

Jer. 36, Jehoiakim Rejects the Scroll
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Overview

1. Hook: How do you react to bad news? Say, the message that you have been declared a political enemy and the government is looking for you. You may mourn over it; you may take steps to avoid capture. One thing doesn't make sense: shoot the messenger and deny the message. Yet many people take exactly that action when they hear God's condemnation of their sin. Instead of acting responsibly on that information, they deny it and reject the messenger. Today, we learn of a Hebrew king who acted just that way.

2. Structure of 34-39

Four stories symmetrically arranged, with an epilog describing the fall of the city:

	King	Subject	Lesson
a) 34	Zed	Covenant	Imperfect obedience
b) 35	J'kim	Rechabites	Perfect obedience
c) 36	J'kim	Scroll	Consistent Persecution
d) 37f	Zed	Prison	Inconsistent Persecution
e) 39	Neb		

3. Like ch. 35, ch. 36 presents a contrast. In ch. 35, the contrast was explicit: the obedience of the Rechabites contrasted with the disobedience of Judah. Today, the contrast is implicit, between two kings of Israel: Jehoiakim, who rejected the word of the Lord through Jeremiah, and Josiah, less than 20 years earlier, who accepted the word of the Lord.

Though Jer does not mention Josiah's experience explicitly, he has organized this chapter to remind us of it at every turn. Thus we will begin by reading Josiah's story, then go through this chapter and note the comparisons and contrasts.

4. Useful dates--25:3 is critical here

- a) 627, Jer's revelations begin, 13th year of Josiah (25:3)
- b) 622 in his 18th year, Josiah discovers the book of the law
- c) 604, 23 years into Jer's ministry and 18 years after Josiah's reform, 4th year of J'kim, the date of this episode (36:1).

d) *Application*: How quickly people fall away from the truth. Here, less than 20 years mark the shift from national revival to official rejection of the truth.

A. Josiah: 2 Kings 22:3-23:3

B. 1-4, The Writing of the Book

The book with which Josiah was concerned was the book of Moses' law, probably Deuteronomy. Jehoiakim is confronted with a written record of Jer's prophecies. Notice "against" in v.2; the emphasis here is on the prophecies of doom, not those of promise (which Jer recorded separately in 30:2).

C. 5-10, Public Reading in the Temple, 2 Kings 23:1-3

Jer begins where Josiah ended, with a public reading of the revelation. And here we see in a nutshell the difference between the two accounts. They move in opposite directions.

1. Josiah took a hidden revelation and sought to make it public, to bring it to the attention of the people for their edification and instruction. *Motto:* Ps. 68:11, "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it."
2. Jehoiakim sought to stifle and hide a revelation that had been in public proclamation for 23 years, and now is written. *Motto:* Rom. 1:18, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [lit. suppress] the truth in unrighteousness."
3. *Application:* You are either a publisher or a suppressor. Your life will either make the hidden truths of God manifest before men, or will hide further from them what little they can already see. Are you a Josiah, or a Jehoiakim?

D. 11-18, Discovery and Review by Officials, 2 Kings 22:8

We should note *who* these men are, and *how* they respond to what they hear.

1. Who are they?
What is particularly interesting is the number of families that participate in both events.
 - a) Hilkiyah, the high priest under Josiah (2 Kings 22:8), is probably Jer's father (cf. Jer. 1:1).
 - b) Hilkiyah first disclosed the book to Shaphan the scribe (2 Kings 22:8); it was in the chamber of Shaphan's son Gemariah that Baruch first read the scroll to the people (v.10), and it was Gemariah's son Michaiah, the grandson of Shaphan, who first brought the scroll to the attention of the other officials.
 - c) Another of Hilkiyah's associates was Achbor (2 Kings 22:14); his son Elnathan is one of the officials who review Jer's prophecies.
2. How do they respond?
Favorably.
 - a) 16, with fear, because of the judgments in the message. This is in explicit contrast with the response of the King and his

court in 24, "yet they were not afraid."

- b) 17, with discernment. They are careful to verify that these are indeed the words of the prophet, whose divine authority they have learned to respect, and not the treasonous rantings of some newcomer.
- c) 16, with boldness. They offer to take these words to the King. That is their duty, as princes, yet one can see that they might shrink from being bearers of bad news. Yet they realize that the king must hear this message.

3. *Application*: There is a connection between who these men are and how they receive Jer's words. Perhaps this is an illustration of the value of a godly heritage. Many are opposed to Jer, but these men, perhaps because of what they have learned through participants in the revival under Josiah, are open to his message.

E. 19, Their Advice to Baruch, 2 Kings 22:14

Cf. Elnathan's role in 26:22. Previously, J'kim had sent him to Egypt to retrieve another prophet, Uriah, and Elnathan had done so, perhaps under the impression that the king was interested in what he had to say, but then the king had put Uriah to death. Now he is more cautious. He does not want Jer to come to the same fate, and so urges him to go into hiding.

This section contrasts with a later verse in 2 Kings, where Josiah sends his counselors to find Huldah to elucidate the meaning of the scroll. There, the officials seek out an obscure prophetess; here, they hide a prominent one.

F. 20-21, Reading the Scroll to the King, 2 Kings 22:9-10

In both cases, the officials bring the scroll to the king. But his response is very different in the two cases.

G. 22-26, The King's Response, 2 Kings 22:11-13

This is where the contrasts between the accounts bristle.

- 1. Josiah listened to the entire book (2K10,11). J'kim hears only three or four columns of the scroll before ordering the scribe to cut it to pieces with the pen knife kept for sharpening quills, and burn it in the fire (23). The officials who brought the scroll to the king pleaded with him not to do this, but he does not hear them (25).
- 2. Josiah tore his garments in mourning at what he heard (2K11), and the officials of Jer's day feared (16). J'kim and his servants do neither (v.24). They deny the sins that Jer has enumerated, and shrug off the judgments of which he warns.
- 3. Josiah sent his men to learn more about the warnings (2K13), and as a result they sought out Huldah the prophetess (14). J'kim seeks to arrest Jer and Baruch, no doubt intending to treat them

as he had Uriah, but the Lord hides them from him (26).

4. *Application:* Think carefully about J'kim's response. Why is he so angry personally against what he hears, to the point of refusing to listen to all of it, and of destroying the scroll so violently? In his heart, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, has struck home. He knows he is guilty and that judgment is coming, and the only alternative to repentance is rejection. Persecution for the sake of the gospel is unpleasant, but it brings this comfort, that the message has at least been understood. Those who hear the gospel, smile politely, and do not accept it, have not fully come to grips with what it is saying. It condemns all men of sin, and warns all of God's eternal judgment--and those who really understand that message can respond only by violent rejection or by pleading God's mercy in Christ. May God help us to make the gospel clear enough so that we get one or the other of these responses, not a vanilla smile that is friendly but shows the message hasn't gotten through.

H. **29-31, The Prophetic Commentary, 2 Kings 22:15-20**

J'kim, unlike Josiah, did not seek prophetic elaboration of what he has heard, but he gets it nonetheless. It is instructive to compare Jer's comments with those of Huldah 18 years earlier. She confirmed that the judgments would fall on the inhabitants of the city (2K16-17), but carefully singles out the king for divine honor because he is yielded to the word of God (2K18-20). By contrast, Jer insists that king and people will alike suffer God's judgment.

Application: You can hide your head in the sand and ignore the warnings of judgment, but that won't hold off the coming storm of divine anger one moment, and in fact will make it even more severe when it finally strikes.

I. **27-28,32, The Rewriting of the Book**

What has J'kim accomplished by his rejection of God's Word? He has not evaded the judgment; he cannot evade that. Perhaps he thinks that he has at least eliminated the annoyance of Jer's prophecies against him. That bothersome book is gone--and yet it is not, for the Lord here recreates it! He enables Jer to recall everything that he wrote before, and many more things besides, doubtless including the events of this chapter that only intensify the condemnation of J'kim.

The entire chapter is a beautiful illustration of Isa. 40:8, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Kings and nations may set themselves against it, but when God has spoken, no one can silence him.

Application: Let us resolve never to set ourselves to the futile task of rejecting God's Word, but rather to seek out what he has to say to us and to obey it with all our hearts.

Hymn: The Bible Stands. **Psalm:** 19; 119

Analysis

36, The scroll written, burned by J'qim, and rewritten sequence p:

- A. execution p: YHWH tells Jer to write the scroll
NB: Commands in the book for Jer. to write: 30:2; 36:2; 36:28. So need to explain the relation between the book of 36:2 and the book of consolation in 30:2.
1. command: quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:1 WA/Y:HIY B.A/\$.FNFH HF/R:BIY(IT LI/YHOWYFQIYM B.EN-YO)\$IY.FHW. MELEK: Y:HW.DFH HFYFH HA/D.FBFR HA/Z.EH)EL-YIR:M:YFHW. M"/)"T Y:HWFH L"/)MOR
 - b) quote:
 - 1) 36:2 QAX-L/:KF M:GIL.AT-S"PER
 - 2) W:/KFTAB:T.F)"LEY/HF)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM):A\$ER-D.IB.AR:T.IY)"LEY/KF (AL-YI&:RF)"L W:/(AL-Y:HW.DFH W:/(AL-K.FL-HA/G.OWYIM MI/Y.OWM D.IB.AR:T.IY)"LEY/KF MI/YM"Y YO)\$IY.FHW. W:/(AD HA/Y.OWM HA/Z.EH cf. 30:4, ")el yhwdh w)el yi&ra)el"
 - 3) 36:3)W.LAY YI\$:M:(W. B."YT Y:HW.DFH)"T K.FL-HF/RF(FH):A\$ER)FNOKIY XO\$"B LA/(:A&OWT L/FHEM
 - 4) L:MA(AN YF\$W.BW.)IY\$ MI/D.AR:K./OW HF/RF(FH W:/SFLAX:T.IY LA/(:AWON/FM W./L:/XA+.F)T/FM S
 2. execution: seq p
 - a) 36:4 WA/Y.IQ:RF) YIR:M:YFHW.)ET-B.FRW.K: B.EN-N"RIY.FH
 - b) WA/Y.IK:T.OB B.FRW.K: MI/P.IY YIR:M:YFHW.)"T K.FL-D.IB:R"Y Y:HWFH):A\$ER-D.IB.ER)"LFY/W (AL-M:GIL.AT-S"PER
- B. execution p: Jer sends Baruch to read the scroll.
1. command: quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:5 WA/Y:CAW.EH YIR:M:YFHW.)ET-B.FRW.K: L"/)MOR
 - 1) quote:
 - a>):ANIY (FCW.R
 - b> LO))W.KAL LF/BOW) B."YT Y:HWFH
 - c> 36:6 W./BF)TF)AT.FH
 - d> W:/QFRF)TF BA/M.:GIL.FH):A\$ER-K.FTAB:T.F-MI/P.IY)ET-D.IB:R"Y Y:HWFH B.:/)FZ:N"Y HF/(FM B."YT Y:HWFH B.:/YOWM COWM
 - e> W:/GAM B.:/)FZ:N"Y KFL-Y:HW.DFH HA/B.F)IYM M"/(FR"Y/HEM T.IQ:RF)/"M
 - f> 36:7)W.LAY T.IP.OL T.:XIN.FT/FM LI/P:N"Y Y:HWFH
 - g> W:/YF\$UBW.)IY\$ MI/D.AR:K./OW HF/RF(FH
 - h> K.IY-GFDOWL HF/)AP W:/HA/X"MFH):A\$ER-D.IB.ER Y:HWFH)EL-HF/(FM HA/Z.EH
 2. execution: ampl p
 - a) summary: 36:8 WA/Y.A(A& B.FRW.K: B.EN-N"RIY.FH K.:/KOL):A\$ER-CIW.FHW. YIR:M:YFHW. HA/N.FBIY) LI/Q:RO) BA/S."PER D.IB:R"Y Y:HWFH B."YT Y:HOWFH S
 - b) ampl: sequence p
 - 1) setting: 36:9 WA/Y:HIY BA/\$.FNFH HA/X:AMI\$IYT

LI/YHOWYFQIYM B.EN-YO) \$IY.FHW. MELEK:-Y:HW.DFH B.A/XODE\$
 HA/T.:\$I(IY QFR:)W. COWM LI/P:N"Y Y:HWFH K.FL-HF/(FM
 B.I/YRW.\$FLFIM W:/KFL-HF/(FM HA/B.F)IYM M"/(FR"Y Y:HW.DFH
 B.I/YRW.\$FLFIM

- 2) 36:10 WA/Y.IQ:RF) BFRW.K: B.A/S."PER)ET-D.IB:R"Y
 YIR:M:YFHW. B."YT Y:HWFH B.:/LI\$:K.AT G.:MAR:YFHW.
 BEN-\$FPFN HA/S.OP"R B.E/XFC"R HF/(EL:YOWN P.ETAX \$A(AR
 B."YT-Y:HWFH HE/XFDF\$ B.:/)FZ:N"Y K.FL-HF/(FM

C. Sequence p: The scroll comes to the attention of the princes.

1. 36:11 WA/Y.I\$:MA(MIKFY:HW. BEN-G.:MAR:YFHW. BEN-\$FPFN
)ET-K.FL-D.IB:R"Y Y:HWFH M"/(AL HA/S."PER
2. 36:12 WA/Y."RED B."YT-HA/M.ELEK: (AL-LI\$:K.AT HA/S.OP"R
3. W:/HIN."H-\$FM K.FL-HA/&.FRIYM YOW\$:BIYM)ELIY\$FMF(HA/S.OP"R
 W./D:LFYFHW. BEN-\$:MA(:YFHW. W:/)EL:NFTFN B.EN-(AK:B.OWR
 W./G:MAR:YFHW. BEN-\$FPFN W:/CID:QIY.FHW. BEN-X:ANAN:YFHW.
 W:/KFL-HA/&.FRIYM
4. 36:13 WA/Y.AG."D L/FHEM MIKFY:HW.)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM):A\$ER
 \$FM"(A B.I/Q:RO) BFRW.K: B.A/S."PER B.:/)FZ:N"Y HF/(FM

D. execution p: princes command Baruch to bring the scroll.

1. command: quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:14 WA/Y.I\$:L:XW. KFL-HA/&.FRIYM)EL-B.FR.W.K:
)ET-Y:HW.DIY B.EN-N:TAN:YFHW. B.EN-\$ELEM:YFHW. BEN-K.W.\$IY
 L"/)MOR
 - b) quote:
 - 1) HA/M.:GIL.FH):A\$ER QFRF)TF B./FH. B.:/)FZ:N"Y HF/(FM
 QFXEN.FH B:/YFD/:KF
 - 2) WF/L/"K:
2. execution:
 - a) WA/Y.IQ.AX B.FR.W.K: B.EN-N"RIY.FHW.)ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH
 B.:/YFD/OW
 - b) WA/Y.FBO)):AL"Y/HEM

E. execution p: The princes tell Baruch to read the scroll.

1. command: quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:15 WA/Y.O)M:RW.)"LFY/W
 - b) quote:
 - 1) \$"B NF)
 - 2) W./Q:RF)/EN.FH B.:/)FZ:N"Y/NW.
2. execution: WA/Y.IQ:RF) BFRW.K: B.:/)FZ:N"Y/HEM

F. Interchange p: The princes interview Baruch.

Contrast the helpful attitude of these princes, who seek to preserve the prophet from the wicked king, from the plotting princes of Zedekiah who seek to harm the prophet.

1. 36:16 WA/Y:HIY K.:/\$FM:(/FM)ET-K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM P.FX:ADW.)IY\$
)EL-R"/"HW.
2. quote p
 - a) quote f: WA/Y.O)M:RW.)EL-B.FR.W.K:
 - b) quote: HAG."YD NAG.IYD LA/M.ELEK:)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM
 HF/)"L.EH

3. quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:17 W:/)ET-B.FRW.K: \$F):ALW. L"/)MOR
 - b) quote: HAG.ED-NF) L/FNW.)"YK: K.FTAB:T.F
)ET-K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM HF/)"L.EH MI/P.IY/W
4. quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:18 WA/Y.O)MER L/FHEM B.FRW.K:
 - b) quote:
 - 1) MI/P.IY/W YIQ:RF))"L/AY)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM HF/)"L.EH
 - 2) WA/):ANIY K.OT"B (AL-HA/S."PER B.A/D.:YOW P
5. quote p
 - a) quote f: 36:19 WA/Y.O)M:RW. HA/&.FRIYM)EL-B.FRW.K:
 - b) quote:
 - 1) L"K:
 - 2) HIS.FT"R)AT.FH W:/YIR:M:YFHW.
 - 3) W:/)IY\$)AL-Y"DA()"YPOH)AT.EM

G. Sequence p: The king hears and destroys the scroll.

1. The King hears the scroll.
 - a) 36:20 WA/Y.FBO)W.)EL-HA/M.ELEK: XFC"RFH
 - b) W:/)ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH HIP:QIDW. B.:/LI\$:K.AT):ELIY\$FMF(
 HA/S.OP"R
 - c) WA/Y.AG.IYDW. B.:/)FZ:N"Y HA/M.ELEK:)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM
 - d) 36:21 WA/Y.I\$:LAX HA/M.ELEK:)ET-Y:HW.DIY LF/QAXAT
)ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH
 - e) WA/Y.IQ.FX/EHF MI/L.I\$:K.AT):ELIY\$FMF(HA/S.OP"R
 - f) WA/Y.IQ:RF)/EHF Y:HW.DIY B.:/)FZ:N"Y HA/M.ELEK: W./B:/)FZ:N"Y
 K.FL-HA/&.FRIYM HF/(OM:DIYM M"/(AL HA/M.ELEK:
2. Destruction of the Scroll
 - a) 36:22 W:/HA/M.ELEK: YOW\$"B B."YT HA/XOREP B.A/XODE\$
 HA/T.:\$IY(IY
 - b) W:/)ET-HF/)FX L:/PFNFY/W M:BO(FRET
 - c) temporal p
 - 1) time: 36:23 WA/Y:HIY K.I/Q:ROW) Y:HW.DIY \$FLO\$ D.:LFTOWT
 W:/)AR:B.F(FH
 - 2) text:
 - a> YIQ:RF(/EHF B.:/TA(AR HA/S.OP"R
 - b> W:/HA\$:L"K:)EL-HF/)"\$):A\$ER)EL-HF/)FX (AD-T.OM
 K.FL-HA/M.:GIL.FH (AL-HF/)"\$):A\$ER (AL-HF/)FX
 - d) 36:24 W:/LO) PFX:ADW.
 - e) W:/LO) QFR:(W.)ET-B.IG:D"Y/HEM HA/M.ELEK: W:/KFL-(:ABFDFY/W
 HA/\$.OM:(IYM)"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM HF/)"L.EH
 - f) 36:25 W:/GAM)EL:NFTFN W./D:LFYFHW. W./G:MAR:YFHW. HIP:G.I(W.
 BA/M.ELEK: L:/BIL:T.IY &:ROP)ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH
 - g) W:/LO) \$FMA():AL"Y/HEM
3. The King and the Prophet
 - a) 36:26 WA/Y:CAW.EH HA/M.ELEK:)ET-Y:RAX:M:)"L B.EN-HA/M.ELEK:
 W:/)ET-&:RFYFHW. BEN-(AZ:RIY)"L W:/)ET-\$ELEM:YFHW.
 B.EN-(AB:D:)"L LF/QAXAT)ET-B.FRW.K: HA/S.OP"R W:/)"T
 YIR:M:YFHW. HA/N.FBIY)
 - b) WA/Y.AS:T.IR/"M Y:HWFH S

H. execution p: YHWH tells Jer to recreate the scroll, and add additional curses against J'qim.

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1. command: quote p
a) quote f: 36:27 WA/Y:HIY D:BAR-Y:HWFH )EL-YIR:M:YFHW. )AX:AR"Y
&:ROP HA/M.ELEK: )ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH W:/)ET-HA/D.:BFRIYM ):A$ER
K.FTAB B.FRW.K: MI/P.IY YIR:M:YFHW. L"/)MOR
b) quote:
1) Recreate the original scroll:
a> 36:28 $W.B
b> QAX-L/:KF M:GIL.FH )AXERET
c> W./K:TOB (FLEY/HF )"T K.FL-HA/D.:BFRIYM HF/RI)$ONIYM
):A$ER HFYW. (AL-HA/M.:GIL.FH HF/RI)$ONFH ):A$ER &FRAP
Y:HOWYFQIYM MELEK:-Y:HW.DFH
2) Add to it: quote p
a> quote f: 36:29 W:/(AL-Y:HOWYFQIYM MELEK:-Y:HW.DFH
TO)MAR
b> quote: result p
1> text ("thou")
a: K.OH )FMAR Y:HWFH
b: )AT.FH &FRAP:T.F )ET-HA/M.:GIL.FH HA/Z.O)T L"/)MOR
MAD.W.(A K.FTAB:T.F (FLEY/HF L"/)MOR B.O)-YFBOW)
MELEK:-B.FBEL W:/HI$:XIYT )ET-HF/)FREC HA/Z.O)T
W:/HI$:B.IYT MI/M./EN.FH )FDFM W./B:H"MFH S
2> result ("he") 36:30 LF/K"N
a: K.OH-)FMAR Y:HWFH (AL-Y:HOWYFQIYM MELEK: Y:HW.DFH
b: LO)-YIH:YEH-L./OW YOW$"B (AL-K.IS.") DFWID
c: W:/NIB:LFT/OW T.IH:YEH MU$:LEKET LA/XOREB
B.A/Y.OWM W:/LA/Q.ERAX B.A/L.FY:LFH
d: 36:31 W:/PFQAD:T.IY (FLFY/W W:/(AL-ZAR:(/OW
W:/(AL-(:ABFDFY/W )ET-(:AWON/FM
e: W:/H"B")TIY (:AL"Y/HEM W:/(AL-YO$:B"Y Y:RW.$FLAIM
W:/)EL-)IY$ Y:HW.DFH )"T K.FL-HF/RF(FH
):A$ER-D.IB.AR:T.IY ):AL"Y/HEM
f: W:/LO) $FM"(W. S

2. execution:
a) Recreation of the original scroll:
1) 36:32 W:/YIR:M:YFHW. LFQAX M:GIL.FH )AXERET
2) WA/Y.IT.:N/FH. )EL-B.FRW.K: B.EN-N"RIY.FHW. HA/S.OP"R
3) WA/Y.IK:T.OB (FLEY/HF MI/P.IY YIR:M:YFHW. )"T K.FL-D.IB:R"Y
HA/S."PER ):A$ER &FRAP Y:HOWYFQIYM MELEK:-Y:HW.DFH B.F/)"$
b) Addition to it:
W:/(OWD NOWSAP (:AL"Y/HEM D.:BFRIYM RAB.IYM K.F/H"M.FH S

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