

Out of the Mire



Jeremiah 38:1–13; 39:15–18 · This week: I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy, Jeremiah 31–33; 36–39; Lamentations 1; 3

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 44, “I Will Turn Their Mourning into Joy,” on Gospel Library**

START

The king’s officials lowered Jeremiah on ropes into a dungeon with no water, only mud, and he sank into it (Jeremiah 38:6).

READ TOGETHER

The officials said Jeremiah’s warnings were weakening the soldiers, and King Zedekiah let them do what they wanted (Jeremiah 38:4–5). The Hebrew word for this dungeon also means a cistern, one of the rock tanks from last week’s lesson on broken cisterns.

JEREMIAH 38:7–9

⁷Now when Ebed-melech 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; ⁸Ebed-melech went forth out of the king’s house, and spake to the king, saying, ⁹My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city.

JEREMIAH 38:12–13

¹²And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. ¹³So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Ebed-melech was an Ethiopian and a eunuch, a foreigner who served in the king’s house (verse 7). He went to the king at the city gate, in public, and said the officials had done evil (verse 9). He spoke up when it was dangerous to.

The king sent him with thirty men. Ebed-melech also brought old rags and had Jeremiah put them under his arms to cushion the ropes as the men pulled him up (verses 11 and 12). He was brave, and he was also kind.

Isaiah had promised foreigners and eunuchs who hold to the Lord’s covenant a place and a name that would never be cut off (Isaiah 56:3–5). Ebed-melech’s name is in the scriptures because of this day. The Lord promised to save his life, “because thou hast put thy trust in me” (Jeremiah 39:18).

A psalm of David praises the Lord in words that fit this day. “He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock” (Psalm 40:2). The Savior does that for anyone stuck in sin or sorrow, and he often sends someone like Ebed-melech to help.

TALK ABOUT IT

Ebed-melech spoke up for someone no one else would defend. Who at school or in our neighborhood might need someone to speak up for them, and what would it take?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Ebed-melech pulled Jeremiah out of the mud with ropes and old rags. When we stand up for someone, we do a small part of what the Savior does for us.