroll Read & Destroyed By Jehoiakim (36:20-26) – cf. Josiah (2Kgs. 22:8-13)

1. *“This is one of the most blasphemous actions recorded in the Bible, that one would show such utter contempt for God’s word. Jehoiakim gave the premier performance of the destructive critic at work.”* (Humph., 387)

2. He callously listens, cuts out, and burns each section (3-4 columns). His coldhearted actions distressed Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah. Compare Tyndale: *“Lord! Open the king of England’s eyes.”*

D. God’s Word Is Not Destroyed (36:27-32) – Another scroll is drafted w/ additions; Jehoiakim will be judged; anvil of God’s word destroys all hammers!

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 36**

A. What do we know about Baruch? (See Harrison, 150)

B. Why might Jeremiah be *hindered* in going to the temple? (ch. 25-26 re: this year)

C. What famous martyr was burned at the stake requesting a king’s eyes be opened?

D. Does Jehoiachin’s reign negate the curse upon Jehoiakim here given? Why not?

E. Will smashing the barometer stop the storm from coming?

**III. Applications For Chapter 36**

A. *“We fervently wish that the destructive critics and liberal theologians would have enough faith to accept [divine inspiration] and cease their ungodly attacks upon the word of God.”* (Humphries, 383) See quote on 390 as well!

B. When we sin by willfully disregarding what we know to be God’s command, we become like King Jehoiakim. *Prejudice blinds one to the truth.* Our struggle is to keep a soft heart. Let us root out our own areas of stumbling today!