

Jeremiah 52
There's Always Hope; Look Up
J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Would you join me in a word of prayer? Heavenly Father, yes how great is Your love for us that You provide teaching, Lord, that You provided Your word. And as we look to Your word and finish up the chapter in Jeremiah Lord, we thank You for that example. And in many ways the Book of Jeremiah and Jeremiah's story, Lord, it's very much like today.

And Your words says that the scoffers will come Lord in the end times, and it feels like we're here. So Lord, we thank You, Lord, for the encouragement, the strength that's only found in Your word. So would You bless this teaching, Lord?

Would You be with Pastor JD, Lord, and his family? And watch over this church? This is Your church, Lord. We thank You for this time together here this evening, Lord. Speak to us, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen. Amen! Good evening to you. You could be seated. Thank you. Welcome! How you doing tonight? [Audience says, "Blessed."]

PASTOR JD: Blessed? All right! Those of you online, we want to welcome you as well. And as Kapono just prayed, we are going to finish the Book of Jeremiah tonight, Chapter 52. So really looking forward to this most interesting chapter.

But before we get started, I would like to take a moment and pray for the people of Turkey and Syria. Doubtless you're aware of what happened, this major earthquake, major earthquake.

So I checked my newsfeed online before the Bible study, and it is now estimated that the death toll has exceeded 21,000, and it continues to go up. So your day four, heading into day five now with the rescue efforts and certainly there are many miracles, but when that much time goes by, it does become increasingly unlikely that you'll find survivors.

So you know, God is able. But one of the things that sort of hit me today was, and God's been doing a work in my life in this regard over the years, as I've shared very candidly with you. You know, the thing about Bible prophecy is when you start talking about Syria, in Bible prophecy, Turkey in Bible prophecy, Russia, Iran, et al, you tend to disconnect the reality that these are people because now they're just nations involved in this prophecy in the end times.

But actually these are — these are people. And when you read a statistic or hear a number like 21,000, this is a five-digit number, but that's 21,000 people. These are sons, daughters. You know, the heartbreaking ones, of course, are the children. And it's hard to see the images when they, you know, get a baby out of there, but....

These are people. And 21,000 — again, I like to try to put into perspective whenever I can and as much as I'm able. But if the population of Kaneohe proper is 40,000, that would be half of the population of Kaneohe, 21,000 people. So many lives have been impacted.

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We had our prayer meeting on Tuesday night. I really appreciated the prayers for Turkey and Syria. But you know... and God, again, is able, and He can take something this bad and He can make good come from it. He can bring people to Him, to salvation because of it.

But I want to pray very specifically if you would please join with me for the people of Turkey and Syria and all those impacted.

Father in Heaven, it's times like this that we so appreciate prayer, the power of prayer, the access that we have to You in prayer. And Lord, we just want to come to You at this time and ask very specifically in prayer for Your mercy for all of the people that have been impacted by this, that are even now experiencing such intense pain and sorrow and grief and loss and just even, Lord, the unknown.

Lord, I just — I pray that You, as only You can and are always so faithful to would reveal Yourself to these precious people, the survivors. Lord, reveal Yourself to them in such a way as only You can, I mean, just so it's unmistakably You, as You, by the Holy Spirit, bring comfort and supernatural peace, supernatural strength, and more importantly, salvation because of this.

Lord, bring many to You because of this. All of the workers that are working tirelessly to rescue as many as they can in this effort, people from all over the world going into these areas, Lord, many of whom are brothers and sisters in Christ, thankfully.

Lord, I pray for supernatural strength for them that You would just sustain them and strengthen them and bless them for their efforts and use this Lord for Your glory. This is devastating.

But God, You are able, and we're just going to look to You and in advance, thank You, glorify You, trust You, and see what You're going to do in and through something as horrific as this.

So Lord, thank You. We pray for the people of Turkey, the people of Syria, and all of the people in those areas that were impacted, not just in Turkey and Syria, and especially Syria, just how much, Lord.

But You, Lord, I know You can get through and are getting through to these precious people that You love so much. Lord for the injured, lastly, I just — I mean, the death toll, of course, it's a mind-numbing number and it's a horrifying number.

But how about all of the people physically injured and whose lives will never be the same again? And just the impact, the toll that this takes. And I was even thinking, Lord, about the financial impact economically. And here's an area that is already, I mean, the poverty is so profound.

So Lord, I want to pray for provision, miraculous provision of every need. So Lord, thank You. Thank You that we can pray. Thank You that when we pray, we know that You hear our prayers, and You answer our prayers for Your glory. So thank You, Lord.

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Lord, tonight we are going to finish this amazing book of Jeremiah. And yeah, we're going to sort of miss Jeremiah. Of course, we get to spend a little bit more time with him in Lamentations, Lord willing, next week, but in a different sort of way.

So Lord, thank You for this book, this final chapter here, interesting Chapter; there's so much here. And so we're just going to look to You again and trust that You're going to allow us, enable us by the Holy Spirit, to see everything that You want to show us, hear everything You want to speak to us. And so that we take from our time together tonight, from You into our lives the application, the riches that are here for us because this is here for a reason.

And so, Lord, we want to know that reason. So speak into our lives in and through Your word, we pray in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

All right. So last chapter. However, this is one of those places in God's word where you sort of have to ask yourself the question of: Why is this chapter in our Bibles? Actually, the answer is found at the end of the chapter, and believe you me, I have to confess that I resisted the temptation to rush through the first part to get to the end because the best is saved for the last.

When we get to the end of this chapter, it's kind of like the light bulb goes off, and it's like, oh, now I know why this chapter is in my Bible. And actually, very thankful that this chapter is in our Bible at the end of this book.

Could you imagine if the Book of Jeremiah ended with Chapter 51? Do you remember last week, Chapter 51, the judgment on Babylon? And then the book ends that way? Wow! It's kind of like the Lord knew we needed a happy ending to this very sad, intense, difficult book. And we got it right here in Chapter 52.

Now, when we get to the end, what we're going to see is that there's always hope. And that should encourage us to look up as God lifts our heads up. And that's what He's going to do at the end of the chapter.

Now, it should be noted that there's some debate about the author of this last chapter. Some suggest it's Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe. Others suggest it could even be Ezra. We don't know.

That's by God's design. It's unnecessary. It's irrelevant. It's inconsequential. But it is unlikely that Jeremiah is the author of this chapter for a number of reasons.

But this, in and of itself, confirms and sort of reinforces this message of hope that is in this chapter, and this for two reasons: The first of which is that it testifies to the credibility and integrity of this faithful, weeping prophet Jeremiah, who for 40 years prophesied against the opposition, the threats on his life, the mocking, the scoffing, the ridiculing, nobody listening to him, everybody laughing at him.

For 40 years, no one took heed to his prophecies. Yet every single prophecy was fulfilled with 100% accuracy, and Chapter 52 testifies to that. So it's kind of like a vindication. It's a

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sanctified vindication of our good friend Jeremiah, who we've gotten to know over the last — how long has it been?

Has it been a year? I don't know. I don't want to know maybe. Has it been a year? We've been in Jeremiah for — really? Wow! Why not? Wow!

Well, that's not bad, you know. I think when we went through Romans, it was like two-and-a-half-years?

Were you here then? I think you probably never came back after that. It was kind of like, wow, man, that was brutal. Yeah, it was a good brutal.

But anyway, so here's our good friend Jeremiah. We've gotten to know him for, I guess, a year now. And all of these prophecies that were recorded with specificity came to pass exactly as he prophesied that they would.

So we need a Chapter 52 to vindicate our friend Jeremiah, number 1.

And number 2, and it actually ties in, it's that of whoever it is that got inspired to write and author this chapter did so to give the reader hope that God's word and God's will will be fulfilled because they were fulfilled.

Let me say the same thing in a different way. In the end, at the end of the day, as we say, it happened exactly as we were told it would by Jeremiah the prophet, not just the captivity by the Babylonians, but the restoration of Judah.

In other words, God, in these prophecies, wrapped and packaged with them promises to Judah. I'm not through with you, Judah. I'm going to restore you, Judah. And He did. And that should give us hope. And we should lift up our heads.

Actually, He's the lifter of our heads. As the sweet psalmist of Israel, David, would write, "You're the lifter of my head." I'm downcast. I'm discouraged. That discouragement has given way to despair.

And the Lord comes along, and He lifts up your head. And you look up, and He strengthens those feeble knees, and He gives you hope. He's the God of hope. There's always hope. Look up. Look up and lift up your head.

So that's why we have it in our Bibles.

Now as we go through this, you're going to see that it's, as one said, *déjà vu* all over again. I know that's redundant. But it's going to sound like we've read this before almost verbatim, and that's because we've read this before, almost verbatim. But there's again, a reason, as we'll see.

So let's jump in, *verse 1*. **"Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.**

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He also [Verse 2] did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For because of the anger of the Lord this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, till He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Now it came to pass [Verse 4] in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month [Notice the specificity] that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it, and they built a siege wall against it all around. So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah."

A year-and-a-half, 18 months. Three times, three different sieges. Finally, the third time they took all of the captives, as we're going to see here shortly.

"By the fourth month, [Verse 6] on the ninth day of the month, the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land."

Again, sounds familiar, right? Now, why the detail? Why do we need to have this now recorded for us a second time? I believe it's for this reason, among others.

This military strategy in that day, when you would want to besiege and take and conquer a city, you would encamp around about it. And the first thing you would do strategically, militarily, is cut off their food supply and their water supply.

Now, whatever they have inside the city walls is whatever they have. And once they run out of that, you got them.

Do you see the application here? Please don't miss this. It's huge. The implications are huge because this is exactly the strategy of the enemy in our lives.

He encamps around about us, and he seeks first and foremost to cut off our supply, the source of living water, of the bread of life. Because "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God." That is our sustenance.

And if we then come to that place where that supply, that source has been cut off, and there's this famine of the Word of God, the bread of life, the water of life, the enemy's got us.

And it's very interesting because you got to know that over a period of 18 months, and that's why the detail, I think, is so important. We know the day, the month, the month on the day and the time that all of this took place.

And, of course, history bears it out. We know the exact month, the year that these sieges took place and the captivity took place as they carried them to Babylon. And not only do we know when they did it, we also know how they did it.

And that should give us pause because the enemy does this in our life, and it's over a period of time. You know, just a day goes by, and then it's a week goes by. We haven't been in the word. We haven't been fed. We haven't drunk from the well of the water of life.

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And it's not long before we realize that all of a sudden now there's a famine in our spiritual lives, and we become spiritually weak. And then it's just a matter of time before the enemy is able to conquer us. Because he first cut off our water supply and our food supply in this spiritual sense. So now it's just a matter of time.

Verse 7, "Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled and went out of the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were near the city all around. And they went by way of the plain.

But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered before him."

He's trying to run from the Chaldeans who are going to take him captive, but he doesn't get very far.

Verse 9, "So they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he pronounced judgment on him. Then the king of Babylon killed [This is graphic] the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. And he killed all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

He also [Verse 11] put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and the king of Babylon bound him in bronze fetters, took him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death."

Now, here again, all the detail. It could be argued it's too much information. I really don't want to know about this. This is — I can't even imagine this.

I have two sons. I can't imagine that this would happen, that they would be killed in front of me and before my eyes. And then after that, that would be the last thing I would see before then they put out my eyes. And then I'm bound and taken captive to Babylon, where I would be put in a prison and left to die. And that's how it would end for me.

Do you realize this was a prophecy? This is Jeremiah 34. And we went into detail into the fulfillment of this most interesting prophecy because this detail provides us with the confirmation of the fulfillment of the prophecy that Jeremiah prophesied in all of its detail.

Let me just read *verses 3-5, Jeremiah 34*. **"And you shall not escape [Speaking of Zedekiah] from his hand [Speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon] but shall surely be taken and delivered into his hand. Your eyes shall see the eyes of the king of Babylon, he shall speak with you face to face, and you shall go to Babylon."**

Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah! Thus says the Lord concerning you: 'You shall not die by the sword. You shall die in peace; as in the ceremonies of your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they shall burn incense for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, lord!" For I have pronounced the word, says the Lord.'

In other words, Zedekiah, this is how it's going to end for you.

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Wait a minute, I'm going to see the King of Babylon? I'm going to go to Babylon? But I'm not going to see Babylon? How is that going to happen? Now stay with me.

This is what makes this so interesting because it kind of creates a conundrum of sorts because the prophecy is that Zedekiah is going to go to Babylon without seeing Babylon. So how is this prophecy going to be fulfilled?

And *Ezekiel's* prophecy echoes this same conundrum. It's in *Chapter 12:12-13*. **“And the prince who is among them shall bear his belongings on his shoulder at twilight and go out. They shall dig through the wall to carry them out through it. He shall cover his face, so that he cannot see the ground with his eyes.**

I will also spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there.”

It's almost like a riddle, right? You know how — my daughter and I were talking about her math. You know they're doing word problems. You know what word problems are? They're of the devil is what they are.

[Laughter]

So you know, Jack and Jill go down the hill at four miles per hour, and they have a wind going against them at 2.75 miles per hour. And so you've got to solve the problem. What is the temperature in Brazil?

That's the — what? I hated them. I could never figure them out. I mean, I get the point behind them because it really forces you to, you know, process and think it through and come up with the solution to the conundrum.

By the way, there is no answer to — you know that was a — okay, anyway. I don't care what the temperature is in Brazil, is what I'm trying to say.

Well, this is kind of like that. So it's a riddle. It's a prophecy. But it's kind of a conundrum. So the prophecy is that Zedekiah is going to go to Babylon, but he's not going to see Babylon.

How is that prophecy going to be fulfilled?

So *Jeremiah 52* and *2 Kings 25* gives us the answer to this “what is the temperature in Brazil problem.”

2 Kings Chapter 25, beginning in verse 1, **“Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that [Does this sound familiar?] that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it, and they built a siege wall against it all around. So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.**

By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine had become so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. Then the city wall was broken through, and

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all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city.

And the king went by way of the plain. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. So [Verse 6] they took the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah [Exactly as Jeremiah had prophesied] and they pronounced judgment on him. [Exactly as Jeremiah had prophesied]

Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.”

Oh, that's how. Well, here's where I'm going with this. There are prophecies in the Bible. There are situations in our life that seem so complex we cannot figure out for the life of us, try as we may, how is God going to fulfill this? This seems impossible.

Well, wait a minute, it happened exactly that way. His eyes were put out, and he was taken to Babylon, and the prophecy was fulfilled, but he never saw Babylon. That's how. And that's the temperature in Brazil and Babylon for that matter.

Okay, last time I'm going to use that, I kind of wore it out, maybe.

So what's the point?

Here's the point. We may not know how God is going to do it. We may not know when God is going to do it. We may not know the way God is going to do it. In fact, if we're honest with ourselves, we actually don't really believe that God is going to do it because it just seems so complex and perplexing and even impossible.

But God will do it. He'll do it His way. In His time for His glory. But you could be rest assured that God will do it.

And it goes both ways, both sides of the table, if you will. So if God said it, that settles it.

Okay, well, when it comes to the judgment of God, okay, I'm cool as long as I'm on the receiving end of that judgment. But what about the promises of God? What about the blessings of God, the many, literally thousands of promises in the pages of Holy Writ that God has said, I give you My word I'm going to do this?

Our response? I don't know how You're going to do it.

That's okay, JD. I know how I'm going to do it.

Yeah, but God, this — this is a — this is a this is a word problem that has no solution, this is a — this is a — this is so complex. This is impossible.

And God's like, JD, I'm the God of the impossible. In fact, actually, I made it impossible so I could do it.

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See, if it were still possible for you, I know you; you're going to do it. Well, you're going to try. See if it's still possible for you, then it's impossible for Me because I'm not going to force Myself on you if it's still possible, and you're still holding out hope that you can figure it out and work it out.

And God's like, okay, just let Me know when you're ready. I'll be here when you've tried and failed and then you come back to Me, and now this thing is so messed up, and you throw your hands up, you say, God, this is impossible!

(Chuckling)

I just, I don't know. I just have this image in my mind. I just picture the heavenly host, the angels given charge concerning me just looking down at me going, man, this guy, he does not get it.

What is up with this guy? What — what took you so long? You could have spared yourself so much sorrow and misery, and suffering and pain, and frustration and agony had you but come to him, said, “God, here, this is impossible.”

And God's response in His grace, His love is always this: Okay, watch Me now! And He does it.

And then we just stand in awe of Him. Wow, God, that was amazing!

And God's like, I know. I'm amazing.

God, that was awesome!

I know. I'm awesome.

How did You do that?

I'm God. Is there anything too hard for Me?

Yeah, but, God, I — this — this looked so dire and so hopeless and so impossible. I — I just — I thought this is it. And then You pulled through, and You did it. And You did it in such a way that it's unmistakably You.

There's no question. There's no way that anyone could say, present company included, yeah, well, it could be explained. No, there's no explanation other than God did it.

I didn't know how He was going to do it. I didn't know the way He was going to do it. But by faith, I'm promised that He will do it. You know, when we — it's an often-quoted verse in Hebrews, you know, **“Without faith, it is impossible to please God.”**

I think it's unfortunate because we take a promise and a verse like that in the word of God, and we — we just kind of, you know, we've got it memorized, we quote it, and we talk about it, and we know it, but then we just kind of dismiss it.

Do you realize what that is saying?

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If it's impossible to please God without faith, that means that it's possible to please God with faith. And I don't think there's one of us here tonight that doesn't want to please God, right?

So you're telling me that when I have faith, God is pleased?

He is delighted. And He finds our faith irresistible. And what I mean by that is He can't resist it when a child of His puts their faith in Him and trusts Him to do the impossible, it is almost like this, and again, I know this is just how I think.

I have a very interesting relationship with the Lord, and we have great times together, and we have many great conversations. You know, I talk to Him. He talks back to me, too, by the way.

No, I'm not hearing voices. I'm hearing the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit. Okay, just so we're clear before you — before you start drawing some conclusions about my mental state.

But, you know, I just picture, you know, the Lord's like, you know, I want to do this for you. And as soon as I noticed that you were putting all of your trust in Me and all of your faith in Me to do this for you, for My glory, man, I can't — I can't resist that.

And so I'm like, hey, let's get down there. Did you see JD? He's trusting in Me, and whoever puts their trust in Me, they're never going to be disappointed; are you kidding Me? I'm not going to let him down. I'm going to show up, and I'm going to do this thing. He's depending on Me. He's relying on Me. He's trusting in Me. He's putting his faith in Me. Let's do this.

He can't resist. He finds it irresistible. I think about it like a parent, an earthly, fallen parent with your children, right? And they come to you fully relying on you, depending on you, trusting you.

When the boys — my boys were little, we, in our devotions, teaching them about faith and trust. And, you know, the trust game where you have them close their eyes and fall back, and you catch them? I completely ruined — and no wonder they're scarred for life — because I thought it would just be funny to not, you know, and then they're just like.... so...

That explains a lot now that I think about it.

But no, they're fully trusting, not by sight, by faith, the antithesis of sight. Because **“faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.”** So they're just trusting, total faith, childlike faith that I'm going to catch them.

So when I have that kind of faith and trust in the Lord, He's not going to, unlike me as an earthly father, He's not going to catch me and provide for me and...? I'm never going to be disappointed.

Yeah, but, Pastor, I'm in a situation right now that is so, I mean, it is so complicated, it is so messed up, it is so awful, I just — and I know the promises is that God is going to work it out for the good because it does very specifically say in *Romans 8:28*, which is another one of

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those verses that I think we — we sing it, we memorize it, we quote it, we say it, we know it, but do we really understand it?

Because it's very specific that we KNOW, not wish, hope, think. No, we KNOW that God works ALL...

Aren't you glad it doesn't say “most” things? Just kind of depends on your situation and how good of a Christian you've been this last week, and how much time you spent in the word and prayer. Did you tithe?

Thank God we're not under law. That's called legalism. I'm allergic to legalism, by the way. If I get anywhere close to it, I break out into a rash, and my eyes start swelling up and my — anyway, it's horrible. Legalism. It's demonic. We're not under the law; it's grace. It's grace.

And so God works ALL things together for the good.

Yeah, but not this one.

No, it says “all.” No, that's “all,” right?

Yeah, but not this.

No, but that's an “all” that's in all. Because it's all, and “all” means [Audience says, “All”] thank You.”

He's gonna **“work all things together for the good to them that love Him and are called according to His purpose.”** And His purpose that we're called to is the next verse, which is to **“conform us into the image of Jesus Christ,”** to make us more like Jesus.

And by the way, that's another one, interestingly enough. And I know I'm going way off on this, and we've got a lot of chapter left. I'm savoring the flavor of this book.

But if that's the purpose, then wouldn't it stand to reason that that trial in my life that is so bad that God is going to work together for the good has the much-needed effect of making me more like Jesus, who is love, joy, patient, gentle, meek, all of the above.

That's what the purpose is. That's the purpose — that's why God has allowed it. And God will do it. And you'll see.

Psalm 27:13-14, David said, I almost tossed the towel in. I had almost given up. But I'm still confident that I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, and then he kind of has a talk with himself.

This is different than self-talk. This is talking to yourself. It's telling yourself, sit down, boy, we need to talk. You wait on the Lord. You be of good courage and be strong and wait. Just wait. You'll see.

Yeah, but I don't know how God's going to...

Yeah, you'll see.

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You know how we would say that to our kids? Just wait. You'll see. I used to hate that. Especially when you asked your mom and dad, you know, as a kid? Hey, Mommy, can we...? We'll see.

That usually meant "no."

But not in *Psalms 27:13-14*. "Just wait; you'll see" means "Yes, it will happen."

Well, *verse 12*. **"Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.**

He burned the house of the Lord and the king's house, all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all around.

Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive some of the poor people, the rest of the people who remained in the city, the defectors who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the craftsmen.

But [Verse 16] Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers. The bronze pillars that were in the house of the Lord, and the carts and the bronze Sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried all their bronze to Babylon.

They also took away the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the bowls, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered." [*Are we going to get an inventory of the pantry here?*]

Well, this detail comes into play in another prophecy in Daniel Chapter 5.

"The basins, the firepans, the bowls, the pots, the lampstands, the spoons, and the cups, whatever was [Oh, I get it now] solid gold and whatever was solid silver the captain of the guard took away. [You're going to regret that one day]

The two pillars, one Sea, the twelve bronze bulls which were under it, and the carts, which King Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these articles was beyond measure. [You couldn't weigh it, you couldn't gauge it, you couldn't measure it]

Now, concerning the pillars..." [*Verse 21*]

We actually studied this, very fascinating, magnificent, by the way, these pillars.

"The height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, a measuring line of twelve cubits could measure its circumference, and its thickness was four fingers; it was hollow.

A capital [Verse 22] of bronze was on it; and the height of one capital was five cubits, with a network and pomegranates all around the capital, all of bronze. The second pillar, with

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pomegranates was the same. There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates, all around on the network, were one hundred.

[That's a lot of pomegranates] [It's a lot of money]

The captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. He also *[Verse 25]* took out of the city an officer who had charge of the men of war, seven men of the king's close associates who were found in the city, the principal scribe of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the midst of the city.

And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.”

Then we're almost done here. Hang on. I mean, why do we need to know all this? You'll see. Just wait.

“Then *[Verse 27]* the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive from its own land. These are the people *[Verse 28]* whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews; in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons; in *[Verse 30]* the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred and forty-five persons. All the persons were four thousand six hundred.”

That's all? Wait. Okay, question. Actually, I have a couple of questions here if you don't mind.

Why do we need to know this? Question number 1.

Question number 2: Why are the totals seemingly so low? Wouldn't there have been more in these three different invasions and taking captives?

And I mean, we're given quite a bit of detail down to the pots and pans and all of the articles and all of the gold, solid gold, not plated, and all of the solid silver. And now we're also told about these people that were carried away, and then the third time, and then the total, 4600.

So let's talk about the first question first. Why do we have this detail? Why do we need to know this?

Because it speaks to the absolute devastation and desolation that ensued because of Judah's sin.

Now, next week, spoiler alert, Lamentations Chapter 1, Lord willing, we're going to see what our sin causes. What it causes us, what it causes others, and infinitely more important, what it causes God.

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As I was reading just Chapter 1 Lamentations, there's five chapters, five songs — actually I shouldn't tell you this because maybe you won't come — but they're actually funeral dirges. They're poems. They're songs. They're mourning, songs of mourning.

So are you still going to come next week?

Well, the first dirge — I found, 50. I stopped because I knew there were probably more, but I just — 50's a round number. I just stopped at 50. 50 consequences of my sin. Bitterness. Loneliness. Fear. Insecurity. 50 of them.

Now you're really not going to come next week. Like you want to hear that.

What's your point, Pastor?

My point is this. We have this detail because we need to have driven home the seriousness of Judah's sin because the seriousness of Judah's sin is the seriousness of our sin, the consequences of our sin. All of these people were taken captive.

All of these things from Solomon's Temple, all of these riches. You couldn't even count the worth, measure them. They were taken to Babylon. And then Belshazzar's getting drunk, drinking out of the gold cups that they stole from the temple from Jerusalem and took to Babylon.

Why do I need to know that? Why is that in my Bible?

Because God wants me to know this is kind of serious.

I know I shared this a couple of weeks ago, but the very first time I read through the Bible — I'm a new believer — I started in Genesis; shouldn't have done that. There's merit to starting in the New Testament.

When I got to the animal sacrifices, I'm like, are you kidding me? Every time I sin, I got to sacrifice an animal? I was a blank slate. I had no clue. In fact, when I would drive around, I would drive by churches' parking lots. I was looking for livestock. I'm like, do they do this?

And then I — no, I'm — this is — I'm not exaggerating. When I got to the New Testament and I realize, wait a minute, Jesus was the sacrifice once and for all.

Thank you, Jesus! I don't have to do that every time! You took that every time I sinned! It's paid for! You're the sacrifice! I get it; I'm not the sharpest knife in the drawer. I surely wasn't then either.

But every time they would sin, they would have to take an animal and sacrifice and shed the blood of that animal. That's how serious it was. Blood had to be shed. And this, I believe, is here because it has to drive home the seriousness of sin and the consequences of sin.

Second question: Why the totals, and why is that number so low?

Two reasons: Number 1, this is only counting the men, not the wives and the children. You add that, and it's, of course, significantly more.

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Second reason, more interestingly, why is that number so low? 4,600 total?

Those are just the ones that survived. Think about the numbers, the totals of those who died. That puts it in the perspective. So again, I think that's why we have the detail.

Verse 31, "Now it came to pass..." [Oh, thank God for this verse and the rest of the chapter]
"It came to pass in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, that Evil-Merodach king of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison."

Okay, wait. So this guy's been in prison for 37 years. He was taken captive into Babylon. He was put in prison where he's been for 37 years. So let's just say for purposes of discussion that he was, ah, we'll just say he was 20 years old. There's a round number.

So 37 and 20. So he's 57.

And this guy; I wish he wasn't Evil-Merodach. That's not very evil because that's very good and kind. And he set him free, brought him out of prison, and lifted up the head. This is a Jewish idiom.

Again, an expression metaphorically of you're downcast, and they gave you hope to lift your head up. And it gets better. This is what else he did.

Verse 32, "And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. [Inferring that he didn't necessarily get bread when he was in prison for 37 years]

And [Verse 34] as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day until the day of his death, all the days of his life."

And he lived happily ever after. The end. Oh! Oh, thank You, God, for Chapter 52.

You see why I wanted to get right to the end? Well, this is the hope.

And did you kind of notice a little bit of typology here? We're given the garments of praise. We're clothed in righteousness, and we put off the clothing, the garments from our imprisonment. Spoke kindly.

We're given provision, daily bread. We're eating at the king's table. In fact, we have a seat at the table that's more prominent than those kings that were with us and before us.

You see where I'm going with this? That's Jesus. That's what Jesus does. He provides each day. He's the manna each day, that portion, the bread of life. It's there every day. I will never want. I will never lack until the day of my death.

Ah, I cannot think of a better way to end a book of the Bible and a Bible study with it. I just want to just kind of bask a little bit.

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Okay, Kapon, go ahead and come on up. We'll bask together. You can go ahead and stand up. You can bask with us.

Thank You, Lord, for Chapter 52. Right? There's always hope.

Thank You, Lord. You are the lifter of our heads. You are our hope, our blessed hope, our only hope. You set the prisoners free, the captives free. You give sight to the blind. You deliver. You redeem. You provide. You feed. You give us the garments of righteousness. You clothe us in Your righteousness. Just speaking kindly to us because of Your love for us, Lord, thank You.

Thank You for this ending. Thank You that this is our ending. Thank You that this is our hope, the hope that we look to and trust in and thank You for. Lord, thank You for Jeremiah. Thank You for this book.

Thank You for all that You've done in our lives, in and through this book. Lord, thank You for the many life lessons and applications because of this book. I pray that we'll take away with us tonight that hope that is ours.

Especially for those who are discouraged and downcast, have given in to hopelessness and despair, Lord, please lift up their heads, renew their hope, strengthen their feeble knees. And thank You, Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.