

# Ebed-Melech, the Un-noticed Ethiopian Eunuch

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple Internet Sources)

## Introduction:

- A. Most know the story surrounding the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch.
  - 1. He serves as an example for believers today (Acts 8:27); he was also a highly placed servant of royalty, who revered God, and was offered salvation as a result
- B. However, unknown to some and forgotten by others, is another Ethiopian Eunuch, named Ebed-Melech - Jer. 37-39
  - 1. He should also serve as an example for us today.

## I. TEXTUAL BACKGROUND

- A. Babylon besieged the city of Jerusalem - Jer. 37:5
- B. Babylon received news that Egypt was coming from the South to help Jerusalem, so they temporarily lifted their siege
- C. During this time, Jeremiah prophesied that Babylon would return and destroy Jerusalem - Jer. 37:7-10
- D. Jeremiah was arrested and charged with treason - Jer. 37:11-16
- E. King Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah who tells him the bad news. The princes tell the king to end Jeremiah - Jer. 37:17 - 38:6
- F. Ebed-Melech came to Jeremiah's defense - Jer. 38:8-13
- G. "Ebedmelech is the Aramaic form of a Canaanite name Abimelech. He was an Ethiopian, a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, and yet had in him more humanity, and more divinity too, than native Israelites had. Christ found more faith among Gentiles than among Jews. Ebedmelech lived in a wicked court and in a very corrupt degenerate age, and yet had a great sense both of equity and piety." (Matthew Henry)
  - 1. "We know nothing more about Ebed-Melech than what is narrated in Jeremiah 38-39. His situation is reminiscent of that of Rahab, whose unusual faithfulness to God and courageous service to him led to her being spared when the city of Jericho was destroyed (Joshua 2, 6). Both of these biblical figures, who happened to be Gentiles by the way, exemplify bold trust in God and faithful obedience, even at great personal risk. They encourage us to do what is right even when those around us would oppose us. Ebed-Melech and Rahab remind us that faithfulness to God isn't a matter of race or family or convenience. Rather, it involves personal—and often costly—choices to serve the Lord. Such service will reap fine rewards, sometimes in this life, as in the case of Ebed-Melech and Rahab, and always in the life to come." (Mark Roberts)

## II. LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

- A. He knew the difference between right and wrong.
  - 1. Isa. 5:18-21
    - a. What God calls an abomination, men call alternative lifestyle - Rom. 1:26-27
    - b. Taking innocent life is called choice - Prov. 6:17
    - c. Rejection of God is called scientific fact - Rom. 1:20-22
    - d. False doctrine is called Christian liberty - 2John 9-11

B. He had concern for another in the middle of his own problems

1. Matt. 22:34-40; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:4

C. His concern moved him to action.

1. James 2:14-16; Luke 10:29-37; James 1:22, 4:17

D. His concern brought him into God's favor - Jer. 39:15-18

Conclusion:

A. Just as in the days of Jeremiah, God needs people of courage and compassion today.

B. Would you have stood up for Jeremiah if you were one of his contemporaries?

1. The way you can determine the answer to that question is to ask: Am I standing up for Jesus today?