**Jeremiah 34:1-22**

***“Enslaved Again”***

Introduction:

1. Have you lost your freedom? Now through choices you have made you are enslaved once again.

2. Jeremiah 34:1-22: Freedom is the key word (vss 8, 15, 16, 17)

Have you lost your freedom?

**I. FREEDOM RELINQUISHED 34:1-7**

Judah had been given opportunity to be free. They had lost their sensitivity to the Word of

 God. They refused to be captured by God, so they would be captured by someone or

 something else…in this case, Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. What has captured

 you?

 ***A. The Plan 1,2***

 *“The Word came”*

**1.** *Against…***Oppressive 1a**

 **2.** *All…***Overwhelming 1b** You can’t fight against God and win. The Someone

 or something is BIG! In this case, Nebuchadnezzar…who is the most powerful man in

 the world.

 **3. Orchestrated 2** *I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon.*

 *\**God permits Nebuchadnezzar to be the instrument. Nebuchadnezzar has no idea

 that he is being used to fulfill God’s plan.

 \*God uses evil, wicked, hideous things to bring us to the end of ourselves. God

 has something bigger in mind!

 \**I shall burn it with fire…*You may lose everything that you hold dear when you

 lose your freedom!!

 ***B. The Pain 3-5***

**1. The Must In Pain 3** *You shall not escape…you shall be taken captive to Babylon. You*

 *will see the king. You will speak to him face to face.*

 \*God knows where the loss of freedom will take you.

 \*You will go farther…stay longer…come up emptier than you had planned or

 could have dreamed!

 **2. The Mercy In Pain 4,5**

 **\****You will not die by the sword (like Jehoiakin) (22:18, 19)*

 *\* Funeral fire…you shall die in peace (in Babylon)* This is not cremation. It

 was not practiced by the Hebrews. This was the custom of burning spices at a

 royal funeral.

 \**Ah Lord…alas O Master* was normally used for the mourning of a king.

 Zedekiah was blinded and died in Babylon.

 \*It is not impossible that the exiled Jews were permitted to show customary respect at

 the death of their Davidic king.

 ***C. The Period 6,7***

Time was running out and it was too late.

1. At the time of this prophecy only Jerusalem, Lachish and Azekah had not been captured.
2. Someday it will be too late. Start today to fall under His Kingship.
3. So much is lost and has been lost, but God can set you free and restore!!!

Have you lost your freedom?

**II. FREEDOM RESTORED 34:8-10**

The law stated that every 7 years a slave should go free…**it wasn’t happening.**

 **The covenant was not based on conviction, but convenience**. Zedekiah may have wanted

 to gain favor with God or the continued threat of attack made it impossible to keep slaves.

 Freed slaves could add to the military and they could join to defend the city.

 It was evident that Judah had lost its sensitivity to God’s Word. Their handling of slavery

 becomes a living illustration of what Israel was doing with God.

1. ***The Covenant 8, 18***
2. It was a covenant to set his people free. To show the sincerity of the covenant a sacrifice was cut in two and then they would walk between the two pieces. If they failed to keep the covenant, the same should happen to them!
3. We made a covenant with Jesus Christ and he set us free! We need to mean business with God!

 ***B. The Commission 9***

All should go free and that none should enslave a Jewish brother.

**1. Totally** *Every*

 **2. Tenderly** *Hebrew and Hebrewess…a Jew his brother.* ***All are free!!***

 ***C. The Compliance 10*** *All obeyed!!*

 **1.** Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) recounted the happy scene on the West

 Virginia plantation on which he was raised on Emancipation Day!

 **2.** The ropes fell off. Freedom was theirs. The debt was paid in full. It was like the day you

 came to Jesus. Do you remember what it was like??

Have you lost your freedom?

**III. FREEDOM REFUSED 34:11**

Since thedecision was out of convenience…when the siege was temporarily lifted (vss. 21,

 22 gives a clue along with 37:5) Zedekiah freed the slaves when it seems like Jerusalem was

 doomed. Then the Egyptians showed up to help in the summer of 588 B.C. The Egyptians

 posed enough threat to give Israel a break from the Babylonian siege. **Emancipation**

 **Revoked!** The new covenant was forgotten and the slaves were reclaimed (11, 16). When

 the immediate danger was passed and the dirty dishes started piling up…chores were not

 getting done…the people of Jerusalem wanted their slaves back. **Through no fault of their**

 **own they lost their freedom...we choose!**

 ***A. The Time***  *“Afterward”*

**1. Since your decision was out of convenience…when the explosion is over.** You are

 getting along fine. You no longer need God to get you out of your mess. You are free!

 **2.** You no longer fellowship with God’s people. Prayer is nearly forgotten…you no

 longer need Him. You seldom spend time in the Word.

1. ***The Turn***  *“They turned”*
2. They turned from their commitment and from their covenant.
3. There is repentance that turns from the world to God. Here you turn from God to the world!
4. ***The Tragedy***
5. They caused those who were free to be enslaved.
6. The rope, the chains now hold them.
7. They lose the joy of living.
8. The loss of freedom is caused by legalism, not life. Law is me doing something for God. **Rules without Relationship leads to Rebellion.** In (Gal. 5:1) *the yoke of bondage* was anything added to the finished work of Christ. The Christian life is not a new form of slavery. If the son has set you free, you are free indeed (John 8:34-36). I am never truly free until I am a slave of Jesus Christ!

Have you lost your freedom?

**IV. FREEDOM REBUKED 34:12-22**

 *“Therefore”* If we are operating from the wrong principle, God must step in!

 ***A. The Reminder 13-15***

 **1.** *Freedom was always in My heart.* *When I brought you out of Egypt…* **13**

 **2.** No one was meant to lose their freedom**. 14**

 *“But your fathers hearkened not unto Me”* We lose our freedom when there is a lack of

 sensitivity to God’s word.

 **3.** For a moment you did right, you lived a life of obedience. **15**  Are you living in the center of

 God’s will?

 ***B. The Reprimand 16*** *You turned…You Polluted…****Freedom was lost!***

 ***C. The Retribution 17-20*** *therefore*

**1. Freedom 17** *I proclaim Freedom for you* is a play on words…you want to be free…you will

 be free:

 **A) Death** *Freedom to the sword*

 **B) Destruction** *Freedom to pestilence*

 **C) Drought** *Freedom to famine*

 **D) Dispersion** *Freedom to be scattered*

 **2. Failure 19-20a** Position means nothing!

 **3. Frustration 20b**

*Have You Lost Your Freedom?*

***Jesus Christ Can Set You Free:***

*Get Back Into The Word!*

**Surrender Absolutely!**