

## Jeremiah 41

**Read Jeremiah 41:1-7:** Israel was supposed to be a theocracy. It was supposed to be a nation governed by God. This chapter is really about anarchy. The word anarchy means without authority. We are reading about competing survival plans of men. God is a Spirit of organization, with singular leadership; and Satan has a spirit of chaos.

*For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. (1 Corinthians 14:33)*

Without God as the head of an organization; it becomes each man for himself. Some survivors in Judah lived in caves or other isolation, while others looked to pillage or exploit the scattered outcasts. Their national leaders are gone. Law enforcement is gone. Now there is a revolving door of those who bare the sword to exert control. Look at the areas where the hurricanes have wiped out the government services. The temporary lapse in services and police turns into mayhem and looting. Free-for-alls never go well. The miners in 1849 who moved to California and lived in mining camps were shooting each other and claim jumping all the time.

The people of Judah have either died or have been taken captive to Babylon. Babylon had only left a governor and some guards over this territory. A small scattering of survivors was left behind. Societal outcasts, without the normal comforts of permeant living. It was like a Mad Max movie. Today, there are still nations run by warlords. They are chaotic and violent. There are no personal protections. The strongest take from the weakest.

*In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 21:25)*



Judah had become an international neutral zone, under a Babylonian-appointed Jewish governor named Gedaliah. The survivors of this holocaust had a new green zone to live in. The scattered

Jews and any roving militias could settle there and do whatever they wanted, as long as the territory remained in Babylonian control. People think that they want to live without rules until they experience all that it means. It was a small taste of Left Behind.



Timothy talks about a post Christian era society, where personal choices are asserted that can infringe upon normal societal safeguards and boundaries. The liberals are selling the notion to freely engage in child porn, transgender rights, unobstructed drug use, no death penalty, etc... It's like abortion. They are selling the idea like it only affects the mother. What do you have left if people get to disregard all others? You get a zoo of wild animals with AIDS. Men have tried to break free of God's rules since the beginning.

*Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? <sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup> "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." <sup>4</sup> He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. (Psalm 2)*

These 'free spirits' ruin their own world. Men have always ruined their world; until God sends another reset.

*For look! The wicked bend their bow, They make ready their arrow on the string, That they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart. <sup>3</sup> If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do? (Psalm 11)*

**Man (in the flesh) is his own worst enemy.**

*For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. (Romans 7:11)*

*Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, <sup>2</sup> that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. <sup>3</sup> And the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.” <sup>4</sup> There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown. <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. <sup>6</sup> And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. <sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” (Genesis 6)*

**My second worst enemy is Satan.** He studies my weaknesses and hunts me down. He capitalizes on our masochistic tendencies. He knows how to bait men. His agenda includes a subterfuge of mind control. We are inclined to sin; but he packages deals, and he sells it.

*By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. (1 John 4)*

**The third enemy is this world.** The players have corrupted the playground. The Garden of Eden has turned into a world of chutes and ladders. Every pursuit under the sun has a trap door. Everything has a curse on it; and it disappoints us.

Outside of God’s plan to go to Babylon is a series of bad alternatives, loaded with peril. The Ammonites (who hated the Jews) hired a hitman in Ishmael to put an end to the small surviving group of Jews. Ishmael’s militia killed this governor, because he offered to protect and provide for these returning Jews. Then the Ammonite hitman killed 80 Jewish men who came to Mizpah to repent. Surviving Jews killing surviving Jews for money.

*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: <sup>2</sup> For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, <sup>4</sup> traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (2 Timothy 3)*

The 80 murdered men had come all the way down from the northern Israel tribes into Judah for the Feast of Tabernacles. That sounds good on the surface by itself. A lot of this carnage in this whole scene seems unfitting, until you go back to what Jeremiah said. Going to Babylon is your only chance at survival.

*‘Therefore, as I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you;*

*My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. <sup>12</sup> One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.* (Ezekiel 5)

The curses just keep coming. Men always try to make up their own rules. We cannot come up with alternate moral codes to please God.

*But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)*

**Read Jeremiah 41:8-18:** God has pulled his protections back. This was not a God-ordained occupation zone. The land is scheduled to be sterilized for 70 years. Men are not supposed to be here. The means of plagues, the sword, famine or even marauders is not significant. Everyone is to explicitly get out of this blast radius. This re-gathering at ground zero was not the prescribed survival plan. They were supposed to go to Babylon for 70 years.

The Ammonites paid to kidnap whoever they did not kill. They brought the captives into Ammon. Johanan, a Jewish militia leader heard about the Ishmael's killing and kidnapping. Johanan came to the rescue. Ishmael and his mercenaries escaped.

Now Johanan and these doubly-displaced people planned their next escape to the land of Egypt. They are still not falling into God's plan. They feared that Babylon would hear that their foreign emissaries had been killed; and come back with a vengeance. Mankind will just keep digging and digging his hole deeper. God's only survival plan was to go to Babylon. Returning to Judah resulted in a massacre. Going to Egypt won't be any better.