

RAGS, ROPES, AND STRANGERS

Jeremiah 38:6-16 (NASB95)

⁶ Then they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchijah the king's son, which was in the court of the guardhouse; and they let Jeremiah down with ropes. Now in the cistern there was no water but only mud, and Jeremiah sank into the mud. ⁷ But Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch, while he was in the king's palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. Now the king was sitting in the Gate of Benjamin; ⁸ and Ebed-melech went out from the king's palace and spoke to the king, saying, ⁹ "My lord the king, these men have acted wickedly in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet whom they have cast into the cistern; and he will die right where he is because of the famine, for there is no more bread in the city." ¹⁰ Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, "Take thirty men from here under your authority and bring up Jeremiah the prophet from the cistern before he dies." ¹¹ So Ebed-melech took the men under his authority and went into the king's palace to a *place* beneath the storeroom and took from there worn-out clothes and worn-out rags and let them down by ropes into the cistern to Jeremiah. ¹² Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, "Now put these worn-out clothes and rags under your armpits under the ropes"; and Jeremiah did so. ¹³ So they pulled Jeremiah up with the ropes and lifted him out of the cistern, and Jeremiah stayed in the court of the guardhouse. ¹⁴ Then King Zedekiah sent and had Jeremiah the prophet brought to him at the third entrance that is in the house of the LORD; and the king said to Jeremiah, "I am going to ask you something; do not hide anything from me." ¹⁵ Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I tell you, will you not certainly put me to death? Besides, if I give you advice, you will not listen to me." ¹⁶ But King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah in secret saying, "As the LORD lives, who made this life for us, surely I will not put you to death nor will I give you over to the hand of these men who are seeking your life."

1 Chronicles 16:22 (NASB95)

²² "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm."

1. There is often a price to pay in presenting the Word of God with integrity.
2. The world can be critical and cruel to those who openly demonstrate their faith in God.
3. Jeremiah prophesied news to Israel and the king that was not pleasing to them and which foretold their capture by the Babylonians.
4. He was accused of treason and ordered thrown into a dry well by the king.**
5. One of the least in the city, an Ethiopian, overheard the decree and appealed to the king for Jeremiah's release.
 - a. **God will use people without notoriety** to be a blessing to His Anointed.
 - b. **God will use what others have thrown away** to add value to His Anointed.
 - c. **God will add sufficient help** to change the circumstances of His Anointed.