

## **Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: June 12: Jeremiah 41: Some Notes**

**Themes:** Breaking the rules of hospitality, breaking a promise, and then, apparently, murder just for the hell of it. The murderer gets his come-uppance and loses his spoils, but escapes with his life (minus his reputation!).. Hard to imagine that the King of Ammon (who might have hoped for the deaths of Gedaliah and Ishmael, was pleased to see the latter back again. Interestingly, both the place of the battle, and the waiting place of sanctuary after the battle, are connected with bits of David's success story. This could have been another success story; but.....

This chapter finishes on the verge of a return to Egypt – something that (given the Exodus) was not really kosher, and was something Jeremiah had condemned. Hold your breath for the next chapter! [Mary and Joseph went to Egypt.]

**Clarifications:** The murder of the pilgrims was bad enough in itself, and did nobody any good; but in as addition these were mourners, who therefore had special protection. Not that the Babylonians had neither killed nor abused the king's daughters, but had left them safely in the charge of the new governor. These Babylonians were in some ways better behaved than modern besiegers and invaders. Sad that today's guided drones and missiles are often more likely to kill the innocent, than the military attacks of olden times?

**Questions:** Is there something in the theory that one crime leads to another crime, and maybe a worse one? (Macbeth: "I am in blood stepped in so sore, that to turn back were tedious as go o'er" ) If you agree with the idea that God is ultimately in charge, where do you see God as being in charge in the Jeremiah story so far? Should the "good" folk who had done the right thing in rescuing the prisoners and seeing off Ishmael have trusted God to protect them from badly judged Babylonian retaliation? Given the choice, would you have gone to Egypt, to Babylon, to Ammon, stayed in Mizpah etc, or opted for Australia?