### Jeremiah

## Chapter 38

1Well, ShephatiJah (son of MatTan), GedaliAh (son of PashUr), JuKal (son of ShelemiAh), and PashUr (son of MelchiAh) started thinking about the words that JeremiAh had spoken to the people when he warned them that 2Jehovah had said that anyone who remained in the city would die by the broadsword, famine, and plague, but those who [surrendered] to the Chaldeans could save their own lives and live.  
  
3For this is what he told them that Jehovah had said:  
  
 ‘When it comes to being handed over;  
 This city will be handed over  
 To the armies of Babylon’s king,  
 And soon thereafter, he’ll take it.’  
  
4So those rulers went to the king and said this to him:  
  
 ‘We have to do away with that man, because he’s weakening the hands of the troops that remain in this city and the hands of all the people when he says things like that. He doesn’t prophesy peace, he’s just telling us bad things!’  
  
5So because the king was unable to resist them, King ZedekiAh said:  
  
 ‘Look! He’s in your hands!’  
  
6And as a result, they took JeremiAh and threw him into the [outhouse pit] that belonged to MelchiJah (the king’s son), which was located in the courtyard of the guard. They took rough cords and lowered him into the pit, which contained no water (just manure), and that’s where he had to stay… In the filth!  
  
7Well, the Ethiopian Eunuch EbedMelech happened to be in the King’s courtyard when they threw JeremiAh into the pit. And at the time, the king was outside sitting on the Gate of BenJamin. 8So EbedMelech left the king’s palace and went to speak to the king.  
  
He said to him:  
  
 9‘O my lord and king,  
  
 ‘These men have done something very wicked when they dropped the Prophet JeremiAh into the outhouse pit… He’ll starve to death there, since there’s no more bread left in the city!’  
  
10So the king gave orders to EbedMelech, saying:  
  
 ‘Take 30 men to the pit and pull him out, so he doesn’t die.’  
  
11Then EbedMelech gathered the men and they went to the sub-basement of the king’s palace and found some old rags and ropes, and they tossed them down to JeremiAh in the pit, 12saying:  
  
 ‘Wrap these around you!’  
  
And that’s what JeremiAh did. 13So they lifted him with the ropes and pulled him up out of the pit. And thereafter, JeremiAh once again stayed in the courtyard of the guards.  
  
  
14Well after that, the king sent for JeremiAh while he (the king) was staying in the house of AsaLiseEl (which is located inside the Temple [complex] of Jehovah). And the king said to him:  
  
 ‘I want to ask you something… And don’t hide the truth from me!’  
  
15But JeremiAh asked:  
  
 ‘If I answer you [truthfully], won’t you just have me killed? Besides, you haven’t listened to any of the advice that I’ve given to you up to this point.’  
  
16Then the king secretly swore an oath to him, saying:  
  
 ‘As Jehovah who gave us this life lives; I won’t kill you or hand you over to these men who are seeking your life!’  
  
17So JeremiAh said to him:  
  
 ‘Jehovah of Armies, the God of IsraEl, said this:  
  
 ‘If you will go and surrender  
 To the governors of Babylon’s king,  
 You’ll live… You will save your own life,  
 And this city won’t be burned with fire…  
 Both you and your family will live!  
  
 18‘But, if you don’t go [and surrender],  
 This city will be handed to the Chaldeans  
 And they will burn it with fire…  
 When that happens, you won’t be saved from their hands.’  
  
19Then the king said to JeremiAh:  
  
 ‘But if I do that, I’ll have a problem with the Judeans who went over to the side of the Chaldeans… If I’m handed over to them, they’ll make [life miserable for] me!’  
  
20However, JeremiAh told him:  
  
 ‘There’s no way that you’ll be handed over to those people. Rather, you should listen to the words of Jehovah that I’ve spoken to you, because it would be better for you to save your own life and survive! 21But if you don’t choose to go out and surrender, this is what Jehovah has decreed:  
  
 22‘{Look!} All the women who remain in [your] house  
 Will be carried to the king of Babylon’s princes.  
 Then these women will say that your allies deceived you;  
 For they care so little about you  
 That they’ll turn and stumble your feet,  
 And help them to bring you to ruin.  
  
 23‘Then they’ll take your wives and your children,  
 And no way will you then be saved…  
 You’ll be taken by Babylon’s king,  
 And this city will be burned to the ground.’  
  
24Well at that, ZedekiAh said to JeremiAh:  
  
 ‘If you don’t speak about this to anyone else, you won’t die. 25But if the rulers hear that I’ve spoken to you about this and they come and ask you:  
  
 ‘What did you say to the king… If you don’t hide it from us, we won’t do away with you… What did you say to the king?’  
  
 26‘You must tell them:  
  
 ‘I went to plead for mercy before the eyes of the king. I just asked him not to take me back to the house of JoNathan and let me die there.’  
  
27And in fact, the rulers did come to JeremiAh and say this to him, and he said what the king told him to say. So they didn’t ask him anything more, because they didn’t know what had happened. 28And after that, JeremiAh stayed in the courtyard of the guards until the time that JeruSalem was captured.