



Ebed-Melech:
The Un-noticed Ethiopian Eunuch

Jeremiah 37-39

The Un-noticed Ethiopian Eunuch

- The Ethiopian Eunuch serves as an example for believers today; he was a highly placed servant of royalty, who revered God, and was offered salvation as a result
 - Acts 8:27-28 - “And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.”
- Unknown to some and forgotten by others, is another Ethiopian Eunuch named Ebed-Melech who also serves as an example for us today - Jer. 37-39

Textual Background

- Babylon besieged the city of Jerusalem
 - Jer. 37:5
- Babylon received news that Egypt was coming from the South to help Jerusalem, so they temporarily lifted their siege
- During this time, Jeremiah prophesied that Babylon would return and destroy Jerusalem
 - Jer. 37:7-10

Textual Background

- Jeremiah was arrested and charged with treason
 - Jer. 37:11-16
- King Zedekiah sends for Jeremiah who tells him the bad news. The princes tell the king to end Jeremiah
 - Jer. 37:17 - 38:6
- Ebed-Melech came to Jeremiah's defense
 - Jer. 38:8-13

Historical Background

- “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)

Historical Background

- “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)

Lessons From The Old Testament

Ethiopian Eunuch

- He knew the difference between right and wrong
 - Isa. 5:18-21 - “Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope; 19 That say, Let Him make speed and hasten His work, That we may see it; And let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near and come, That we may know it. 20 Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!”

Lessons From The Old Testament Ethiopian Eunuch

- What God calls an abomination, men call alternative lifestyle - Rom. 1:26-27
- Taking innocent life is called choice - Prov. 6:17
- Rejection of God is called scientific fact - Rom. 1:20-22
- False doctrine is called Christian liberty - 2John 9-11

Lessons From The Old Testament

Ethiopian Eunuch

- He had concern for another in the middle of his own problems
 - Matt. 22:34-40
 - Rom. 12:10 - “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another”
 - Phil. 2:4 - “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

Lessons From The Old Testament

Ethiopian Eunuch

- His concern moved him to action.
 - James 2:14-16 - “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”
 - James 1:22 - “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”
 - James 4:17 - “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”
 - Luke 10:29-37

Lessons From The Old Testament

Ethiopian Eunuch

- His concern brought him into God's favor
 - Jer. 39:15-18 - “Meanwhile the word of the LORD had come to Jeremiah while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, 16 Go and speak to Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring My words upon this city for adversity and not for good, and they shall be performed in that day before you. 17 But I will deliver you in that day, says the LORD, and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. 18 For I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but your life shall be as a prize to you, because you have put your trust in Me, says the LORD.”