**Jeremiah 41 (Lesson 22a)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 41 – Murder Of Gedaliah (2.5 min. to read)**

*A. Murder of Officials at Mizpah (41:1-3)* – irony here as Ishmael means *“God listens”*

1. v. 1 states this occurs in the 7th month. Is this the same year he was appointed? If so, it has only been two months since his appointment. It could also be a different year (cf. 39:2; 52:29f).

2. *“[Gedaliah] not only refused to believe that Ishmael plotted against him, but he invited Ishmael to be his guest.”* (Harkrider, 108) Even so, *“Ishmael and his men were received most hospitably and acted most treacherously.”* (Mott, 170) The butchery of this feast is memorialized with a fast day (cf. Zech. 7:5; 8:19; cf. Ps. 41:9 for gravity of offense).

3. Ishmael and his men killed the governor, the Jews with him, and Chaldean soldiers. As if the act of aggression against Judah itself would not bring the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar, most certainly his wrath would be provoked by the death of his own personal soldiers.

*B. Slaughter of Pilgrims & Captivity Of Those Remaining At Mizpah (41:4-10)*

1. These pilgrims were either Judeans who had moved N after the fall of Samaria or descendants of Israel living among the heathen. Heathen customs banned in LOM (16:6; Lev. 19:28; 21:5; Dt. 14:1; Ezra 9:3?).

2. 70 corpses were dumped into a large cistern established during the reign of Asa of Judah as a means of provision during hostilities with Baasha of Israel (1Kgs. 15:16-22; 2Chr. 16:1-6).

3. 10 escaped butchery by means of a bribe (Pr. 13:8; Mt. 13:44) w/ items no doubt devoted to Babylon. As their comrades were dumped in underground storehouses, they bribed Ishmael with their underground storehouses so they would not meet the same end.

4. Ishmael takes the remainder of Mizpah and heads to Ammon to develop next plans and/or profit off the lives of the captives. Ishmael may have been making a play for the throne of Judah, albeit as a puppet king for Ammon, since the princesses are specifically called out.

*C. Johanan’s Semi-Successful Response & Plan to Go to Egypt (41:11-18)*

1. Johanan & soldiers pursue caravan to pool of Gibeon (2Sa. 2:13; 75ft. deep) & captives flee back to Johanan. Ishmael & 8 of his men (10 earlier…2 die in this skirmish?) escape to Ammon. This section reminds one of Abraham and Lot and the battle of the 9 kings (Gen. 14).

2. The people head to the house of Chimham, a son of Barzillai the Gileadite (2Sa. 19:37f), to plan a flight to Egypt for fear of reprisal from Nebu. for the civil unrest. They have been warned time and time again not to return to Egypt and not to rely on them but they continue to disobey.

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 41**

A. What applications may be made re: the mindless emotionalism of this chapter?

B. What threats for us lie in “returning to Egypt”?

**III. Applications For Chapter 41**

A. We must not let personal ambition cause us to stumble!

B. *“This section certainly illustrates the floundering efforts of worldly men who seek to make their own way through life, apart from seeking any guidance from the Lord (10:23). ‘The way of transgressors is hard’ and ‘evil pursueth sinners’ (Prov. 13:15, 21).”* (Humphries, 425)

**Jeremiah 42 (Lesson 22b)**

**I. Text Of Chapter 42 – Don’t Go To Egypt! (3 min. to read)**

*A. The People Insincerely Ask for Jeremiah’s Intercession (42:1-6)*

1. The people beseech Jeremiah to inquire of the Lord and vow to faithfully observe all that the Lord says through Jeremiah

2. *“The people really do not intend the absolute commitment to obedience which their words express. Their minds are already set on going to Egypt. They had no idea Jehovah would tell them to remain in the land under the present circumstances. They only wanted to know how best to carry out their settled purpose. They wanted guidance only within this limitation.”* (Mott, 171)

3. *“On the surface, the people’s request appears to manifest a noble, humble attitude. There also seems to be a sense of desperation in their request. As it turns out (v. 20), the seemingly humble appeal was lacking in sincerity. Good words were spoken, but the heart was absent (cf. Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:7-9; Ezek. 33:30-33).”* (Humphries, 427)

4. In the next chapter, the very man who warned Gedaliah of peril & saw what not heeding a proper warning would result in, himself does exactly the same thing! (43:2ff).

5. Notice *“your God”* change to *“our God/the God of Israel”* (vv. 2f, 6, 9, 18).

*B. YHWH’s Answer—Do Not Fear: Stay in The Land & Don’t Go To Egypt! (42:7-22)*

1. God gives them 10 days apparently to change their attitude before giving Jeremiah a message to convey. The message is a simple “either – or”: peace (vv. 10-12) or punishment (vv. 13-18).

2. The people’s choices reflect a refusal to learn even in the face of repeated disciplinary measures from God. And although firm, *“God’s punishment is remedial, not willful, vindictive or capricious, and arises from the same responsible concern which a father shows towards his son’s misdemeanours (cf. Heb. 12:5f).”* (Harrison, 164)

3. Egypt was no more immune to attack than Jerusalem had been. Had they already forgotten Pharaoh Hophra’s abandonment of them just prior to this? Had they already forgotten Carchemish? (2:36f; 43:10; 46:13; Ezek. 17:15; Is. 31:1; Pss. 115:9-11; 118:5-9; 146:3-7; Dt. 17:16)

**II. Thought Questions For Chapter 42**

A. Why did the exiles return under Cyrus (Is. 45:1) instead of Neb. (42:12)?

B. What can we learn from the repeated disobedience and rebellion of Judah, even after the clear chastisement of the Lord? Would immediate punishment of this caliber work with us or would we behave the same way?

C. What attitudes & situations cause us to struggle with self-deception?

**III. Applications For Chapter 42**

A. We should “keep nothing back” when we preach Jesus (v. 4; cf. Acts 20:27).

B. *“God’s moral character and righteous standards of conduct do not change (Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17). However, he does change his actions toward men based upon their attitude and conduct (cf. Jer. 18:7-10). Man is called upon to measure up to God’s righteous standard (Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:26; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16). Man falls short and needs to repent (Rom. 3:23; Acts 20:21), but God never falls short, and therefore, never needs to repent.”* (John Humphries, 429)

C. We should not expect God to honor our own plans that are not of His making.