

# Jeremiah 38:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

## Analysis

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**So they shall bring out all thy wives and thy children to the Chaldeans—**God's prophecy specified the capture of Zedekiah's entire family, a detail that proved tragically accurate. His sons were executed before his eyes, and he was blinded (39:6-7). The verb *yatsa* (יָצָא, "to bring out") ironically echoes verse 17's command that Zedekiah himself "go forth" to surrender. His refusal to go forth willingly guaranteed his family would be brought forth as captives.

**Thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire—**The causative Hebrew construction makes Zedekiah personally responsible for Jerusalem's destruction. Though Babylonian soldiers would light the fires, Zedekiah's disobedience would be the true cause. His one decision—refuse to surrender—would condemn the entire city. This crushing weight of responsibility makes his choice even more inexcusable: one man's pride would destroy thousands of lives.

## Historical Context

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The capture and abuse of royal families was standard ancient Near Eastern practice, serving both to eliminate rival claimants to the throne and to humiliate the defeated king. Nebuchadnezzar executed Zedekiah's sons at Riblah, ensuring

## Related Passages

## Study Questions

- ## Interlinear Text

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## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 41:10** (Kingdom): Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites.

**Jeremiah 39:6** (Kingdom): Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

**Jeremiah 38:18** (Kingdom): But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

**2 Kings 25:7** (References Babylon): And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.