

Jeremiah Ch 39-40:7 • “To Build and to Plant”

- Background As the chapter opens, Jeremiah has been prophesying for 41 years!
Many prophesies fulfilled but now going to start tumbling like dominos.
- v1 Old news; siege began in January 588BC.
- v2 June / July 586BC Babylonians broke thru (food gave out cf Jer 52 / Lam 4)
- v3 List of proper nouns actually collection of names, place names, and titles.
- v4 Fountain Gate tells us direction Zedekiah headed (toward Jericho).
- v5 Riblah = c. 200 miles N of Jerusalem (modern Syria). Strategic location.
- v6-7 Fulfills prophesies from Jeremiah 32 & 34.
- v8 2 Kings 25:8 dates this a month after fall of Jerusalem.
- v9 Third deportation (cf 605BC and 597BC).
- v10 Poor not a threat; too many people would be burden; raising crops maintains land's value and possible provision for traveling army.
- v11-12 How does Nebuchadnezzar know who Jeremiah is? People surrendering?
Or possibly Daniel and his friends (deported in 605BC)?
- v13-14 More co-mingling of names, titles, place names. One worth noting is
Nergal-Sharezer = Nebuchadnezzar's son-in-law; future emperor.
- v14 Gedeliah ≠ same guy as Ch 38. This Gedeliah's father was an ally of Jeremiah
in Ch 26; grandfather Shaphan involved in revival under Josiah in 2 Kings 22.
- v15 Chapter ends with handful of verses out of chronological order.
This episode actually follows Ch 38v28 but precedes Ch 39v2ff.
- v16 Same Ebed-Melech from Ch 38 – pled Jeremiah's case before Zedekiah.
- v17 God promising safety from Jewish officials or Babylonians soldiers? Both!
- v18 Why end chapter with this story? Emphasis on individual believer saved
in the midst of collective judgment (cf Messianic believers today)?
Or emphasis on salvation to Gentiles (foreshadowing later judgment)?

Notes continue on reverse page

- Ch 40 Ch 40 technically begins a new section (Ch 40-44 or Ch 40-45v3).
Life in occupied Judah and flight to Egypt.
- But first few verses fit better with Ch 39.
- v1 At first glance appears to contradict Ch 39. Some reconcile by hypothesizing
a second arrest the Bible doesn't tell us about. But an easier way to get there
is to place events of 40v1-6 *before* release to Gedaliah.
- Interesting passage is just narrative – we don't get to the “word of the Lord”
until Ch 42v9.
- v2-3 We don't know that Nebuzaradan believes in Jeremiah's God.
Jewish tradition says that he converted, but Scripture is silent.
Could be he's just quoting Jeremiah back to Jeremiah.
Or that he acknowledges Israel's God without worshipping Him.
- v4 Possible reason for topsy-turvy order: another example of a Gentile
paying respect to Word of God and man of God?
- v5 Awkward translation. The idea is that Jeremiah doesn't immediately reply.
Nebuzaradan makes it easy on J – “it's okay; you can go back.”
- v6 Mizpah generally believed to be northernmost city in Judah at the time.
- Application Ministry is others! Jeremiah doesn't pursue comfort or safety; obeys God!*
How did Jeremiah know God's will?
NOT automatically the hardest or harshest ministry...
Jeremiah 1v10!
The planting hadn't happened yet!