

Psalm 118, Jeremiah 16-22 (#90)

Psalm 118 — This is a Messianic psalm celebrating God's salvation. *Can you find the verses in this Psalm which are cited in the New Testament (hint: There are 3 verses cited in the New Testament. Use your study bible cross-reference and footnote)?*

Jeremiah 16— Jeremiah was forbidden by the Lord to marry and have children, to attend a funeral, or celebrate a feast. The people question why the Lord has declared this great disaster on them, and He said that it is because their fathers had abandoned Him and did not obey His instruction. Even more, they themselves have done more evil than their fathers by following the stubbornness of their wicked hearts and not by obeying Him (vv. 1-13). Yahweh promises that the day will come when He will bring them back to the land of their ancestors. The people of Judah acted like little children who think that because they can't see you, you can't see them. The Lord, however, will use fishermen to catch them and hunters to hunt them down, and they will be repaid double for the detestable and abhorrent idols that they have worshipped. Through their great suffering and the return of the faithful remnant to Jerusalem seventy years later, Judah and Israel will know the Lord's power and might (vv. 14-21). *What were the reasons that Jeremiah was forbidden to marry and have children, attend a funeral, or celebrate a feast? See verses 1-9.*

Jeremiah 17— Because of the unrestrained idolatry of the people, they would forfeit their wealth, relinquish their inheritance, and serve their enemies in a land they did not know. The Lord then contrasts the man who puts his trust in human flesh and thus is cursed, with the man who trusts in Yahweh and finds prosperity even though living in times of drought and suffocating heat (vv.1-8). The Lord examines the heart of man which is deceitful and incurable and will give to each according to what his actions deserve. The choice is clear. We can worship the eternal and glorious Lord, or we can abandon Him with eternal consequences (vv. 9-13). Jeremiah once again feels the sting of the people's taunting by their asking him, "If you are speaking the Word of the Lord, why hasn't God's judgment already come?" Jeremiah pleads with the Lord to vindicate, save him, and bring total destruction on his persecutors (vv. 14-18). The Lord asks the king, Judah, and the residents of Jerusalem to show their loyalty and obedience to Him by not doing normal work on the Sabbath, but to keep it holy and to offer sacrifices to Him. If they kept the Sabbath holy as commanded in Exodus 20:8-11, then Yahweh would accept them and allow them to continue in the land, but if not, then He would set the gates on fire and consume everything (vv. 19-27). *What does the Bible teach about the condition of the human heart and God's ability to examine it and transform it? See 17:9-10, 1 Samuel 16:7, Matthew 15:18-20, and Jeremiah 24:7, 31:33. What should our response to Him be? Proverbs 4:23, Psalms 139:23-24, and Psalm 86:11.*

Jeremiah 18— God told Jeremiah to go to the potter's house and related the work of a potter as an illustration of God as the potter and Israel as the clay. The Lord declares His right to reshape Israel into any form He wishes. Whenever a judgment is announced by God, the ultimate result will be according to the response of that nation. If the nation repents, then God will relent concerning the disaster He was going to send. If Judah, or any nation, disregards God's announcement of judgment and does not repent, judgment is sure to follow. Since God's people have forgotten Him, rejected His ancient roads, and burn incense to false idols, God will turn His back on them in the day of calamity (vv. 1-17). The people plotted against Jeremiah declaring that they had enough priests and prophets to teach and guide them so they wouldn't need to pay any attention to what he is saying. Jeremiah implores for God's vindication and asks for protection from their plot to throw him into a pit (vv. 18-23). *This chapter depicts God as the Sovereign potter. What responsibility do you play as a clay pot being formed by God? See II Timothy 2:19-21.*

Jeremiah 19— Jeremiah bought a clay jar and took some of the elders and priests to the Valley of (Ben) Hinnom, and there proclaimed God's judgment because of all the evil they had done in Judah by burning of incense to other gods and by burning of their children on the altar of Baal. Jeremiah then shattered the clay jar depicting what God would do to the city and its people and showing them that they could never again be mended. Then he returned from the Valley of (Ben) Hinnom, which he called the Valley of Slaughter, to the courtyard of the temple to proclaim disaster because of Judah's idolatry, obstinacy, and disobedience. *What was taking place at the Valley of (Ben) Hinnom, and what place mentioned in the New Testament was derived from it? See Matthew 5:22.*

Jeremiah 20— As Jeremiah preaches in the courtyard, Pashhur, the chief official in the temple, had him beaten and put in stocks. After being released the next day, Jeremiah gives Pashhur (meaning prosperity everywhere) a new name, Magor-missabib (meaning terror on every side). The Lord would make Pashhur a terror to himself and to those he loves. He also prophesied that Pashhur and his whole family would be taken into captivity to Babylon and would die there (vv. 1-6). In verses 7 to 18, which is the last of his laments, Jeremiah's emotions are constantly changing from grief to joy, from accusing God to praising Him, and from Word of God being a burning fire in his bones to cursing the day he was born (vv. 7-18). *In verses 7 to 18, Jeremiah is on an emotional roller coaster. What other prophet in the Old Testament also became very emotionally unstable because of persecution and exhaustion? What was the reaction of Paul and Silas when they were beaten and put in stocks? See I Kings 19:1-10 and Acts 16:22-25. What can we do to keep ourselves on an even keel emotionally during times of high stress and conflict?*

Jeremiah 21— The events of this chapter happened about 588 B.C. as King Nebuchadnezzar and his army surrounded and laid siege to Jerusalem. King Zedekiah sent Pashhur and Zephaniah the priest to Jeremiah to ask if God would give the same deliverance to Judah that had happened under Hezekiah. Jeremiah says that God will not deliver Judah, but He will fight against Judah and that those who resist will die by famine, plague, and the sword. He declares that those who stay in the city will die, but those who immediately go out and surrender to the Chaldeans will retain their lives (vv. 1-10). The Lord tells King Zedekiah to administer justice and rescue victims from their oppressors and not become overconfident and secure in his fortress in Jerusalem that overlooks the whole valley. Yahweh says that He will start a fire in their forests and will consume everything around it (vv. 11-14).

In this time of desperation, King Zedekiah turned to God for help by seeking advice from Jeremiah. What was wrong with King Zedekiah's approach in seeking God's help?

Jeremiah 22— This chapter can be confusing about who is descended from King Josiah. The opening verses are a warning to the sons of Josiah to be like him in administering justice and righteousness, rescuing the victims from the hand of the oppressor, and other such commands. If they followed these commands, they would still be blessed by God and continue on the throne of David. After the death of Josiah, his son Shallum (also called Jehoahaz) reigned for three months until being taken captive to Egypt by Pharaoh Neco (vv. 1-12). Another son of Josiah, Jehoiakim, was appointed by Pharaoh Neco to serve as a puppet king in 609 B.C. and reigned in Jerusalem for 11 years. Jehoiakim was only concerned about personal gain and building a massive palace on the backs of workers who served without pay. In 598 B.C., as Nebuchadnezzar's troops approached Jerusalem, Jehoiakim was buried like a donkey by being dragged off and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem (vv. 13-23). Jehoiakim's son Coniah (short for Jeconiah and also called Jehoiachin) reigned for three months and was then taken with his mother to Babylon where they would die. Because of Coniah's sin and rejection of the Lord, a curse was pronounced on him declaring that none of his descendants would sit on the throne of David (vv. 24-30).

In speaking about Coniah (Jehoiachin), the Lord says (verse 30) that none of His descendants will succeed sitting on the throne of David. Matthew 1:11 says that Jechoniah (Coniah/Jehoiachin) was in the line of Christ. How do we resolve this apparent contradiction? See also Luke 3:23-38.

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups . c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Halley's Bible Handbook, c. 2000, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL. 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN.

Psalm 119:1-48, Jeremiah 23-29 (#91)

Psalm 119:1-48 — This Psalm is an acrostic whose 22 stanzas of eight verses in each stanza begin with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. *Consider the possible contradiction between verses 4 and 5. What does this teach us about holiness, repentance, and devotion?*

Jeremiah 23— The Lord gives a warning of coming judgment to the shepherds (both political and spiritual leaders) who scattered the flock instead of caring for it. A day is coming when the Lord's flock will be gathered again to the land of Israel from all of the nations they were scattered, and they will be fruitful and numerous. The day is coming when the Righteous Branch of David, the Messiah, will reign as king and administer righteousness and justice in a united land. He will be named "Yahweh Our Righteousness (vv. 1-8)." Jeremiah's heart is broken for the great evil of the priests and prophets. They have abused their power and perpetrated evil even in the Lord's house. The prophets of Samaria and Jerusalem led the people astray by committing adultery, walking in lies, and strengthening the hands of evildoers. When they proclaim peace and safety, it comes from their own minds but not from the mouth of the Lord (vv. 9-17). A proof that their prophets ran with their own message instead of hearing from God is that they never tried to turn the people back from their evil ways. They understood God to be limited and localized, but Yahweh is omnipresent and sees everything and everyone. The true Word of God is like fire and like a hammer that pulverizes everything (vv. 18-32). The false prophets said that they have a "burden from the Lord." They were using that phrase to lend authority and credibility to what they were saying to the people, but in all actuality the words and ideas came from themselves. Yahweh will expel them from His presence and make them an object of ridicule (vv. 33-40). *Describe the message, motives, methods, and destiny of the false prophets found in the following passages; verse 17 (message), Micah 3:5, 11 (motives), II Timothy 4:3 (methods), and verse 40 (destiny).*

Jeremiah 24— In 598 B.C., after the second deportation of Judah which included King Jeconiah, the officials of Judah, and the craftsmen, the Lord showed Jeremiah two baskets of figs. The figs of the first basket were ripe and succulent, and the figs of the second basket were extremely bad and inedible. The first basket represented those sent off into exile that the Lord will watch over, transform, and bring back to the land. The bad figs are represented by King Zedekiah, the officials, and those left in Jerusalem and living in Egypt, who will become an object of horror and disaster and will perish from the land. *In verse 7 the Lord says, "I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord (ESV)." Since the Lord is able to change our hearts and transform us, what is an area in your life you are asking the Lord to change and transform?*

Jeremiah 25— In 605 B.C., Jeremiah says he has been preaching God’s coming judgment with no response from the people who prefer to continue in their sins and idolatry rather than repent and return to the Lord. Jeremiah prophesied that God’s servant Nebuchadnezzar from Babylon will come and destroy Judah and make them a desolation. Judah will serve Babylon for seventy years, and then the Lord will bring them back to their land (vv. 1-14). Judah and all the nations around them will drink the cup of the wine of God’s wrath administered by Babylon, and then at the end, Babylon itself would also drink of it (vv. 15-29). “The Lord’s judgment is described with other vivid images, including a deafening storm, the slaughter of sheep, the shattering of a pot, and a raging lion (vv. 30-38).” #12, p. 419. *Verse 11 and 29:10 says that Israel would be in Babylon for seventy years and then would be brought back to their homeland. What other person read these words of Jeremiah years later which caused him to repent and seek the Lord? What other prophecy containing the number seventy did the Lord reveal to this person? See Daniel 9:1-3, 24-27.*

Jeremiah 26— At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim in 609 B.C., Jeremiah stood in the courtyard of the temple and declared boldly the message of judgment on Judah with the possibility that if they repent and turn from their evil, Yahweh might relent concerning the disaster that would come because of their evil deeds (vv. 1-6). When the priests and prophets heard his message, they were infuriated and wanted to kill him. After hearing his prophecy, the officials and the people told the priests and prophets that Jeremiah didn’t deserve the death sentence since he had spoken in the name of Yahweh their God. The elders cited Micah who prophesied during King Hezekiah’s reign and who preached the same message as Jeremiah. Since Judah at that time repented, the Lord relented from sending disaster. Jeremiah was not handed over to the people to be put to death because of the support of Ahikam (vv. 7-19). After prophesying the same message of judgment as Jeremiah, Uriah had to flee to Egypt to escape the anger of King Jehoiakim. He was extradited back to Jerusalem and executed (vv. 20-24). *In this chapter two prophets preached the same message, but Jeremiah was saved from death, and Uriah was put to death. What other incidents in the New Testament are similar to this chapter? See Acts 12, John 21:18-22. What lesson does this teach us about the sovereign will of God for our lives and the lives of other believers?*

Jeremiah 27— In 593 B.C., God commands Jeremiah to wear an ox yoke with chains which were symbols of bondage **and proclaim to all the nations surrounding Judah to submit to the authority of Nebuchadnezzar of**

Babylon who is to subjugate all the peoples of the Middle East. These nations are not to believe the lies of their prophets, diviners, and sorcerers. If they don't put their necks under the yoke of Babylon, then they will be removed from their land and perish (vv. 1-11). Then Jeremiah repeats the same message to King Zedekiah, the priests, and all the people. He told them that they must surrender and serve the king of Babylon and live, and not believe the lies of the false prophets. The false prophets tried to convince King Zedekiah that the articles of the temple that were taken to Babylon would soon be returned to Jerusalem, but Jeremiah said that even the massive pillars of the temple would be taken to Babylon (vv. 12-22). *Verse 6 says, "I have placed all these lands under the authority of My servant Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (HCSB)." The dictator Nebuchadnezzar was called the servant of the Lord, and they were to submit to him. As Christians, what is to be our response to our leaders even though we may violently disagree with some of their politics, actions, and beliefs? Romans 13:1-7, I Peter 2:17, I Timothy 2:1-3. Who disobeyed Nebuchadnezzar for conscience sake and received deliverance from the Lord? See Daniel 3:1-30.*

Jeremiah 28— In the fourth year of King Zedekiah's reign in 594 B.C., Hananiah, a false prophet, quoted Yahweh as saying that in two years the yoke of Babylon will be broken, and the Lord will return all those in exile to Israel and restore all of the articles taken from the temple. Jeremiah reminds Hananiah that only when a prophecy comes true will the prophet be recognized as one truly sent from the Lord. Hananiah took off the yoke bar around the neck of Jeremiah and broke it. Jeremiah repeated God's words that an iron yoke will be placed on the neck of all the nations, and that they would serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The Lord through Jeremiah said that because Hananiah was trying to persuade the people to believe lies, he will die that same year. Two months later Hananiah died. *Because of their evil, Jeremiah said that God will change their wooden yoke for an iron yoke. What advantages do we have by being yoked up with Christ? See Matthew 11:28-30.*

Jeremiah 29— After King Jeconiah, the court officials, and the artisans had been exiled to Babylon in 598 B.C., Jeremiah sent a letter to them encouraging them to settle down to a normal life in this foreign land and seek the welfare of Babylon so that they would prosper. The deported people of Judah would spend 70 years in Babylon before being restored to their homeland. Since the hearts of the people were far from God, He promised that they would find Him if they searched for Him with all their hearts (vv. 1-14). Jeremiah told the exiled Jews not to believe the message that they would soon return that was given by the false prophets. They must consider themselves blessed since those who live in Jerusalem are rotten figs that will receive the sword, famine, and plagues because

they have not listened to the warning by the prophets of Yahweh (vv. 15-19). Ahab and Zedekiah, two lying prophets, will be handed over to Nebuchadnezzar and be killed before the eyes of everyone for their committing adultery with their neighbor's wives and speaking lies in the name of the Lord. From Babylon, Shemaiah, the false prophet, sent a letter to the priest Zephaniah in Jerusalem to get him to put Jeremiah in stocks for his unpatriotic words. The Lord said that because he prophesied lies, neither Shemaiah, nor any of his descendents will ever see the good that God will bring to his people (vv. 20-32). *What were the promises that God gave to the exiles in Babylon that would give them encouragement and hope? See Verse 11 to 14.*

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Psalm 119:49-96, Jeremiah 30-35 (#92)

Psalm 119:49-96 – The psalmist takes comfort in the promised blessings for those who keep God’s Word. *What are the different words the author used to describe the Word of God?*

Jeremiah 30— Although there is a near fulfillment of this prophecy when King Cyrus of Media-Persia allowed Israel to return to their land after the seventy years captivity in Babylon, the major fulfillment will be in the latter days when the tribulation period will be a time of Jacob’s trouble. This will be an era when Israel will be purified through persecution, and only one-third of Israelites will be alive to enter into the Kingdom of the Messiah (v. 9 and Zechariah 13:8-9). The Lord will use suffering to discipline His people for their enormous guilt and flagrant sins, but will bring destruction upon the nations from which they have been scattered because of their wickedness. Yahweh will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and a sound of celebration and thanksgiving will be heard in all the cities of Israel. *Verse 7 says, “How awful that day will be! There will be none like it! It will be a time of the trouble (distress) of Jacob, but he will be delivered out of it (HCSB).” What period of time is the author speaking about? See verse 9, Matthew 24:15-22, and Daniel 12:1.*

Jeremiah 31— This chapter now looks forward to the gathering of Israel in the latter days from the remote regions of the earth when Yahweh establishes His everlasting covenant with all of Israel. This future age will be such a time of joy and happiness for the remnant of Israel because of the Lord’s goodness, and the boundless material and spiritual blessings they will receive (vv. 1-14). There was bitter weeping by Rachel for the loss of her children due to their disobedience and wickedness. Because of the Lord’s discipline, a time will come when Ephraim will repent, return to God, and will be restored (vv. 15-30). The Lord announces a glorious New Covenant with both the house of Israel and Judah that will not be like previous covenant under Moses. God guarantees the fulfillment of the New Covenant in verses 35 to 37. *1. In what way would the New Covenant be different than the Mosaic Covenant? See verses 33-34. 2. What illustrations did the Lord give to assure Israel the fulfillment of the New Covenant? See verses 35-37.*

Jeremiah 32— In 587 B.C., during the time of the siege on Jerusalem, the Lord told Jeremiah to buy a field in Anathoth from his cousin Hanamel, thus demonstrating his trust in God’s Word when the Lord said that He would

bring His people back to their land in the future and rebuild Jerusalem (vv. 1-15). Jeremiah was troubled with the Lord's command to buy land just a short time before its utter destruction. He declared the great power of the Lord by saying to God, "Nothing is too difficult for you (vv. 16-25)." The Lord repeated that the Chaldeans will capture Jerusalem and set the city on fire because the king, officials, and leaders had turned their backs on Yahweh. God had Jeremiah buy the land in Anathoth as a witness to the promise that one day He will make an everlasting covenant with all Israel that will give them a new heart to love and obey Him, and He will take delight in them. Fields again will be bought when the Lord restores the fortunes of His people (vv. 26-44). Verse 27
says, "I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me (NIV)?" What two impossible things happened when the Lord gave similar words? See Genesis 18:13-14 and Luke 1:34-37. What do you need the God of the impossible to do in your life?

Jeremiah 33— Jeremiah was still confined in the guard's courtyard. Even though God's decree of total destruction of Jerusalem is immediately on the horizon, the Lord takes this opportunity to look to the future and promises the return of Israel to the land. After seventy years, the fortunes of the people of Judah and Israel will be restored, and they will return from Babylon to rebuild their cities and cultivate their land. Their rebellions and sins will be forgiven, and the sound of joy and praise to the Lord of Hosts will once again be heard (vv. 1-13). Then the chapter looks forward to the restoration of the Jewish nation in the latter times. The Righteous Branch will spring up from the line of David to administer justice and righteousness in the land. The covenant of Yahweh with Israel can never be broken, and He will never retract His unconditional oath to them. The fulfillment of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants is as certain as the appearance of the day and the night (vv. 14-26). Verse 3 says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will show you great and mighty things, which you do not know (NKJB)." What is one prerequisite to receive answers to prayer? See Matthew 7:7, James 4:2c, and Psalm 145:18-19. What are we acknowledging when we bring our prayer requests to God?

Jeremiah 34— In 588 B.C., just before the fall of Jerusalem, the Lord promised King Zedekiah that he would not be killed by the sword but would meet the king of Babylon face to face and die peacefully in Babylon. His death would

be lamented by the people (vv. 1-7). King Zedekiah made a covenant with the people to free all the slaves according to the command of God, but the slave owners changed their minds later and forced the slaves to return to them (vv. 8-16). The Lord declared that since the slave owners did not proclaim freedom to the slaves, He would declare freedom to the slave owners to be killed by the sword, plague, and famine. The Babylonian army will return to Jerusalem, and the Lord would treat those who broke the covenant like the calves that were cut in two at the covenant making ceremony (vv. 17-22). *Explain the procedure of the covenant making ceremony given in this chapter and in Genesis? See verses 18-19, Genesis 15:17-18. What did breaking the covenant mean?*

Jeremiah 35— In this chapter, the Lord makes an example of the Rechabites who for 200 years had obeyed the command of Jonadab to not drink wine and to live in a nomadic lifestyle by dwelling in tents. When Jeremiah brought them into the temple and invited them to drink wine, they refused because of the command of their ancestor. They were commended by God for their faithfulness by giving them a promise of preserving their godly line into the future. Their lives were in stark contrast to the unfaithfulness and disobedience of the people of Judah. Jonadab gave one command which was obeyed by the entire family for 200 years, and yet God had spoken to His people over and over again through His servants the prophets, and they did not pay attention to them or obey them. *Contrast the obedience of the Rechabites with the disobedience of Judah. How does this apply to our lives?*

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Psalm 119:97-136, Jeremiah 36-40 (#93)

Psalm 119:97-136— These stanzas of Psalm 119 reflect praise of God’s Word, commitment to keep it, and requests for divine providence. As you reflect upon the stanzas of this psalm, what stands out to you?

Jeremiah 36— In 605 B.C, the Lord commands Jeremiah to write all the words of coming judgment He had spoken through Jeremiah with the goal of bringing Judah to repentance and averting destruction. Jeremiah was restricted from entering the temple so he dictated the words he received from the Lord to the scribe Baruch who was go to the temple and read them to the leaders, people, and finally the king. In the ninth month a fast before the Lord was proclaimed, and Baruch read the words of the prophecies to the officials and the people. Moved with fear, the officials told Baruch and Jeremiah to hide themselves, and then they took and read the scroll to the king and all his officials (vv. 1-18). As he heard the scroll being read, King Jehoiakim cut it up page by page and burned them in the fireplace even though some urged him not to do it. Although the king ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch, the Lord had hidden them. Then the Lord commanded Jeremiah to write another scroll with the same words of the original scroll, and other words were added to it. Yahweh pronounced severe judgment on Jehoiakim for his wrongdoing (vv. 19-32). *King Jehoiakim thought that by burning the pages of the scroll in the fire that he could destroy God’s Word. Using a concordance, what are some verses in the Bible that speaks of the power, eternity, and indestructibility of the Word of God?*

Jeremiah 37 – Babylon laid siege against Jerusalem in 588 B.C. because Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and sought help from Egypt. When the army of Egypt came out to fight Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldeans temporarily withdrew from Jerusalem. The king came to Jeremiah to ask for prayer and get a word from the Lord. Jeremiah repeated that the Chaldeans would return to Jerusalem, capture it, and burn it down (vv. 1-10). When Jeremiah tried to leave the city to claim his share of land among his relatives, an officer of the guard accused him of treason by deserting to the Chaldeans. Jeremiah was beaten and placed in a dungeon for many days (vv. 11-16). King Zedekiah asked Jeremiah for a word from the Lord again and was told that he and Judah would be turned over to Babylon. Upon Jeremiah’s plea, King Zedekiah transferred him from the dungeon to the guard’s courtyard (vv. 17-21). *After reading this chapter, describe what type of person King Zedekiah was. Why did the king ask for prayer and a word from the Lord?*

Jeremiah 38— Some of the resistance leaders heard Jeremiah prophesying of impending judgment on the city and petitioned the king to have him killed because he was weakening the morale of the people. The King allowed the

royal officials to take Jeremiah and drop him into a cistern where he sank into the mud and was left for dead. Ebed-melech, a court official, requested to King Zedekiah that he be allowed to rescue Jeremiah before he died in the cistern. With the king's permission, Ebed-melech took thirty men with him and pulled Jeremiah out of the cistern with a rope, old rags, and old clothes (vv. 1-13). King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah in order to once again hear from God in hope of better news, but Jeremiah repeated the same words as before. He warned the king to obey the voice of the Lord and surrender, so that all would go well and that the city would not be burned down. Jeremiah remained in the courtyard until the day Jerusalem was captured (vv.14-28). *What should we commend Jeremiah and Ebed-melech for in this chapter? How are the lives of these two men examples to us in times of difficulty or persecution?*

Jeremiah 39— The siege of King Nebuchadnezzar lasted about two and a half years until July 586 B.C. when the walls were penetrated. The Babylonian army entered the city and King Zedekiah and the nobles ran for their lives. The Babylonians caught up with them near Jericho and brought them to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah which is 200 miles north of Jerusalem. The sons and nobles of King Zedekiah were slaughtered before his eyes, and then his eyes were put out, and he was taken to Babylon in chains. The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, carried most of the people to Babylon, but left the poorest behind to tend the fields and vineyards (vv. 1-10). Jeremiah was rescued from the guard's courtyard by Nebuzaradan, the Babylonian commander of the guard, and was turned over to Gedaliah who allowed him to live among his people in Judah. God promised to rescue Ebed-melech during the Babylonian invasion of Jerusalem because he trusted the Lord to protect him when he saved the life of Jeremiah (vv. 11-18). *What is a major lesson taught to us in this chapter by the lives of King Zedekiah and Ebed-melech? See Galatians 6:7-8.*

Jeremiah 40— Nebuzaradan found Jeremiah in chains with all the other people who were being exiled to Babylon. He gave Jeremiah the freedom to choose to go to Babylon with him or to stay in Israel with those who left behind. With the encouragement of Nebuzaradan, Jeremiah decided to stay with Gedaliah, the new governor, at Mizpah (vv. 1-6). Gedaliah reassures all those who are left in Israel that they will be safe under the rule of the Chaldeans. Judeans from Moab, Ammon, and Edom returned to their land. Johanan warned Gedaliah that Ishmael was trying to kill him, but he did not believe him. *Chapter 41 describes the assassination of Gedaliah by Ishmael. What was Gedaliah's fatal flaw? See 40:13-16, 41:1-3. What lesson can we learn from this?*

Sources for summary and questions: 1. Serendipity Bible for Groups . c. 1988 Littleton, CO. 2. MacArthur Study Bible ESV. 1997 Thomas Nelson, Inc. 3. Life Application Bible HCSB c. 1988 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 4. The Complete Bible Companion c.2014 Barbour Publishing, Inc. Uhrichsville, OH. 5. ESV Study Bible c. 2008 Crossway Bibles, Wheaton, IL. 6. The World Bible Handbook, Lawrence Richards, Word Inc. Waco, TX. 7. The Quest Study Bible NIV, c. 1994 Zondervan Publishing & Christianity Today, Grand Rapids, MI & Wheaton, IL. 8. The Transformation Study Bible, c. 2009, David C. Cook. 9. Halley's Bible Handbook, c. 2000, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI. 10. 500 Questions & Answers from the Bible, c. 2006, Barbour Publishing, Uhrichsville, OH. 11. Understanding the Bible c. 2000, Holman Publishers, Nashville, TN. 12. Homan Bible Handbook, c.1992, Homan Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 13. Moody Bible Commentary, c. 2014, Moody Publishers, Chicago, IL 14. Life Essentials Study Bible, c. 2011, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN.