

Ebed-melech

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[0 : 00] The book of Jeremiah is full of the sufferings of this faithful prophet who was given over the course of several reigns of the kings of Judah, of the last of the kings of Judah, a really thankless task.

And it got progressively more thankless as the years went on, as well as constantly witnessing for the faithfulness of the Lord and against the increasing paganism of the kings of Judah and testifying faithfully to what the Lord required of them and what the Lord desired them to do.

And clearly the Lord protected him and hid him from many attempts on his life. Yet as the years went on and the final king of Judah, King Zedekiah, who had been put in place by the king of Babylon to replace the previous king, who was Zedekiah's nephew effectively, he replaced him at the age of 21.

21 is young to have so much burden of kingship laid upon one's shoulders, even though Judah was very much a shrunken kingdom by then.

Northern Israel had already been carved off before, centuries before. It had effectively gone pagan also. The Assyrians had destroyed it and carried away all the northern Israelites into captivity.

[1 : 30] Those same Assyrians had come to the very gates of Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah, but they had been delivered. The Lord delivered Jerusalem out of the hands of the Assyrians.

Hezekiah was a faithful king towards the Lord, but the generations that followed became more and more unfaithful. And eventually Sedekiah, who clearly, being so young and perhaps easily influenced by those around him, who were themselves simply the dregs of what was left, the real mobility, the real strength, the real powers in the land that had already been carted off into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.

So what was left was, if you like, the rump of the dregs of self-seeking courtiers. And their influence on the king was quite powerful. And having been on the throne for nine years, that means that if he was made king at 21, then at the age of 30, he was persuaded to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar.

And if we were to look at the last chapter of Jeremiah, we would see a sort of potted history of that. After nine years on the throne, he rebelled. And of course, the Babylonians reacted against that by gathering a huge army and coming to besiege Jerusalem.

There was a brief moment of respite when after Jeremiah had prophesied the fall of the city and so on, then the Egyptians came up. And the Babylonians said, well, if they're coming up, they're coming against us, we'll have to break off and go and fight them.

[3 : 05] And everybody thought, oh, good, Jerusalem's not under siege anymore. That's great. That's fine. We're free again. And Jeremiah said, don't be daft. You're not free for long. They'll be back. And sure enough, they wiped the floor with the Egyptians and then came back again to pursue and to besiege Jerusalem.

But nobody likes somebody who is constantly prophesying that you're going to lose. The princes in Jerusalem and the soldiers and those who were responsible for defending the city against the Babylonians, it doesn't really help the political situation.

If you've got this man of God constantly saying, look, there's no hope for this city. You have to surrender. If you don't surrender, your lives won't be saved. If you don't surrender, the city will be destroyed.

You'll starve. You'll die of pestilence. You'll be killed by the Babylonians. The city will be burned with fire. It's not exactly a cheerful message of victory and encouragement. But it is the message that Jeremiah was given to prophesy.

And it would have been a very difficult message with which to be faithful because Jeremiah was himself a Jew. He wanted to see the kingdom flourish. He wanted to see Jerusalem safe and

secure.

[4 : 21] But he was being given a message of its destruction. And if he was going to be faithful to the Lord, he had to keep on pronouncing that word. It made him extremely unpopular as this chapter testifies.

Having previously been put, if we see in the previous chapter, having been put in prison, in verse 16 in chapter 37, he was entered into the dungeon and into the cabins.

Now, when they talk about a dungeon in these contexts, they mean, first of all, something subterranean, effectively underground. And what we have here described in chapter 37, verse 16, is that cabins, it doesn't mean like sort of porticabins or little chalice or huts, as we would have.

The word translated as cabins is from a root meaning to bend. And it means that there would be coming off from the main sort of pit or dungeon, there would be sort of subterranean cells, underground cells, whether caves or whatever, carved out underground with vaulted roofs.

Or perhaps such low roofs as the prisoner had to bend under them. So he was underground in prison. Here, though, in this chapter, where the king says, well, look, if you want to kill, I can't do anything to stop you, he says to the princes that want to kill Jeremiah.

[5 : 43] But they stopped short of actually putting him immediately to death. Maybe even they bumped at the thought of killing the prophet of the Lord. So when Zedekiah, again being weak, said to them, behold, he is in your hand, for the king is not he that can do anything against you.

Then took they Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon of Malkiah the son of Hamalek that was in the court of the prison. And they let down Jeremiah with cords, and in the dungeon there was no water but mire.

So Jeremiah sank in no mire. Why would there be water in the dungeon? Well, the reason for this is the word that we have translated as dungeon means effectively a cistern or well.

A deep pit. Effectively a well which would have walls around it. And so that whether rainwater or when the water table rose, there would be a water supply in there that the inhabitants of the city could draw on.

But whether because of drought, famine or whatever, all the water was used up. Or at any rate, all the water was gone. This particular cistern had no water in it.

[6 : 51] And again, we read of a similar situation. Zechariah chapter 9 verse 11. As for thee also by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.

Now again, it's talking about a cistern or well, which was convenient. It was handy. As a dungeon, you just put somebody in it. And they can't get out. They can't clamber up the walls.

You don't have to worry about bars or about guards or anything. Once they're down that well, once they're down that pit, they're not going anywhere. Now, the fact that there wasn't water in it doesn't mean there wouldn't be no remnants of sort of a water kind of sludge.

And this is what we read about, you know, Jeremiah sunk in the mire. It's not sort of, you know, some kind of depth here of men drowning in mud. But he would be sinking probably up to his knees, possibly to his waist, in the mud, in the sludge that is at the bottom of this disused well.

But once he's in there, he's not getting out. He's not going anywhere. And probably he was put there in order to die. To die quietly, to die slowly rather than being stoned or killed with a sword or whatever.

[8 : 08] But here then emerges into this episode one of the real heroes of the whole book of Jeremiah. One who stands out for not only his bravery but also for his compassion here.

And this is Ebed Melech. Ebed Melech, the Ethiopian. You know, the Bible doesn't often make reference explicitly to people's skin color.

But the Ethiopians, of course, were the first major black peoples to emerge in biblical history. And Jeremiah himself in his previous chapters, we read in chapter 13, verse 23, he says, Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?

And this is the verse in which you get this problem. Can the leopard, you know, a leopard can't change his spots. Then may he also do good that are accustomed to do evil. So the color of the Ethiopian's skin was that which made him remarkable amongst the sort of different shades of tan or brown that would be in the Middle East or amongst the Egyptians or whatever.

The Ethiopians were black. And there were some amongst the pharaohs of Egypt. There was actually an Ethiopian dynasty, a black dynasty of pharaohs at one stage in Egyptian history.

[9 : 33] And we have reference, for example, to this in 2 Kings chapter 19 at verse 9. When he heard say of Terhaka, king of Ethiopia, behold, he has come out to fight against thee.

He sent messengers again unto Hezekiah saying, I speak to Hezekiah, you know, don't think that the Egyptians are going to save you. So that Terhaka, who was the king of Ethiopia, was pharaoh. He had become king of Egypt. Now, Ethiopia in those days, we've got to remember, it didn't mean so much necessarily that the political entity that is geographically Ethiopian now.

It meant that which was, what to us, the southern part of what is now Egypt or Sudan, the upper Egypt as they would call it. It's confusing for us looking at a map because we think upper Egypt is northern Egypt.

And of course, upper Egypt to them means further up the Nile. So southward into what is now Sudan and then Ethiopia. That would be the way by which the black Ethiopian peoples then came into contact with the more brown-skinned Egyptians and the Jews and the Arabians and so on.

[10 : 45] Obviously, further west, there was no way of crossing the Sahara. But where the Nile was, these peoples of the south and actually sub-Saharan Africa could interact with the Egyptians and with wider numbers of people.

Also mentioned in 2 Chronicles, chapter 14, of Zerah the Ethiopian who came with a host of a thousand thousand. And he came against one of the kings of Judah before.

So they could be potentially very powerful kings and warriors. But Ebed-Melech here is a slave. He is described, his name means literally, servant of the king.

Ebed-Servant-Melech the king. An Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house.

Now, the Jews didn't tend to make eunuchs themselves.

Or if they did, it was simply a result of them becoming more like the pagan kings round about. God nowhere in his word either advises, recommends or approves of the making of eunuchs.

[11 : 48] It was something that the pagans did. And the Israelite kings tragically sometimes copied them. You know, nowadays it's quite a political issue, the so-called FGM, female genital mutilation.

There's male genital mutilation from thousands of years ago. And of course it was very widespread. And two main purposes people sometimes put eunuchs through in the royal services.

One, to hold high office as chancellors or advisors or whatever. And they were thought safe to have so near the king because they could not form any dynasty themselves.

For obvious reasons. If they were to try and plot against the king and to become king themselves, what would be the point of that? Because you could not produce any sons to carry on the dynasty or the line after you.

So your ambition had to be self-contained within one lifetime. And so these people were thought to be safer to have around the king than those who might have ambitions of their own.

[12 : 52] The other obvious place where eunuchs might be used was in the care of the house of the women. Or the harim would be. For obvious reasons, it would be unadvisable to have men fully charged with testosterone guarding those particular places.

So they would often use eunuchs in charge of those places. But again, the only reason you would have harems is because the kings of Judah had to come like their pagan neighbours.

Again, God does not give approval to that kind of behaviour. So here is Ebed-Melech, the Ethiopian. Eunuch in the king's house. He heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon.

The king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin. Ebed-Melech went forth out of the king's house and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king. Now something we notice here, we miss it unless we see it in passing.

The king is sitting in the gate of Benjamin. That means he is sitting, as it were, on his throne. He is surrounded by his courtiers and his guards. In other words, this is in public. This is the equivalent of an audience with the king.

[14 : 02] In public, in the open. This is not whispering secretly in the king's ear while he is having his dinner and just getting a quiet word with it. But it is not that he went secretly to the king.

He went out of the king's house. He left his duties behind for now. He is sufficiently senior in the king's house. He strives, as it were, up to the king. The gate of Benjamin went forth out of the king's house and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon.

And he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is, for there is no more bread in the city. Now you might think, well, there's no more bread in the city. He's going to die wherever he is. But such

food as there was would be distributed amongst those who were seen to be there. Somebody's down a well. They're down a system. Nobody's going, oh, yeah, let's remember the guy down the well. Let's throw him some bread down there too. Let's get up. No, he's forgotten about. As far as they're concerned, he doesn't exist anymore. He's gone. He's there to just die and pass away quietly. So he is like to die there for hunger. There's no more bread in the city. Now see again here how comparatively weak the king is. [15:15] Somebody just faces him down. Somebody says, this is wrong, your majesty. This shouldn't be happening. He said, okay, like, do it a bit like, you know, take 30 men or whatever and go and set them free.

Whether the princes are standing there, those who have been Jeremiah's enemies, whether they are actually there at the time, probably not. Probably they're off somewhere else. It's just the king and his immediate guards and servants.

Whether they are unaware of what even Melech is doing. But it takes courage to do what he's done. Because he must assume that what he has done will get back to these enemies of Jeremiah. But he is facing them back. This is a man to whom horrendous things have been done in his past. He is a slave. He hasn't got much hope of surviving if the city is taken. And yet he speaks up for this despised prophet of the Lord. It makes a difference to this one prophet of the Lord. It's not just a cup of cold water.

[16:20] It's actually bringing him out of the pit, out of the dungeon where he would have perished and died. He's like to die. Then the king commanded him to the military, Ethiopian, take from hence 30 men with thee.

From hence, from here, from the gate of Benjamin. It means the king is surrounded not only by courtiers but by guards. And the implication is that if he takes 30, 30 is a lot. You know, if you think of 30 men walking down the road, that's quite a crowd of people. You're not readily going to take on 30 men, especially if there aren't. And that is the implication. Taking from amongst his guards and amongst his servants, 30 men. Not only to do the pulling up of Jeremiah out of the pit, but to stand guard in case you get in your position.

So the king is serious about this. He's weak, but he wouldn't have wanted to destroy Jeremiah himself. Because he's probably like Herod with John the Baptist. He knows he's a man of God.

[17:23] He knows there's truth in what he says. But he's afraid of his courtiers and of his princes. So he says, okay, take 30 men with you and go and bring them out before he dies. So he took the men with him.

You might think he went straight to the dungeon. Get the ropes. Haul them back up again. Send them to him. And say, okay, that's it. Now you're free. But two things. Mark out Ebed-Mellie here. One is this compassion, this gentleness. He went into the house of the king under the treasury and took those old cast clouts and old rotten rags. Clothes had been thrown away.

Old clothes, basically. And let them down by cords into the dungeon. Wrapped them up in the ropes and dropped them down slowly to Jeremiah. And he says, bootbeats.

Cast clouts and rotten rags under thy armholes under the cords. Now that can mean either under your armpits, you know, as you're being dragged up by the rope. Another possible interpretation is that armholes could refer to the end of the sleeves, you know, the cuffs.

[18:26] And so the armholes are where the hand comes out. And so it could be a possible translation of the original is that the armholes is the joint where the finger joins the hands.

And so, you know, if you were going to be holding on with the rope and holding on for the end, your hands would get burned or torn or scraped with the strain. They'd be cutting into the flesh. So whether it's the hands or whether it's the armpits or whether it's both, it could be wrap it around your hands and fingers and put it under your armpits so the eyes are dragged up and others.

It won't cut into the flesh. The ropes which are going to be the means of your salvation will not be causing you more suffering and pain.

And this is the compassion here. It's not just we're going to get him out. But in getting him out, we don't want to be hurting him. We don't want to be doing him harm.

It's one of the really few instances of genuine caring gentleness that appears throughout the Old Testament. Ebed Melech is one of the heroes here of the prophecy of Jeremiah.

[19 : 33] Ebed Melech, Ethiopian, said, put now these cast clouds and rotten rags under my armholes and under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords and took him up out of the dungeon.

And Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison. Now, why did he just set him free to walk the streets? No. Ebed Melech probably is the one who keeps him in the court of the prison. Why there? Probably because he's as safe there as anywhere else. If he's in the court of the prison, then his enemies may not initially realize that he's no longer in the dungeon. One of the things that have been out of sight is that nobody actually comes and peers in the sea. If you're there, if you're still in the dungeon, if you're still down at the well, no, they're not going to bother with you anymore. As far as they're concerned, that's you gone. So if he's in the court of the prison, he is less publicly visible. He is less in danger. He is, in a sense, protected. So he is looked after, in a sense, by being kept there secure.

[20 : 33] And that seven verses is all that we would have of Ebed Melech, the Ethiopian. Anyway, save for the fact that in the following chapter, chapter 39, if you look at me, look with me in verse 15.

The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, Go and speak to Ebed Melech, the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel.

Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil and not for good. They shall be accomplished in that day before thee. But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord. And thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For I will surely deliver thee. And thou shalt not fall by the sword. But thy life shall be for a prey unto thee. Because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. Now see that key phrase at the end. It's not just because you're a friend to Jeremiah. It's not just because you're a nice guy.

[21 : 37] It's because you put your trust in me. This would imply one reason why Ebed Melech feels positively towards Jeremiah in the first place, despite his prophecy of doom and destruction of the city, is because Ebed Melech is a believer in the true God of Israel.

Thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. Now to most people, captives, slaves, particularly eunuchs, were simply function rakes.

They were only of any use for what they could do, the work they could do. Other than that, they were just dust-bidding people's feet. But the Lord, the God of Israel, the true God, had previously, through the prophet Jeremiah, had a special message for strangers and outcasts and for eunuchs. If we read in Isaiah 56, verse 3, Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people.

Neither let the eunuchs say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant.

[22 : 54] Even unto them will I give in my house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

You see, in an age and a culture that was obsessed with its posterity, obsessed with having an heir to carry on, it's why barrenness was regarded as such a curse for men and for women.

Of course, they tended just to blame the women in those days. But a man who could not produce heirs would likewise be looked at a wee bit askance. A eunuch is physically incapable of having posterity, of producing subsequent generations.

But what the Lord is saying is, If you trust in me, if you put your faith and trust in me, I'll give you an inheritance that's far better than any sons and daughters. And to even Melch the Ethiopian, the Lord says, You know, because you've put your trust in me, I will spare you when this city goes down.

You'll have your life for a prey. What does that mean? Having your life for a prey means you'll escape basically with the skin of your teeth. You will live. You will be spared. But that's pretty much all you'll get away with.

[24 : 12] It's like if you're on a ship when the ship goes down, but you survive. You can't say, Oh, let me just go back and get everything out of my cabin and all my luggage and all the junk that was in there, so I've got it floating with me in the sea.

No, if you're in a shipwreck and you escape with your life, that's your life for a prey. If your house burns down and everything is destroyed in it, but you survive, that's your life giving you for a prey. You will survive. And I think, Okay, well, thanks very much. You know, that's great. But, you know, it's not an awful lot to be going on with, is it, Lord? You know, I just happen to live, but everybody, you know, everything else gets lost.

Well, if you're already a slave, already a eunuch, already a slave, already a foreigner, what do you have anyway? But your life will be given you for a prey. You won't be delivered into the hands of the men of whom you are afraid.

Now, why would he have caused the fear of the Babylonians? Because, you know, he's not from Judah. He's not a particular important person in the king's household.

[25 : 16] He's just a servant. Okay, remember that the Babylonians have been rebelled against. No empire can allow somebody to set the precedent of rebelling and being seen to get away with it.

Because if you rule umpteen different kingdoms and one of them stands up and thumbs its nose at you and the others all turn and say, oh, well, we wait for the blow to fall. Oh, it hasn't fallen. They haven't been smashed to bits. They haven't been destroyed. Oh, well, they can get away with their freedom. Let us have a go as well. We'll declare our independence and our freedom. Now, you cannot allow that precedent to be set.

So when one declares a state of rebellion, what do you do? You use a sledgehammer to crush a nut. And that is what the Babylonians were doing.

When they came to destroy Jerusalem, they didn't just camp round about it. They built forts. They were in for the long haul. They weren't going anywhere. The city starved to death.

[26 : 19] When the city fell, what do we read of what happened? Well, let's just turn briefly to Jeremiah 52. Read from verse four. First of all, the tragedy of Zedekiah himself.

Came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, the tenth month, the tenth day of the month.

Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, came. He had all his army against Jerusalem and pitched against it and built forts against it round about.

So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. Two-year siege. Now, by the end of a two-year siege, there's no fruit left for anyone in the place. In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the famine was sown in the city, so there was no bread for the people of the land.

Then, the city was broken up. And all the men of war fled and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden.

Now, the Chaldeans were by the city round about, and they went by the way of the plain. That probably means they sneaked out into the Kidron Valley, which, if you follow it, continuously takes you down to the Dead Sea.

[27 : 24] And from the Dead Sea, they would be able to buy it from the plain. And having gone that far away, Zedekiah would think, yes, I've gone out. I've escaped. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho miles away.

He's come down at the mountains. He's gone into the desert, into the plains, into Jericho. But they overtook him there, and his army was scattered from them. Then they took the king and carried him up to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him.

And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. He slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. In other words, all those who had counseled and advised Zedekiah what to do were put to death in front of him.

And also all his sons. You think, okay, that's what you'd expect. Grown up, full grown men. How old is Zedekiah at this point? He's 21 when he becomes king.

He reigns 11 years, including the siege. 32. 32 by the time he is captured alive. How old are the sons of a 32-year-old likely to be?

[28 : 36] Well, if he starts producing children at 15 or 16, it means that the oldest of them will be maybe 15, 16, 17 of the oldest. His oldest children will be 17.

If there's more, then they will be 12, 14, 10, younger. We're looking at children being put to death in front of their father.

Then, he put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and the king of Babylon bound him in chains and carried him to Babylon and put him in prison until the day of his death. It doesn't stop there. Remember that they have to make an example of Jerusalem.

Verse 24, the captain of the guard took Sarai, the chief priest, and Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three keepers of the door. He took also out of the city a Munich, which had the charge of the men of war, and seven men of them that were near the king's person, whatever that means, which were found in the city, and the principal scribe of the host who mustered the people of the land, and three score men of the people of the land, whoever they were, again, 70 people, just picked off the street, that were found in the midst of the city.

So Nebuchadnezzar, the captain of the guard, took them, brought them to the king of Babylon, to Riblah, and the king of Babylon smothered them and put them to death in Riblah, in the land of Amath. Thus Judah was carried away, captive out of his own land.

[30 : 02] So in other words, a eunuch in charge of mustering our people, a scribe in charge of keeping a note of who's been conscripted, those who stand near the king, 70 people who just happen to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time, of course Ebit Melech has caused to be afraid.

If they are killing anybody and everyone who has anything to do with the king, with the establishment, with the monarchy, with the government, they are simply killing them all and then destroying the city, literally pulling it down and then burning it over the heads of its inhabitants, then, you know, you can see why he expects also to die.

It's in this context where everyone else is being slaughtered that the Lord's word to Ebed Melech actually means something.

Where he says, you know, you will not be delivered into the hands of the men of whom you are afraid. For I will surely deliver thee and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prayer unto thee because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.

And we might initially think, yeah, that's not much, is it? He escapes by the skin of his teeth. That's an awful lot when everybody else is being wiped out.

[31 : 24] You're already a slave, you're already a unit, you own nothing yourself, but you survive when everybody else is being slaughtered. Why? Because of the blessing and protection of God.

For thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. Now, whilst escaping with our lives might not seem like a big deal to people who want perhaps to have a bit of wealth, a bit of power, a bit of things, you know, we can say, well, I came away with all this.

What is it we expect to take out of this life, for example? Whatever we have accumulated, whatever we may have built up, whatever money or wealth or lands or property or power we may have, this is the equivalent of what is with us in our first class cabin in the ship that has just been wrecked and going down.

You can't take it with you. If you escape with your life, you're doing well. Now, this world is effectively a ship that's going down. You can't take any of it with you, but you can have your life. You can have your immortal soul preserved to you and blessed because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord. Peter writes this, 1 Peter 4, 17 and 18, For the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

[32 : 48] And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Ibn Melech is a man who warms the heart of every reader that reads that account. What a nice guy. What a good man. What a brave man.

To stand up for poor Jeremiah when everybody else turned their back and they take his 30 men, they pull them out of the pit, but they have the compassion to say, put these under your armpits and your hands.

Protect your fingers, protect your hands, protect your armpits from the strain of the rope, yanking you up out of this deep well from which you were never going to get out otherwise.

What a nice guy with Melech but that's not why he's spared. He's spared because he puts his trust in the Lord. But he gets his life for a prey. That means he barely is saved.

[33 : 48] He scarcely survives and the righteous scarcely be saved. Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? When a soul is saved by the Lord, not from the destruction of physical, earthly Jerusalem, but from the destruction of this world, even if we're spared to the day the Lord comes back, this world will all eventually be burned up and melt with fervent heat.

That's what the Bible tells us. So whether we're still alive when the Lord comes back or whether we go from hence before he comes back, our life is all that we will get for a prey if we are spared for

that.

And if we are spared for that, it will only be because we put our trust in the Lord like he did now. You see, nothing else we can take with us.

Nothing else is going to be our deliverance. We escape with that and only just with that. As Peter talks about the righteous being scarcely saved, the blood of Christ avails, it cleanses us from all sin. But we would probably like to think in terms of, well, righteousness of Christ to all my sins paid for and there's plenty left over so I can sit a little bit more if I want than I can.

[35 : 07] I've got a little bit to spare and so on. You won't have a thing to spare. Let's say if there were units of salvation and in order to be saved then you needed 110 units of salvation and the blood of Christ gave you how many?

It will give you 110. If the price is 524 it will give you 524. If it is 17 it will give you 17. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin but it's not an abundance flourishing got loads spayed on.

What Christ has offered up avails exactly for every last sin of every last soul who puts their trust in Christ.

But there's not like abundant spares left over. If there was abundant spare left over then some of what Christ did will be in vain.

But as it is every last ounce every last drop of the price that has been paid by Christ is applied for the salvation of sinners.

[36 : 17] There will be nothing spare. There will be nothing left over. There will be nothing lost of all that Christ has done. Your life will be given you for a price that the righteous those who are saved by Christ not for any righteousness in themselves if they scarcely be saved then where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Those who don't have Christ will end up being lost not because they're nasty people not because they're terribly bad or murderers or drug dealers or whatever the case may be they will be lost because there was no one to pay their price.

Oh well surely if Jesus was really nice he'd pay their price too but Jesus is there. Christ is pleading with them put your trust in me believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

That is the offer of the gospel and it will have been there their whole lives. If we are lost we are lost not because of the quality of our character or lack of it we are lost because we didn't have a saviour because we didn't have an advocate one who paid a price for us with the father.

This is why Ebed Melik ends up saved and spared. I will surely deliver thee and thou shalt not fall by the sword but thy life shall be for a prayer to thee because thou hast put thy trusted knee saith the Lord.

[37 : 45] Jesus said by their fruits you shall know that. Now part of the fruit of God's spirit is that it gives you a love for the brethren. It gives you a love for the Lord's people that when all the world turns against them you still love them because of who they belong to and because of who you belong to if you're in Christ.

Ebed Melik is moved to compassion for Jeremiah not just because he feels sorry for some poor soul they've chucked down a well but rather because this is the prophet of the Lord.

These men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet whom they have cast into the dungeon. And ez Mount is our story hangs out of hope so let's go ahead and you go