

# The King's Servant

Jeremiah 37 – 39

# The King's Servant    Introduction

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Born on July 14, 1919, in Scottsville, Virginia, [Eugene Allen](#) ... served under eight U.S. presidents, including Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy and Jimmy Carter.

He witnessed firsthand some of history's major events ... Known as having been a modest man, Allen is the subject of the 2013 film *The Butler*. He died in 2010 in Washington, D.C.

(from [Biography.com](#))

# The King's Servant Introduction

The Main Characters (in order of appearance):

- Zedekiah king of Judah
- Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (or “the Chaldeans”)
- Jeremiah the prophet
- Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, servant of King Zedekiah. His name actually translates as “King's Servant.”

# Jeremiah's Warning 37:1-10

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- **Jeremiah** is faithful to speak the truth.
- **Zedekiah** generally does not listen to it.
- His interactions with **Jeremiah** – such as asking for prayer – reveal he is a deeply conflicted person.

# Jeremiah's Imprisonment

37:11-21

# Jeremiah's Imprisonment 37:11-21

- The sentry and the officials falsely accuse, beat and imprison **Jeremiah**.
- He continues to speak the truth.
- **Zedekiah** wants to hear **Jeremiah**, treats him reasonably, but will never really listen to his message.

Jeremiah in the Cistern

38:1-6

# Jeremiah in the Cistern 38:1-6

- **Jeremiah** continues to speak the truth and now suffers for it even more.
- **Zedekiah** reveals his conflicted nature. He fears his officials. He does not defend **Jeremiah**.

Ebed-melech to the Rescue

38:7-13

# Ebed-melech to the Rescue 38:7-13

- Ebed-melech is the hero of this story.
- He is a foreigner, but fears the God of Israel more than most Jews at this time.
- Zedekiah gives him permission to rescue Jeremiah.

# Jeremiah's Next Warning 38:14-28

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- **Jeremiah** keeps proclaiming God's message.
- **Zedekiah** reveals his fears and inner conflicts.
- **Jeremiah** keeps the king's confidence by sticking to the story about his earlier request – which may in fact be true.
  - (In other words, we don't have to worry about Jeremiah being a liar here.)

Jerusalem Falls 39:1-10

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- **Nebuchadnezzar** does what he does best. He conquers, kills and destroys.
- **Zedekiah** tries to escape, but fails. His worst fears eventually come to pass.

The Servants Survive 39:11-18

# The Servants Survive 39:11-18

- Nebuchadnezzar shows mercy to Jeremiah.
- The Lord shows mercy to Ebed-melech.

The King's Servant      Conclusions

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- Similar to White House butler Eugene Allen, **Ebed-melech** was a servant of the king.
- Even his name says that.
- Let's see what we can learn from his life.

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

- Ebed-melech served the Lord in a foreign country.
- Ebed-melech served the Lord in an environment where most people didn't.
- Ebed-melech used his position near the king as a place of influence.
- Ebed-melech looked out for someone who had trouble looking out for himself.

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- **Ebed-melech** served the Lord in a foreign country.

**1 Peter 1:1-2 (ESV)**

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

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## Philippians 2:14-16 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> Do all things without grumbling or disputing, <sup>15</sup> that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, <sup>16</sup> holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

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- **Ebed-melech** used his position near the king as a place of influence.

**Hebrews 4:16** (ESV)

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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**Matthew 25:31-40** (ESV)

<sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

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**Matthew 25:31-40** (ESV)

<sup>33</sup> And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

- **Ebed-melech** looked out for someone who had trouble looking out for himself.

**Matthew 25:31-40** (ESV)

<sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

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**Matthew 25:31-40** (ESV)

<sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

- **Ebed-melech** looked out for someone who had trouble looking out for himself.

**Matthew 25:31-40** (ESV)

<sup>40</sup> And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

# The King's Servant      Conclusions

- Finally, don't miss this fact:
- Ebed-melech was a servant of the king – and so are you.
- You have freer access to the King of Kings than Eugene Allen had to eight different presidents.