

Jeremiah 41

Read Jeremiah 41:1-10: It becomes a little harder to detect God's hand in chapters like this. It is a dog-eat-dog narrative about the siege survivors. A new society is starting over again; and yet there is already genocide, mass murder, deception and hatred. The prediction that Ishmael would murder Gedaliah (the Governor) came true. It was true that Ammon hatched a plot to take down the Israeli government as well as the Babylonian outpost.

This whole chapter seems like a senseless plot to kill a struggling people. Why kill off a seemingly insignificant remnant? Why does the devil want to kill mankind; as he is but temporary dirt and air? This sadly is the history of the Jews. Hebrew genocide has been a phenomenon since the beginning. The Philistines, Haman, Hitler and Stalin were only a few well-known names. Here the Ammonites try to wipe out the Jews. There must be hundreds of such stories from various nations who tried to wipe out the Jews. Satan is against Jesus and God's chosen people. It is amazing to just watch the news and see how the Jews are cast as villains when they are being attacked.

Not only did Ishmael kill the Babylonian-appointed governor. He also killed all government leaders, Chaldean army representatives, surrounding Jews, and everyone with him. He also killed 80 Hebrews who were prostrating themselves before God in Jerusalem. Why would God allow 'faithful' and repentant Jews to be killed? Not all repentance is unto salvation. Much of the repentance men display is to stop the punishment for disobedience. These Jews had cut themselves; which is an idolatrous practice. Were these mourners following really God's instructions? They should have freely left with the Babylonians earlier.

Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: 'If you surely surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then your soul shall live; this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. -But if you do not

surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans; they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand.” (Jeremiah 38:17-18)

Ishmael then set up a slave caravan to take all of the locals to Ammon.

Read Jeremiah 41:11-18: Johanan (another captain in the Hebrew army) pursued Ishmael. Ishmael and a hand full of men escaped to Ammon. Johanan freed the captives in route to Ammon. Johanan was afraid that Nebuchadnezzar would come back and be furious about the insurrection and kill him.