

Ebedmelech

“Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil...” (Jeremiah 38:7-9).

Ebedmelech was an Ethiopian eunuch who risked his life to get Jeremiah released from prison. Zedekiah's princes had cast Jeremiah into the dungeon to die. His crime was that he spoke the word of God, some of which advised Jerusalem to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar. Arguing that these were treasonable words worthy of death, the princes convinced Zedekiah to look the other way concerning this righteous man. Thus, he deferred to their judgment saying, *“Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you”* (Jeremiah 38:5).

Our text discloses that Ebedmelech, upon hearing that Jeremiah was in prison, immediately petitioned the king to release him, calling those who placed him there evil. Why would he risk his life for an enemy of the people, especially of the princes in the same court as he? The answer lies in the very preaching of Jeremiah. His calls to repentance, while being annoying and largely unheeded by the people, awakened Ebedmelech to his own sinfulness causing him, at some point, to seek for the grace of God. Much to the consternation of the people, Jeremiah enumerated their many sins in his sermons. For example, he pointed to their general fallen nature as evidenced by their vain hope of salvation from every imaginable source other than from the Word of God, *“Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel”* (Jeremiah 3:23). He also pointed to specific sins by name. The sacrifice of babies on the altar of Molech, for example, is especially mentioned as an abomination, *“But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. And they built the high places of Baal, ... to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that*

they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin” (Jeremiah 32:34-35). Life had become cheap; consciences had become seared. This was a time of great apostasy in which the people in their worship of god did what seemed right to them and did not want to hear of the God that brought them out of great bondage (sin). Jeremiah's preaching of the one true God and the way of salvation through the shedding of blood infuriated the people who wanted to do away with him.

Ebedmelech was a child of God as showed by his love for this outcast of society and the religious establishment—Jeremiah. If it were not for the Spirit of God, Ebedmelech could not have found the strength to defend Jeremiah. One can only imagine the defenseless others who perished at the hands of this government. Paul sheds light on how the Holy Spirit worked in the heart of Ebedmelech, *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith”* (Galatians 5:22). Further, Jesus teaches of the impossibility of doing good without being good (saved), *“A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit”* (Matthew 7:18). Truly, Ebedmelech could not have done otherwise. Through the Word he was able to believe the true value of confession and animal sacrifice for the forgiveness of his sins that foreshadowed things to come. There is no fear of earthly consequences when eternal life in heaven is at stake. God delivered Ebedmelech from Nebuchadnezzar, not because he spoke up for Jeremiah but because *“...thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD”* (Jeremiah 39:18). How joyous and fearless Ebedmelech became when he heard the words of salvation preached by Jeremiah, *“...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”* (Jeremiah 39:17). In like manner, God will deliver us from eternal fire if we likewise seek out God's grace and remain faithful unto the end.

Today we are faced with situations very similar to those of Jeremiah's day. People have fallen away from the truth, desiring to hear words that sound good but that are not. The unborn are regularly sacrificed on the modern altar of convenience by the millions while the

sin-darkened mind of man calls evil good and good evil. As Jeremiah and the prophets of old taught, there is a mercy seat where a sin-burdened soul can find forgiveness. As happened then, today many become infuriated with this “outdated” preaching. Pray that we will not turn our backs on God nor look the other way when He calls, but that may we seek the Lord while He may yet be found, *“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near”* (Isaiah 55:6).

God’s Peace,
Charles Korhonen

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Online Broadcasts

From our webpage: <http://www.tapiolachurch.org/> you will see the mixlr live audio – we will be 'on the air' during our church services.

Summer Schedule

Church at 10:00am
Bible Study at 7pm on Wednesday.

Aug 7	Ken Storm	Holy Communion
Aug 14	Earl Kaurala	
Aug 21	Ken Storm	Confirmation Service
Aug 28	Nathan Ruonavaara	