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Dear Associates and Friends,

February 2012

“[Jeremiah, Part 2](#)” is the article this month by Dr. Ernest L. Martin. It was first presented in October 1999 as a taped lecture. It surveys all the writings by Jeremiah. To fully understand the messages of God given through Jeremiah, messages even for our time today, we need to know about and read all that Jeremiah wrote. First, read the accounts that include Jeremiah in 2 Chronicles 35:11 through chapter 36 to understand the context of the times he lived in, the events that affected his countrymen of Judah and Israel as well as all the nations of the world. Then read Jeremiah’s own works; it is a large body of data.

Jeremiah had a hard life. When the Book of the Law was discovered in the temple (2 Kings chapters 22 and 23), Jeremiah traveled around Judea to instruct the people about “**the words of this covenant**” (Jeremiah 11:1–8, 17:19–27). After King Josiah died Jeremiah taught that the prophecies of God’s punishment were inevitable. In fact, Jeremiah preached that the people and kingdom of Judah should be subservient and obey Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, designated by God as “**my servant**” (Jeremiah 25:9, 27:6, 43:10). Jeremiah’s own family rejected him, thinking he was a traitor to his people, who would go over to the Babylonians (Chaldeans, Jeremiah 37:11–21).<sup>1</sup> God warned Jeremiah about their feelings toward him:

**“For even your brethren, and the house of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you; yea, they have called a multitude after you: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto you.”**

• **Jeremiah 12:6**

Jeremiah loved his people, yet God put him in the position to prophesy evil for the disobedient nation, making him appear to be an enemy of the people and nation.<sup>2</sup> Yet God’s warnings to Judah were not heeded. Along with these difficulties, God required that Jeremiah had to forego a normal life and not marry or have children, a matter in which he obeyed:

**“The word of YHWH came also unto me, saying, ‘You shall not take you a wife, neither shall you have sons or daughters in this place.’<sup>3</sup>**

**For thus says YHWH concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land;**

**They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword,**

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<sup>1</sup> We do not know how long Jeremiah’s father, a high priest, lived after “**the book of the law**” was discovered in the Temple. Jeremiah 12:6 may indicate that even Jeremiah’s own father rejected him and his message.

<sup>2</sup> This often caused him to despair and complain to God (Jeremiah 9:1; 12:4; 15:10; 17:14–18; 18:23), even cursing his own birth (Jeremiah 20:14–18). Jeremiah’s complaints were so relentless that God demanded he repent (Jeremiah 15:19). God even told Jeremiah to stop praying on behalf of the nation and the people (Jeremiah 7:16, 11:14, 14:11).

<sup>3</sup> On a personal level God warned Jeremiah not to marry or to have children “**in this place.**” Could Jeremiah have children in another place? I do not know, but it is doubtful. There is no mention elsewhere of his marrying or having children. This indicated how serious God was. In this special situation for Jeremiah God revoked His own command to “be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28, 9:1, 7). Jeremiah was the exception to God’s usual rule.

**and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.”**

• **Jeremiah 16:1–4**

This was the most unpleasant future imaginable for Jeremiah’s people.

When the good King Josiah of Judah died, Jeremiah composed a song of lament (2 Chronicles 35:25–36:22) which is generally understood to be the Book of Lamentations. This song did not just lament the death of Josiah, it primarily lamented the soon-to-occur destruction of the kingdom and exile of the people from Judah. The design of the Book of Lamentations would lend itself easily to music due to its acrostic structure. There were other elements of Hebrew poetry that seem to indicate a musical connection with the words. We know it was read or performed during the Day of Atonement. Jeremiah wrote Lamentations as a near-term prophecy to his own people for his own time. It would not be surprising that Lamentations would also have relevance to our time today.

After Josiah died, the most severe opposition to Jeremiah began. During the reign of Josiah’s son, King Jehoiakim, Jeremiah gave his great prophecy about the Temple (Jeremiah chapter 7 through 9, 10:17–25). It was at this time that his fellow priests sought to have Jeremiah beaten (Jeremiah chapter 20) and even killed (Jeremiah 18:23 and chapter 26, particularly verse 11.), although he was saved by other high officials. Forbidden to enter the Temple to teach, Jeremiah took his message outside to the people by having his companion Baruch read his prophecies to the people (Jeremiah chapters 36 and 45). The people did not listen, of course, but they received God’s words as a witness to them. It was intended for their benefit, but they would not listen. We can all learn much from reading Jeremiah.

## **Apology**

The snail mail of the Newsletter and Article for last month was posted late and I apologize for any anxiety this may have caused some of you. ASK is a “positive” addiction for many of you, and I know that you greatly anticipate the monthly material that comes to you by mail. Those of you who access, print, and read ASK material through the internet did not know the difference. Please bear in mind that it is more cost effective for us that you retrieve, read, or print the article from your own computer. Of course we will continue to serve you who are not able to access ASK through the internet by providing mailed copies.<sup>4</sup>

## **Thank You**

The world changed greatly during the lifetime of Jeremiah. Our world has also changed greatly in our lifetimes, what with world wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and now with the threat of long-term economic disruption. It is my understanding that these changes are a “shifting to a higher gear” to set the stage for God’s fulfillment of prophesied events as a witness to mankind, and particularly for those nations in the Middle East.

Dr. Ernest Martin claimed no special knowledge beyond his intense study of the Scriptures. He strove to read Jeremiah and other Scriptures plainly. ASK puts forth that information to the world through the internet — like seeds that are scattered, fully understanding that it is **“God that gives the increase”** (1 Corinthians 3:7–9). We thank God for you. You make it possible for us to continue this work, yet we know that we may not fully see the fruit that God brings from Dr. Martin’s work and our endeavors during our lifetimes. We thank you very much. May God bless you all and give you peace.

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<sup>4</sup> Most libraries in the world now have internet access and allow use of their computers for internet use. Many libraries have simple classes to quickly teach you how to use the internet. Avail yourselves to this marvelous resource. Besides access to ASK, the world is literally at your fingertips through the internet. We had one correspondent who was 99 years old who successfully and regularly used the internet. All ASK material is available and usable by E-readers, I-pads, and most advanced cell phones.