

# THE FAITH OF EBED-MELECH

JEREMIAH 38:7-18

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**EBED-MELECH** story is a remarkable example of a, "**Forgotten hero**" whose small act of courage had a significant impact.

The story of **Ebed-Melech** is found in Jeremiah 38 and 39 of the Old Testament, set during the final, chaotic days of the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (c. 588-586 B.C.E.). He was a Cushite (Ethiopian) foreigner and a eunuch serving as a trusted royal official in the palace of King Zedekiah.

Ebed-Melech serves as a powerful example of a faithful "outsider" who excelled in character when insiders failed. Ebed-Melech was an African (Cushite) servant in King Zedekiah's palace who risked his life to rescue the prophet Jeremiah from a muddy cistern during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem (Jeremiah 38-39). As a foreigner and eunuch, he demonstrated remarkable courage and compassion by **The Story (Jeremiah 38:7-13)** corrupt officials to do what was right, ultimately earning God's protection for his trust.

Ebed-Melech was a Cushite (Ethiopian) eunuch and trusted servant in King Zedekiah's palace who saved the prophet Jeremiah from dying in a muddy, waterless cistern around 588-586 B.C.E. during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem. He courageously risked his life to approach the king, decrying the officials' evil actions against Jeremiah, and was later rewarded by God with protection during the fall of the city for his faith.

**Compassionate Rescue:** He took 30 men and provided worn-out clothes and rags for Jeremiah to pad his armpits, showing thoughtful care for the prophet's comfort during the rescue.

**Divine Reward:** Because he dared to stand alone for truth, God sent Jeremiah to tell Ebed-Melech that his life would be spared during the destruction of Jerusalem, explicitly because "*you have put your trust in Me*" (**Jeremiah 39:18**).

**The Rescue:** After learning that officials threw Jeremiah into a deep pit to starve, **Ebed-melech obtained the king's permission and took 30 men to rescue the**

**prophet.** He used old rags and worn-out clothes to cushion the ropes under Jeremiah's arms, protecting him during the extraction.

Because Ebed-Melech trusted in God, the Lord instructed Jeremiah to tell him he would be spared from the Babylonian destruction, promising "you will not fall by the sword but will escape with your life".

As a foreigner (Cushite) and a servant, Ebed-Melech exemplifies faith, courage, and compassion, acting righteously when native Judean leaders did not.

#### **LESSONS FROM EBED-MELECH:**

##### **1. COURAGE OVER CONVENIENCE:**

He risked his own safety and position to stand up for an unpopular truth.

##### **2. COMPASSION IN DETAIL**

He did not just rescue Jeremiah; he did so thoughtfully, taking care to minimize the prophet's pain (the "rags and old clothes").

#### **CONCLUSION**

#### **HYMN**

**512**

#### **FAITH OF OUR FATHERS**

##### **3. COURAGE IN ADVERSITY:**

He demonstrated that one person, even an outsider or servant, can stand up against corrupt authority to defend what is right.

##### **4. ACTIVE COMPASSION:**

His faith was active, moving beyond pity to tangible, risky action ("rope holder") to help the oppressed.

##### **5. GOD SEES AND REMEMBERS:**

The story highlights that God notices acts of faithfulness, especially when no one else does.

##### **6. FAITH OVER FEAR:**

He chose to trust God and act, despite the potential consequences of defying the princes of Judah.

##### **7. GOD NOTICES OBSCURITY:**

Even though he is a minor figure, God recognized Ebed-Melech's trust and rewarded him personally.

##### **8. FAITHFULNESS IN UNLIKELY PEOPLE:**

God often uses "ordinary" or marginalized people to accomplish His work, rather than the powerful.