***Jer 35 The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying, 2“Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.”***

***3Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, 4and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door. 5Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, “Drink wine.” 6But they said, “We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, ‘You shall drink no wine, you nor your sons, forever. 7You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have any of these; but all your days you shall dwell in tents, that you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.’ 8Thus we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, 9nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed. 10But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. 11But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, ‘Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Syrians.’ So we dwell at Jerusalem.” 12Then came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, saying, 13“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “Will you not receive instruction to obey My words?” says the Lord. 14“The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father’s commandment. But although I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, you did not obey Me. 15I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.’ But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me. 16Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me.” 17“Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.’ 18And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, 19therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever.”***

We’re back with Jeremiah tonight. This chapter concerns obedience and the keeping of covenant with God. It takes place in the time of Jehoiakim, so we know it falls between 609 BC and 598 BC. The threat of Nebuchadnezzar is in view. Egypt has been dealt with by the time.

Verse 1 *The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying –* Recall that we have been studying King Zedekiah, so this prophecy falls before the Zedekiah, probably in the 4th year if Jehoiakim’s reign or 605 BC.

Verse 2-4 *Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.” 3Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habazziniah, his brothers and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites, 4and I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was by the chamber of the princes, above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door.* The Rechabites were strangers, not of the children of Israel. Theologians believe that they are Kenites, from the land of Midian. They dwelt in the land of Judah, but were not of the land of Judah. They were sojourners. Jonadab is mentioned in 2 Kings 10:13, mentioned during the time that Jehu was cleansing the land of Israel after the death of Ahab. Jehu had Jonadab riding with him in his chariot, which shows the standing of Jonadab in his time. He was a man of right heart. Jonadab left his family with principals and morals, imploring them to remain pure before God and keep things simple. Abstain from wine and remain in tents, remaining unattached from the possessions and luxuries of life. Jeremiah is to go to the Rechabites and *And bring them into the house of the Lord –* as no idolaters were allowed in the temple according to the Law, this indicates that the Rechabites did not engage in idolatry. *I brought them into the chamber of the sons of Hanan –* They were to be brought into the chambers adjoining the temple, used by priests and Levites as they ministered. They also were used to store vessels and other things needed for the daily sacrifices. *The son of Igdaliah, a man of God –* A man of God, also known as a prophet. *Which was by the chamber of the princes –* This is a chamber where princes, Sanhedrin, assembled. *Above the chamber of Maaseiah, the keeper of the door –* Maaseiah was likely the head doorkeeper, as there were many Levites appointed to the duty of opening and shutting the gates of the temple.

Verses 5-7 *Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, “Drink wine.” 6But they said, “We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, ‘You shall drink no wine, you nor your sons, forever. 7You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have any of these; but all your days you shall dwell in tents, that you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.’* Jeremiah now sets before them wine, as God commanded. It had been about 235 years since Jonadab charged his family to drink no wine. 235 years of opportunity to turn away from a solemn promise and tradition of honoring heritage. Listen to their response. *But they said, We will drink no wine —* No! We will drink no wine! Why? *For Jonadab, our father, commanded us, saying, You shall drink, no wine.* 235 years, many generations, opportunity to forget the promises. Yet, as soon as it was offered, they remembered their vow.

Verses 8-11 *Thus we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, 9nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed. 10But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. 11But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, ‘Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and for fear of the army of the Syrians.’ So we dwell at Jerusalem.” Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab our father –* We’ve kept our solemn word. Do we keep our solemn promises to God no matter the time that goes by? We dwelt in tents as well. *But when Nebuchadrezzar came, we said, Come, let us go to Jerusalem –* They have lived as nomads and sojourners, without permanent dwelling. It’s only recently that they came within the walls of Jerusalem to escape the Chaldeans and Syrians.*So we dwell at Jerusalem –* they continue to dwell there as the siege took place. There’s no indication that they built permanent structures or planted vineyards, et cetera. It appears they were dwelling within the walls while Nebuchadnezzar besieged the countryside.

Verses 12-16 *Then came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah, saying, 13“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, “Will you not receive instruction to obey My words?” says the Lord. 14“The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father’s commandment. But although I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, you did not obey Me. 15I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way, amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.’ But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me. 16Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me.”* The Rechabites have proven themselves faithful to the word of their fathers, 235 years after the fact. Now, God shows His application. *Tell the men of Judah, Will you not receive instruction? –* Will nothing get through to you? Will nothing convict you of sin and show how you have broken My covenants – Covenants that you agreed to and promises you made. We have duty to God. We profess Jesus as Lord and Savior, Master of our life, Teacher… yet, we treat commandments and callings as suggestions from God. They are not. The Rechabites are obedient. But the men of Judah and Jerusalem are not. B*ut you have not hearkened unto me –* it was make most sense that people would obey God and forget the commands of an ancient ancestor. It would make most sense that they were perform God’s instruction, hearken to His word and ignore man’s instruction. But this is not what God sees. They disobey Him and follow man’s law instead. God sent prophets and messengers reminding the Jewish people of the promises, yet, the Rechabites probably seldom had to be reminded. God’s yoke was far easier to keep, His ability to bless far superior to Jonadab, and yet He is ignored and disobeyed, while a man long dead of obeyed by a people certainly inconvenienced by Jonadab’s instruction.

Verse 17 *Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the doom that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them but they have not heard, and I have called to them but they have not answered.’* Because the people have rejected God, disobeyed Him, and ignored His warnings through hundreds of years, He will bring calamity upon Judah as He had said from the start. He will bring captivity by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. They have failed in their promises, unlike the Rechabites. They have refused to hear and have actively disobeyed.

Verses 18-19 *And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechabites, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts and done according to all that he commanded you, 19therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not lack a man to stand before Me forever.”* For their faithfulness and obedience, God, through Jeremiah, pronounces blessing upon the Rechabites. What a wonderful blessing it is! There will be a man standing in worship of God forever. We could never ask for a more wonderful promise than this! That we too will stand in the Presence of the Lord God forever.

And so we leave Jeremiah tonight. God has demonstrated what obedience looks like. He has sent prophets and teachers to describe it and demonstrate it throughout time. He has been faithful in sending people early and often. Yet, some disobey and refuse to believe. Our call now is to believe upon the Lord Jesus – and profess His Holy Name. We are to faithfully witness. What does our witness say? Are we following faithfully or disobeying repeatedly? Obedience is preferred to sacrifice. How are obeying Him in our daily walk?