**Jeremiah 38:14-28**

***“When Fear Reigns”***

Introduction:

1. Has that Giant Fear jumped on your back? Is there a fear that reigns in your life?

2. *The only known cure for fear is faith.*

2. Jeremiah 38:14-28 is full of fear and an absence of faith...fear produces all kinds of problems:

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**I. FEAR OF POSITION 38:14-16** ***Indecision***

***A. Seeking Truth 14***

**1.** Zedekiah was a puppet king. Indecision characterizes a politician concerned for

 his position. The fact he calls for Jeremiah is an indication he can’t make up his

 mind. We have a similar account in Ch. 37. The same message is given. He

 couldn’t make up his mind. Zedekiah checks the polls. He was a puppet:

 \*Ez. 17:11-21 once he gets back home, he listens to his advisers. REBEL! So

 Zedekiah reversed his foreign policy.

 \*(34:8-11) Do away with slavery, then the slave holders revolted and he reversed

 his policy and revoked the amendment.

 \*(37:16) He sent Jeremiah to a dungeon. Then v. 21 placed him under house arrest.

  **\***Zedekiah hoped God would change His mind.

 **2.** Fear brings indecision, but fear may cause us to seek God. The heart is filled with

 questions that only God can answer.

 ***B. Searching Truth 15***

**1.** There are two major questions with Truth: If you receive it…

 \*Will you kill it?

 \*Will you do what it says?

 **2.** Fear causes us to kill truth and not obey it!

 ***C. Saying Truth 16***

**1.** Fear will cause you to say anything as long as you get what you want.

 **2.** Fear causes us to make promises that we normally would not make.

 **3.** Fear causes us to get very religious. Is there a fear that reigns in your life?

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**II. FEAR OF POPULARITY 38:17-23 *Indifference***

He was afraid of the people, but not afraid of God. What will people say? What about

 what God says?!

***A. Truth Speaks 17a***

Jeremiah gave the exact same message! God was speaking through Jeremiah.

 ***B. Truth Stands 17b-18***

God’s word doesn’t change. Zedekiah needs to read Ch. 39. Fear doesn’t change

 the message from God.

 ***C. Truth Shakes 19***

**1.** Zedekiah is more afraid of man than God. He is afraid of fallen Jerusalem.

 **2.** Fear expresses itself! *“Lest they deliver me”*

 **3.** Fear is fueled by pride and insecurity *“Lest they mock me”*

 ***D. Truth Separates 20-21***

**1.** God’s word is God speaking.

 **2.** Obey and live…refuse and be destroyed. That is the message of salvation today.

 **3.** Fear ignores and cannot willingly comply: Fear ignores the inevitable. Fear

 keeps us from obeying. Fear stops faith even when we know the outcome. Fear

 stops us from hearing.

  ***E. Truth Sees 22-23***

**1.** God knows where you will end up if you keep living the way you are. Politically

 and spiritually Zedekiah would be stuck in the mud.

 **2.** God knows the heart ache and heart break of not listening to Him.

 **3.** God knows that judgment awaits the Christ rejecting life.

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**III. FEAR OF POWER 38:24-26 *Insecurity***

Zedekiah was always looking over his shoulder…powerful people.

***A. Fear Silences 24***

**1.** Fear keeps quiet when it should speak up.

 **2.** Fear doesn’t want anyone to know you have been with Truth.

 **3.** Fear puts others in an awkward position.

 ***B. Fear Schemes 25***

**1.** If the anti-Babylonian group talks to you…comes to you…puts pressure on

 you… promises you…

 **2.** Fear wants others to lie for them. Fear is always planning. Fear has someone

 always out to get them. Fear is paranoid!

 **3.** It’s all about me…selfish…self-centered.

 ***C. Fear Speaks 26***

**1.** Fear is so afraid of the truth.

 **2.** Fear wants to keep the truth from others.

 **3.** Fear makes up its own form of truth which is not true. It’s a lie! Fear is less than

 honest.

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**IV. FEAR OF PERSON 38:27-28 *Inadequacy***

Jeremiah is tired, weary. He is very human. Jeremiah speaks in the flesh!

***A. His Person Is Confronted 27a*** Jeremiah was afraid.

 ***B. His Person Is Confessed 27b*** What he says is not totally truthful.

 ***C. His Person Is Confined 28*** Jeremiah is back in the court of the prison. **Not telling**

 **the truth didn’t get him anything.**

1. Jeremiah is a hero, but not a superhero. After 43 years, he didn’t want to return to Jonathan’s prison. He didn’t want to die there (37:20). In (38:15) He was afraid of king Zedekiah: *“If I give you an answer will you not kill me?”* He wanted Zedekiah to give him prophetic immunity. Even after this reassurance, Jeremiah was still afraid. He was so afraid he lied to save his neck.
2. It shows us that Jeremiah was human. Being human stinks! He had times of doubts, fears, weakness. *They shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord to deliver thee. (1:19)* He forgot God’s Word. Fear set in. He acted in the flesh and missed a golden opportunity to share God’s Word one more time.
3. Past victories are no guarantee for today. This is the last word that some of these would hear. No matter how spiritual we are fear can grip the greatest. Fear causes you to not tell the truth. Ch. 39: after 43 years Jeremiah is vindicated. Fear stops us from acting and one day it will be too late to act.

*“The only known cure for fear is faith”*

***Faith implies divine revelation.***

*Adjust your life…act according to God’s Word.*

**Have you placed your faith in Jesus Christ?**