

Jeremiah Chapter 52 John Karmelich

1. For my fellow novel readers out there, there's often an epilogue at the end of the book. It's there to give a more "facts" about the story. In effect that's what this final chapter in Jeremiah does. In fact he isn't mentioned in this chapter. It mostly covers old ground as if it's saying, "If you don't want to read all 52 Chapters of Jeremiah and "just want the facts", this is your chapter".
2. That of course leads to the big question: Why? After 51 Chapters essentially describing the fall of Israel as a nation and how the survivors got grafted into the conquering Babylonian Empire, why have an epilogue chapter just stating the facts about Israel's "final moments"? More importantly, why should we care? Why's this in the bible, is essentially the question. So glad you asked!
 - a) One reason is to consider where Israel started as a nation and where they ended up. In a sense it's a little like reading the whole Old Testament. God took a large group of people out of Egypt (two million is a good guess) and they took over the land of Israel. They did it by conquering the locals there and have been there since roughly 1,500 BC. That's a long time for any entity, let alone God's chosen people. Yet in many ways the Old Testament is a "tragedy" as it goes from birth to death of a nation, with a resurrection occurring when it (the Babylonian captivity) ended. In a sense the entire Old Testament is a model of a death and resurrection. Our lives even as a witness for Jesus is a downhill ride as our bodies do decay with age. Yet we're resurrected to be with God forever based on what He's done for us, not what we've done for ourselves even as Christians. Yes it should be the desire of all people to dedicate our lives to serving Jesus as we then use it as a witness for Him. What I am saying is all life on earth is ultimately a tragedy. We each died and praise God, we will then get resurrected again.
 - b) All I'm saying is stating the key facts of the decline one more time is a key point just as the entire book of Jeremiah is in effect a tragedy to be told. Yes there are lots of lessons and a lot of applications as my regulars know. One reason Jeremiah is so long is God had much to teach us about being a witness for Him through this tragedy about Israel's fall.
 - c) In fact the fall of the temple is remembered in synagogues to this day. There is a date that comes in the summer, which was the date when both this temple and the one that stood in Jesus' day were destroyed. If it's important for Jewish people to never forget that event, I would argue it should be important for us (Christians) too. Revelation tells us a day will come in the future when God's temple will be rebuilt. The Anti-Christ will ruin that one. Then we'll get another temple being built where Jesus will rule from one day, as explained in the last few chapters of Ezekiel. God's temple is not a "done deal" in human history.
3. So let me come back to the key question. Why study this chapter? As my regulars know, it's not to study history. Yes this chapter shows the accuracy of Jeremiah's predictions. We don't know if he added it himself or someone else did. Either way it validates Jeremiah as a prophet. Yes all of this took place 2,500 years ago. That leads back to the question, why study an epilogue chapter?
 - a) For starters, to remind ourselves how tragic life is.
 - b) To remind ourselves that our good works are like filthy rags to God (Isaiah 64:6). What I mean by that is we should never forget we're saved strictly by His grace and not because of whatever we've accomplished as a witness for Jesus. Don't get me wrong, I'm positive there are rewards in heaven based on making a difference for Jesus, but the key question we'll get at the entrance exam, is "Why do we think we belong in heaven?" If we answer anything other than Jesus blood, we're in big trouble.
 - c) My point is as you read through the tragedy of this final chapter, don't be thinking, "I am a lot better than those people". Don't think, "I'm glad I'm not in their shoes". What we've got to be thinking is we're saved strictly by His grace and nothing else. As we all know, it is not meant to be an exclusive club. We're to reach out to others to lead them to Jesus.

4. It may help at this point to summarize the final chapter.
 - a) It starts by giving facts about the last Israelites king.
 - b) In essence the bible calls him a "bad man". The Babylonians made this guy the king, then he rebelled against Babylon. No wonder when the Babylonian leader caught up with him after Jerusalem's fall, the Babylonian king had his sons killed and the former Israelite king was blinded for life at that point. It is one big reminder of what can happen to us if we're living our lives by ignoring living how He calls us to live.
 - c) The chapter also spends time describing the destruction of the temple itself. Many parts of the temple are described being taken away for its "scrap value"! There's no mention of that thing most associated with God, the temple ark. Lots of theories exist as to why there's no mention of it. The truth is no one knows. Anyway, the point of those temple stuff details is for us to consider the tragedy of the whole situation. God's chosen went from the height of glory to taken into captivity and their valuables were taken away.
 - d) Finally we get a "head count" of how many Israelites were taken into captivity at the "final round up". Yes I suspect many were already taken. The small number (a few thousand) is an indication of how far down the ladder Israel had sunk. The last recorded number time the number of Israelites were counted was under King David. I'll just say if you take what that text says and you add for women and children there were roughly 2,000,000 Israelites living under King David's rule. After the kingdom split, let's make it easy and say it was a little under 1,000,000 in the southern Israelite kingdom that's the focus of most of Jeremiah in this book. Here we read of only 4,600 people taken away to Babylon. Again it's a model of the tragedy of that nation at that time. Today there are about 6.5 million Jewish people. Despite all efforts to wipe them out through history, they're still around and a witness for His existence as there is no other way to explain their survival and existence as a nation.
5. Oh, if you haven't figured it out by now, my lesson title is "The Epilogue". It discusses the facts of Israel's downfall and gives us a reminder of how far God's people have fallen as His witnesses to the world around us. This lesson is shorter than most of them, so I'm "easing up" for the final one!
 - a) As I always do the last page of this final lesson has a bibliography of my sources that I did use to help prepare these lessons. It's my "Epilogue of the Epilogue".
 - b) Finally, if you didn't know Jeremiah also wrote the four-chapter book of Lamentations. I'd encourage you to study that one next. It's much shorter than this book and it follows well on the topic of why the destruction of God's temple is so significant and why we believers in Jesus should also care about that temple.
 - c) With that said, let's go through this final chapter as we wrap up this major undertaking of one of largest books in the bible.
6. Chapter 52, Verse 1: Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah. ² He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. ³ It was because of the LORD's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.
 - a) When we think of kings we tend to picture older men taking over after their father died. I remind you here that this guy was born in a kingly family and is among the descendants of King David. God promised David that his descendants would rule forever, which as it turns out is a reference to the fact that Jesus must return to rule the world. Not because of anything David did or anything his descendants did, but strictly due to His unconditional promise God made to David.
 - b) My point here is just because he was a bad king and the bible doesn't speak kindly of him, when we get to Matthew's gospel, he's still listed as an ancestor of Jesus through Joseph. I obviously know Joseph was not Jesus real father, but Joseph was his legal father based on adoption laws in both Judaism and Roman law. For most of us, that's "old ground". What I simply want us to grasp is even though this was a "bad dude", he's in the Messianic line.

- c) Speaking of genealogy we get his parents listed here. In fact this king's grandfather was named Jeremiah and obviously he's not related to the author of this book. OK, we'll bite, why is the king's mom and grandmother listed here? Speculation: The king was probably raised on the fact he was part of the royal family. I'm sure he got told about the promised Messiah coming through his family line. He was raised in the Jewish faith. This king was the uncle of the last one. His brother ruled before that. I'm just saying the text focused on mom's side as dad's was well known.
 - d) Finally the text said it's because of the Lord's anger they were trust out of the land.
 - i) My basic view is God is 100% loving all the time, 100% angered by sin all the time. When we see things that obviously are beyond human explanation that makes life appear as God is angry, that's a "human reaction" to this.
 - ii) For those of you who haven't been following all my Jeremiah studies, the reason it was necessary for God to kick them out of that land, was because idolatry reached a point where God "had no choice". A good thing about that Babylonian captivity, is it cured the Israelites of corporate idolatry. God knew what He was doing so to speak. Yes it was horrid. Yes many people had to suffer and die in horrible ways. The truth is God sometimes allows horrible things ultimately for His glory. I have known some wonderful Christians who've suffered and died horribly. Ultimately God finds ways to use such tragedies for His glory. That's my point here.
 - iii) The related point is God wanted the Israelites to accept the captivity. It is another reason why this king was also in big trouble, as we'll see later in this chapter.
 - iv) I promised to make this lesson shorter and I'm messing up! Let's move on.
7. Verse 4: So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They camped outside the city and built siege works all around it. ⁵ The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.
- a) Remember the Babylonian king was pretty ticked off at Jerusalem at this time. Twice he attacked Jerusalem and both times earlier took away stuff and people. By now, he had a "belly full" of this, and decided to make Jerusalem suffer for not surrendering. Imagine if you lived in a city that was surrounded by an army. Essentially you had to starve to death or give up. It took about 18 months of people starving and doing horrible things in order to survive before it finally ended.
 - b) A point underlying this chapter is to show that Jeremiah's predictions got fulfilled just as he said they would. He predicted for years (probably decades) about this happening and here it is actually taken place. Even if you want to argue Jeremiah wrote the whole thing after it fell, that still doesn't explain the 70 year prediction "to the day" as Jeremiah wasn't around when that happened let alone the details he had to describe how Babylon fell as a city. I'm convinced Jeremiah was a prophet and a lot of this chapter is in effect, "See I told you this was going to happen this way".
 - c) If you need to get anything out of this, it is simply the fact that when we go against living as God desires we too will suffer for it. I have yet to meet an adulterer, a thief, a habitual liar, or even an alcoholic who hasn't had to pay a price for ignoring His commands. That is in effect the underlying point of this chapter.
8. Verse 6: By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat. ⁷ Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah, ⁸ but the Babylonian army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, ⁹ and he was captured.
- a) Here's the big scene where the leaders of Jerusalem made a run for it. They probably got out of the city and thought, "Hey we made it". When they got to Jericho, the "jig was up".

- b) It's about 15 miles from Jerusalem to Jericho (yes I googled it). If one was running I figure about 6-7 hours as it's a long and winding road. (Yes I've traveled it!)
 - c) I have to admit I pondered, how did the Babylonians know the king escaped? My guess is they heard people in the city talking about the fact the king abandoned them, so they left to go look for him. There's a famous, narrow downhill road from Jerusalem to Jericho. My guess is the Babylonian army followed that trail. Maybe the Babylonians had people who spotted the escaping group. The "Arabah" refers to the desert area between Jerusalem and Jericho. It's a minor thing, but some may be curious what it means.
 - d) I have to admit, I pondered how many people died there. Near the end of the chapter the number of people taken to Babylon totaled 4,600 so I suspect a lot of people starved there or died battling the Babylonians.
 - e) OK then, the bad news continues:
9. Verse 9 (cont.): He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him. ¹⁰ There at Riblah the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah. ¹¹ Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon, where he put him in prison till the day of his death.
- a) First question I pondered. Where is Riblah and yes I googled it. Today it's a cemetery on the border between Lebanon and Syria. The point is this is where Nebuchadnezzar set up his camp as commander in chief. He probably had more than one battle going at a time. It was his base camp. He probably had runners to tell him what is going on with Jerusalem siege. When the king was captured in Jericho (southeast of Jerusalem) along with those in his party, they were probably dragged tied up on carts to where Nebuchadnezzar was.
 - b) We have another prediction coming true here. The bible predicted this king will spend the rest of his life in Babylon but also predicted he would never see it. Therefore, when he had his eyes put out and taken away, both predictions came true at the same time.
 - c) Imagine the last thing one sees is one's children being killed. Then one is blinded and led in chains hundreds of miles away. Again the moral of the story is God's not to be messed with in any capacity. Even those who we think "died and got away with it" will suffer for all of eternity. The simple point is there is a price to be paid for rebelling against God.
 - d) With that said, that ends "story #1" of this final chapter. In summary it's here simply for a reminder that God fulfills His promises good and bad and we must accept the fact we are playing by His rules whether we like it or not!
 - e) The next story focuses on the destruction of the city and God's temple. Let's begin:
10. Verse 12: On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ¹³ He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down. ¹⁴ The whole Babylonian army under the commander of the imperial guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. ¹⁵ Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest people and those who remained in the city, along with the rest of the craftsmen and those who had gone over to the king of Babylon. ¹⁶ But Nebuzaradan left behind the rest of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.
- a) Notice the exact date of the temple's destruction is given here. This date is remembered to this day. On the Hebrew calendar it's called "Tishah B'Av" which simply means the ninth day of the month of "Av". Both the first and second temple were destroyed on this day. It is so significant that four times in the bible (twice in Jeremiah) the destruction is recorded.
 - i) So why should we care? First remember in my previous lessons about Babylon. It was destroyed because they "went too far" and burned down God's temple. It is a reminder that God needs to show He's the god of the world not just the Israelites.
 - ii) Also it's about the temple being significant past, present and future.

- iii) When the Messiah returns (i.e., Jesus 2nd coming), that temple that doesn't exist in Israel today is where He'll be hanging out all the time! He will rule the world from Jerusalem and specifically from the temple. Scholars argue that the temple site is a spot where an important Muslim synagogue stands today. Alternative theories do exist about other sites but I won't go there. The simple point is when Jesus does return He'll have a temple to rule from, so it's significant.
 - iv) The point about remembering the temple's simply to remember the fact God is not done with the concept of His rule from earth. Yes "God is everywhere", but we do have to remember that when Jesus became human He remains fully human for all of eternity. Therefore He has to hang out "somewhere" and that's the temple.
 - b) With that lecture out of my system, the text is once again Jeremiah effectively telling us, "I told you it was going to happen exactly as I predicted". Jeremiah said how the poorest of the land will get to "hang around" even after the captivity began. As I've stated in earlier lessons the Babylonians did this "not to waste good" as they probably taxed what's grown there after that. If you recall it appears those who stayed ran to Egypt and disobeyed. Is it possible some did stay? Of course. I suspect that's true by the tone of the text.
 - c) OK John, we get the temple destruction stuff and some stayed, what about the walls being removed? Why was that? It was Nebuchadnezzar's way of saying, "Don't mess with me, or I will destroy the cities that chose to rebel against me". If you study the history of that city, it has been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times in history. That included when the crusades occurred. The point of including this in the text is to show how the city died and then the book of Ezra will teach about it's resurrection under the Medo-Persian boys!
 - d) We get the name Nebuzaradan. He's essentially the guy in charge of the destruction and the clean up operation of the survivors. He wasn't the guy who was killed some chapters back, but he was an army commander who oversaw all of this destruction.
 - e) The verses so far covered the "general destruction". Next we'll focus on the temple itself.
11. Verse 17: The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried all the bronze to Babylon. ¹⁸ They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service. ¹⁹ The commander of the imperial guard took away the basins, censers, sprinkling bowls, pots, lampstands, dishes and bowls used for drink offerings--all that were made of pure gold or silver.
- a) The short version is the Babylonians wanted to carry away anything of value. They took bronze things as well as anything made of silver or gold away as "scrap value". I should be careful here, as some of these items were left as is as they were put in the "trophy case" in Babylon.
 - b) Way back in First Kings Chapter 7 lists all these items as they were used. Most of them go back to the days of King Solomon (son of David). Think about reading the bible from one end to the other. Reading of Solomon's greatness and the power that Israel had. Yet they turned from God and here we're reading of the bitter end. Let's face it, if this was the end of the bible, it'd be a tragic story. The promise of a resurrection of the nation by Jeremiah let alone many of the other profits is what sustained them through all of this. The point is we got the end of a several hundred year period of the sons of David ruling in Jerusalem. It is a tragedy. It is Jeremiah saying, "I told you so". It's Jeremiah saying, yes it was God's temple, but just because His temple is here, that's no excuse to slack off on what He wants us to do, be a living witness for Him.
 - c) One of the points I pound through many of my bible lessons is once we believe that Jesus is God, died for every sin we ever will commit and He's in charge of our lives, that doesn't mean "That's it, we can go live however we want and we'll see God in heaven". To live as a Christian means that God expects us to use our lives as a witness for Him. Obviously it means a lot of different things for different people as we use our gifts for His glory.

- i) Whenever I meet young Christians (young in faith), my favorite question to ask is what are you good at or what do you enjoy doing? Then it's a matter of using that gift (or gifts) to make a difference for Jesus. Obviously we all have to pitch in for a thing that's not our gift. As I like to joke, no one has the spiritual gift to take out a pile of trash, but it has to be done. My point is that our rewards in heaven are not a matter of how many people we save. It's a matter of a willingness to use our lives as a witness for Jesus and being lead by the spirit for that purpose.
 - ii) The reason I'm "pounding the pulpit" here on this issue is because we're reading of the Israelites being killed and taken away in captivity for a failure to use their lives as a witness for God. No we don't have a temple to destroy today, but He can still find ways to punish us, put us in the penalty box, or simply take away options for us to be a witness for Him.
 - iii) OK then, back to Temple destruction!
12. Verse 20: The bronze from the two pillars, the Sea and the twelve bronze bulls under it, and the movable stands, which King Solomon had made for the temple of the LORD, was more than could be weighed. ²¹ Each of the pillars was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; each was four fingers thick, and hollow. ²² The bronze capital on top of the one pillar was five cubits high and was decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze all around. The other pillar, with its pomegranates, was similar. ²³ There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; the total number of pomegranates above the surrounding network was a hundred.
- a) Here we get the details of what's being taken away. I picture Jeremiah as an eyewitness to this or someone who had his writings adding it as an appendix. We get details that match what was written hundreds of years earlier when Solomon ruled over Israel.
 - b) For you "technical" people there's a height mention in kings of the pillars that don't match exactly here. One explanation is one description doesn't include a "cap". Another one is a remodeling of the temple under another king was the difference. Do I believe all of this is accurate? No reason not to. Way too many details are given.
 - c) Since I'm discussing the pillars. Realize they didn't hold anything up. They were in effect, big decorations in front of the temple. Pomegranates were a fruit that grows there. There was such fruit as decoration to symbolize "producing fruit for God". Yes all of it was just for decorations, but each item was also symbolic of what God "stood for" as well as what's to be expected of believers, "to produce fruit" for Him. Fruit isn't just say, bringing in new believers. It's also about making a difference for God and helping others grow in Him.
 - d) Like I keep saying, this is all a sad tragedy. Let's keep going.
13. Verse 24: The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵ Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men, and seven royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land and sixty of his men who were found in the city. ²⁶ Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷ There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed.
- a) We know from earlier in the chapter that Nebuchadnezzar had the king's sons killed and he blinded the king. Here we read of the other "top guys" being executed. Why, because they were part of the organized rebellion against Babylon ruling. From the high priest on down, these men ignored what God told Jeremiah and now they died for their refusing to believe Jeremiah was a true prophet of God.
 - b) So was this the official end of the "High Priest" role? Well since there was no temple for a time it's not an issue. However, the line of the high priest did continue. There was one at the time of Jesus and I'm sure he's related to the ones who went down here. When Rome burned the temple in 70AD all records were destroyed, so we have no record today of any succession of those priests. The good news is Jesus is our High Priest. (Hebrews 4:14-16.)

- c) I can just hear many of you thinking, "OK, a bunch of people I don't care about got killed 2,500 years ago in Israel. Why should I care?" The underlying issue isn't about them per se, but about the idea of what could become of us if we fail to be a good witness for Jesus. What if you say I go to church regularly, pray regularly and read the bible? Then I'd say, I am proud of you and I hope that you find ways to use your life as a witness for Jesus. If it is true you're doing that, my job isn't to condemn you but to encourage you to continue to be a witness for Jesus as it's the job of others to encourage me as well. One of the reasons I am convinced God wants "groups" working together is so we can be accountable to others as a witness for Him.
- d) OK enough guilt for those verses. Let's try the next few:
14. Verse 27 (cont.): So Judah went into captivity, away from her land.²⁸ This is the number of the people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: in the seventh year, 3,023 Jews;²⁹ in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem;³⁰ in his twenty-third year 745 Jews taken into exile by Nebuzaradan the commander of the imperial guard. There were 4,600 people in all.
- a) When the Israelites first entered that land, there were about two million people. I'm sure a lot of them were part of the long dead at this point Northern Israel kingdom, but it's still a powerful thing to realize all those people and only 4,600 were taken away in the end.
- b) I'm sure the vast majority died when the city was under siege for 18 months. I'm sure that a lot of people defected, but still this is a horrid tragedy.
- c) Let me ask the related question of the last 100 years, why did God allow the Holocaust to occur in Germany? I've personally met some survivors. Some are religious and others are not. The only "good" that came out of it was the nation of Israel was reborn because of it. I am not saying it excused something so horrid. I'm saying God had a purpose for it and I am sure God will judge people fairly based on what they knew or could have know about Him during that time. In spite of that, millions of Jewish people are alive today. God has a purpose to keep them around as it's to have a Jewish nation in existence when Jesus will rule the world from there. Jesus promised He will return to rule, so therefore there has to be a Jewish nation to rule from! Why do you think nonbelievers are so "hell bent" on that nation being destroyed?
- d) Anyway, back in Jeremiah's day we read of only a small remnant surviving.
15. Verse 31: In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Evil-Merodach became king of Babylon, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah and freed him from prison on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month.³² He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.³³ So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table.³⁴ Day by day the king of Babylon gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived, till the day of his death.
- a) The final epilogue note is that the successor to Nebuchadnezzar let the Jewish king out of prison and as a blind man he was allowed to eat at the king's table. Remember that Jesus was listed as a descendant of this king, but there was also the "blood curse" placed on him by Jeremiah (22:24 and 22:30). The virgin birth is how Jesus got around the curse. He was still a descendant of the kings by Jewish and Roman adoption laws.
- b) There's a tradition that this Babylonian king was in prison for awhile and there he met the Jewish king. That's why he was brought out of prison. OK time for the final, "why should we care" lecture of the book. Imagine being this man. The last thing he got to see before he was taken in captivity was his sons being killed. I'm sure the king thought, "that's it for my life, I'm going to hell and I have to spend the rest of my life as a blind man in prison." My point is we never know what God has planned for our future. We don't know what is the length of our lives. In my life I've had to deal with a handful of people "on the ledge" who were about to commit suicide. If someone believes in God then one has to remember that God decides how long we get to live, not us.

- c) Obviously if we jump off a cliff, that's it. However, we never know how long or in what way God wants to use us. Here was this "washed out blind king" yet near the end of his life he gets restored and gets to eat at the king's table. Why is a mystery. What it shows us is how we never know how God is going to use us.
16. Before I wrap up this book, I want to thank everyone who's read these lessons. I've stated many a time that I never come out the "back end" the same as I enter the front end. It's been a wonderful journey. Despite the darkness and tragedy of this book, I've learned a lot about how God can and will use people willing to be a witness for Him. Jeremiah only made as best we can tell, one man as a convert (Baruch). Maybe there were others, but it was a small percentage. Does Jeremiah get a big role in heaven for only saving a few people? Of course, because it's not how many we save, it's about being faithful to what God's called us to do. Jeremiah was faithful in his role and I only hope God will consider me faithful in mine. At the same time I'm well aware our good works are "filthy rags" before God (Jeremiah 64:6) before God. Whatever reward I get is His business. What is our job is simply to be a witness for Jesus throughout our lives.
17. My prayer is these lessons have helped you draw closer to God and have made you appreciate a life as a witness for Him all the more. My prayer is that each of us draw closer to Him and live our lives as a faithful witness. Do we mess up? All the time. Still He wants to use us, "Warts and all" for His glory. I can't imagine a greater purpose for living than that. I hope all of us did draw closer to Him through these studies. I pray that God makes it obvious to each of us how it is that He wants to use us for His glory. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.

On the next page is my list of sources. Thanks so much for reading. John

Supplement: Bibliography

"If I have seen further, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants." (Isaac Newton)

Without prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all these commentaries are useless. My prayer as I prepare these lessons was for God to show me the things He wanted me to learn, and second, the lessons He wanted me to pass on in my writings. I have quoted many sources throughout these lessons. If any of these writers appeal to you, I invite you to read or listen to them further via the places listed below. I have also quoted other sources not listed, and those names are usually listed in the lessons. These other authors were usually quoted from the materials listed below and taken from those sources.

First and foremost, the greatest commentary on the bible is the bible itself. Here are the bible versions I use in preparation of my lessons. I mostly quote The New International Version (NIV), Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society; The New King James Version (NKJV), Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.; The King James Version (KJV) (no copyright on that version); the English Standard Version. (ESV). The copyright information for the ESV is in point #7 below. The Living Bible (TLB) Copyright © 1971, 1986 by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, IL 60189; "The Message" copyright © 1993 by Eugene H. Peterson. All rights reserved. All the bible text used in these lessons (except the ESV) is taken from Parsons Software: Electronic Edition STEP Files Copyright © 1999, Parsons Technology, Inc., all rights reserved and from Zondervan Reference Software (32-bit edition) Version 2.6, Copyright © 1989-1998 The Zondervan Corporation.

Here are the commentaries I have referenced over these lessons. The specific commentaries on Jeremiah are listed first, and then bible-wide commentaries. They're listed in alphabetical order by author. References to audio commentary means the information was gathered via the Internet in MP3® Format, unless otherwise stated:

1. Commentary on Jeremiah by Jon Courson. It is in book form from Harvest House Publishing. It is also available in MP3® format at <http://www.joncourson.com/>.
2. Commentary on Jeremiah by Bob Davis. They are available for free in MP3® format at <http://northcountrychapel.com/studies/>.
3. Commentary on Jeremiah by David Guzik. It is available for free in audio and text format. The web address is http://www.enduringword.com/library_commentaries.htm Mr. Davis quotes a lot of famous authors from the 19th and 20th Century on these books and I've used some of those quotes.
4. Commentary on Jeremiah by Chuck Missler, available at K-House Ministries 1-800-KHOUSE1. The web address is <http://www.khouse.org>.
5. The Book of Jeremiah by J.A. Thompson (Part of the NIV Commentary on the Old Testament). 1980, Wm. B. Eerimans Publishing Company. Available via Amazon and other book stores.
6. The English Standard Version Study Bible; Copyright (2005-2009) The Standard Bible Society. The version itself is copyrighted 2008 by Crossway Bibles, a publication of "Good News Publishers".
7. The Expositor's Bible Encyclopedia, Zondervan Publications, (via CD-ROM 1998 release). This is a multi-volume encyclopedia with notes on every bible verse. It is available through Zondervan. Paperback books are published on individual Bible books from this same source.
8. The Life Application Bible, Zondervan Publishing: www.zondervanbibles.com/0310919770.htm.
9. The MacArthur Study Bible with commentary by John MacArthur Nelson Bibles (1997) ISBN: 0849912229.
10. I also refer sometimes to J.P. Moreland apologetic ministry which is at www.jpmoreland.com and Greg Koukl's apologetic ministry, which is Stand to Reason at www.str.org I also quote from Dennis Prager on many Jewish issues. He is a nationally syndicated radio broadcaster. See dennisprager.com.
11. My apology if I have quoted someone else and I have forgotten to include them in this list.
12. Also grateful for "Google" and "Wiki" web site to look up specific facts stated in these lessons.