Prelude & Prayer

* **Joke on Stubbornness** 
  + 4 Evangelist while away in a summer retreat had a theological argument, with the three young Evangelist siding against the oldest Evangelist.
* **This is what we call in Chinese “A dead chicken kicking the pot’s lid!”**
  + This means that the chicken is so stubborn that… There is a lot of truth to it! Isn’t there?
* **Right now, I want you guys to think of a person that is stubborn!**
  + Some of you may be thinking: my wife, my husband, my children, my dad/mom, or my siblings!
  + But wait! How many of us saw an image of ourselves? We hate to admit this!
  + My mom always tells me that I am stubborn! - “A dead cow only shows 1 side of its neck”.
* **There are two types of Stubbornness – the Good and the Bad type!**
  + Good if we are stubborn for God, for the faith we believe in; that we will not wavier for righteousness, for obeying God’s, for walking in his way!
  + Bad if we are stubborn about our own ways & will not change!

“Obduracy” –Jeremiah 36

* **In the Bible, stubbornness is also expressed as** a hardened heart, hardened neck, stiff-necked, and self-willed. There are probably more terms which you can find.
  + Obduracy means - *stubbornly persistent in wrong doing, unrepentant sinner, Hardened in feelings, and resistant to persuasion.*
  + Obduracy causes a lot of unnecessary pains and suffering in our lives, it invites serious judgments from God. All of these can be avoided if we are willing to turn from our ways!
  + *Chinese proverbs:* **江山易改, 本性難移**
    - It doesn’t mean that there is no hope! That we should change.
    - By the Grace of God, by His words, by His correction our stubborn personality can be changed.
* **We will look at how a King reacted toward God’s words, His admonishments.**
  + We will examine how this king responded and learn from this king on how we should not response.

Overview

* **The chapter opens up where Jeremiah was commanded by God to write down** **His judgment against Judah in a scroll.** **And then to pronounce it to His people!**
  + That Judah will be destroyed and her people will be carried off into a foreign land because of their sins and disobedience.
* **Jeremiah commanded Baruch the scribe to read the words that God had given to him** in the house of the Lord. Jeremiah was not allowed to go to the house of the Lord.

Stubbornness Causes Us to “Do Nothing”

**Jeremiah 36:9-10** And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem. Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD’S house, in the ears of all the people.

* **Baruch read the book in the house of the Lord during a fast. So the place was full of people**
  + The word phrase “in the ears” is use 8 times here!
  + This means that we are to perk up our ears and listen intently when God’s word is read/proclaim.
* **What where the reaction of the people in the Lord’s house?** Nothing significant that was recorded!
  + Some may say “Oh I heard that before!” “I’ll believe it when I see it!” or “God will never do that to us, nothing will happen. God is bluffing.”
  + Some may have given some thoughts; “wow! I wonder if there is any truth to what he is saying”.
  + Some may say “You may be right, but you know what, I don’t care, Not my concern!”
* **To be indifferent, to ignore, and to dismiss God’s warning without even giving any thoughts about *it is to reject God’s words, His admonishments.***
  + *But it is more than just God’s correction/warning we are rejecting!*
    - It is to reject His Mercy and Grace towards us.
    - It is to reject a chance God is giving us to repent and to turn back to Him.
    - It is to reject His forgiveness of our sin.
* **To reject God’s admonishments is *to accept the punishments that God has proclaimed towards us*.**
  + **ILLU:** A person who smokes and refuses the urging of doctors and others to stop is to accept the consequence of facing those dreaded lung diseases later on in life, even losing his/her life.
  + **ILLU:** Take the recent focus on the traumatic damages to the brain when NFL players suffer concussions. Will the players heed the warning and stop playing? Probably not. This means they are accepting the possibility of coming down with many dreaded brain diseases later in life.

Exhortation

**Jeremiah 36:11 - 20** – When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, Then he went down into the king’s house, into the scribe’s chamber…”

* **Michaiah heard the whole book! And he took Action!**
  + He didn’t dismiss God’s words as unimportant news! He *took God’s word seriously*.
    - How serious do we take God’s word? Each Sunday and you and I hear His words?
  + He went down into the king’s house, to inform the princes of Judah. All the senior officials or important officials.
  + They then verified the source of the information, whether it is true! V18 – Jeremiah spoke and I wrote it down! It was from God’s prophet, it is God’s words.
* **When we hear God’s words, His admonishments, His exhortations…**
  + Take it seriously!
  + Verify in the Bible that it is the truth!
  + Take appropriate actions!

Stubbornness Causes Us to “Show Contempt”

**Jeremiah 36:21-23 “**So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe’s chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.”

* **To show contempt is to disregard (ignore), disrespect, disdain (scorn) God’s word!**
* **He stopped the reading / He stopped listening** 
  + After hearing only 3 or 4 columns, He doesn’t want to hear it anymore!
    - “I don’t want to hear it anymore!” “I know it is only going to judge me, accuse me of wrong doing!” “That I should repent, turn from my ways!”
    - The king is really saying that God has got it all wrong!
  + By refusing to hear God’s admonitions;
    - He is refusing to listen to instructions that will save him from lots of pain and sufferings!
* **Destroyed God’s word - Cut the scroll with a pen knife and burned the scrolled. He showed no fear, reverence for God.** V24 – “Yet they were not afraid”.
  + I’ll show you what I think of your words! He cut up God’s word! He didn’t just cut one or two pieces; he did so “Until all the roll was consumed in the fire!”
  + This is to say that God’s word is a bunch of baloney. False accusations to defame & dishonor me!
  + God’s word cannot be destroyed – Jesus said “Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away!”
    - **ILLU**: Parking Ticket! You can rip it up, you can throw it away! You can burn it! But you know what? You can’t burn the digital copy in their system’s database! That fine will come!
* **Refused to listen to others**
  + **Jeremiah 36:25 -** Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.
  + I am right! You are all wrong! You guys are just all ganging up on me!
  + If a fool will not listen to God; will he listen to the wisdom and urging of others? No! Stubborn people do not want to listen to anyone!
* **What the King did was not only contempt, but selfish.** 
  + He destroyed God’s word so that others will not be able to read/hear it; there are some that might be convicted and be willing to turn back towards God.

Exhortation

* **Michaiah and the princes** showed reverence and respect for God’s words.  ***They fear*** the impending judgment of God!
  + They preserve God’s prophet (told them to hide). They urged the King not to destroy God’s word.
* **When you hear God’s words, His admonishments, His exhortations…**
  + Show fear and reverence for God’s word. Take every effort to preserve God’s word.
    - Memorize them. Edge them in our hearts that we not forget. It is health to our bones.
  + **Proverbs 7:2-3** “Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

Stubbornness Causes Us to “Show No Remorse”

**Jeremiah 36:24 –** Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

* **Renting their garments is a sign of remorse and sorrow!** 
  + But after destroying God’s word, they show no remorse at all!
  + The king was not content after destroying God’s written words, but he wanted to destroy the source!
* **He wants to take vengeance on Jeremiah!**
  + The King wanted to arrest Jeremiah and Baruch! The purpose is to punish the wrong doers!

Possibly have them killed or thrown in jail.

* + You see, it is not the King that has committed sin; it is Jeremiah, he is the trouble maker! Causing disorder in the kingdom! Spread false rumors!
* **What the King is doing, is challenging God!** 
  + But what he is really doing is asking God for more judgment instead!
  + “Lord, I want extra fudge on my Sunday!” “I want extra cream in my latte!”
* **Look what the King got on top of the God’s original judgments!**
  + No one from his line will be king, his line will be broken.
  + He will not get a kingly burial, but instead, his body will be thrown in the field. (***Dishonor***)
  + His children’s, even his servants will suffer all the judgment that the Lord had warned about.
  + Even after this added judgment - “…but they hearkened not.”

Exhortation

* **When we hear God’s words, His admonishments, His exhortations…**
  + Do not resist the Holy Spirit’s conviction
    - **Acts 7:51** - Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye.
  + Let God’s word convict our hearts and repent! Why? Because stubbornness is a sin.
* **Samuel tells us that Stubbornness *is as* iniquity and *idolatry*!**

**I Samuel 15:23 – “**For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry…”

* + Why idolatry? Idolatry is to give our adoration, reverence, honor, and glory to the idols instead of God.
  + In the case of stubbornness, we are giving these things to ourselves and not God!
  + Stubbornness is all about us! It is a selfish, self-center sin!

Conclusion

**Final Exhortation**

* **Remember Stubbornness does not only affect yourself**, **but it affects others:**
  + Your family, your spouse, your children, your parents, your siblings, your friends!
  + Don’t bring them down into perdition (destruction) with you because of your stubbornness.
* **When we are faced with God’s conviction, admonition, or correction, let us not be stubborn, but instead…**
  + Take God’s word seriously, let us take action.
  + Show fear and reverence for God’s word, edged them in our hearts.
  + Yield to the Holy Spirit’s conviction and ask God for forgiveness.
* **All of us can be pretty stubborn at times and can lead us to screw up our lives pretty bad at times!** 
  + God is always ready to forgive us of our stubbornness, our sins

**Jeremiah 36:3** - It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

* + Confess our sin to the Lord! Turn from our evil way! And God is faith & just to forgive us of our sin!
  + Praise the Lord for His mercy, for His long suffering towards us, for His forgiveness!