Jeremiah

Chapter 52

*The Fall of Jerusalem*

**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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.**

**52:1–27, 31–34** Paralleled almost verbatim in 2Ki 24:18–25:21, 27–30 (see notes there). (52:4–27 is summarized in 39:1–10; see notes there.) The writer(s) of Kings and the writer of the appendix to Jeremiah (perhaps Baruch) doubtless had access to the same sources. It is unlikely that either of the two accounts copied from the other, since each has peculiarities characteristic of the larger work that it concludes. In a few passages, Jeremiah is fuller than Kings (compare especially vv. 10–11 with 2Ki 25:7; v. 15 with 2Ki 25:11; vv. 19–23 with 2Ki 25:15–17; v. 31 with 2Ki 25:27; v. 34 with 2Ki 25:30). (CSB)

**52:1** *Jeremiah.* Not the prophet. (CSB)

**52:3**  LORD’S ANGER – His wrath over their idolatry causing Him to cast them from His presence and to permit the rebellion of Zedekiah, which resulted in the final overthrow of the southern kingdom. (Kretzmann)

**52:4**  TENTH MONTH – Answering nearly to our January. (ACC)

 BUILT SIEGE WORKS – the camp of the besieging army, and built forts against it round about, very likely towers of wood used for purposes of observation and as foundations for casting missiles into the city. (Kretzmann)

**52:5** CITY WAS KEPT UNDER SIEGE – It held out one year and six months. (ACC)

**52:7** WALL WAS BROKEN – The enemies penetrating through the outer line of defenses. (Kretzmann)

**52:8** SOLDIERS…SCATTERED **–** They were scattered in a panic, as they were, there was no thought of real resistance. (Ketzmann)

**52:9** RIBLAH…HAMATH – This is where Nebuchadnezzar had meanwhile established his headquarters, leaving the taking of Jerusalem to one of his generals, Nebuzar-adan, (Kretzmann)

**52:10** SLAUGHTERED THE SONS OF ZEDEKIAH – They had agreed to, and promoted, the rebellion of Zedekiah. (Kretzmann)

**52:11** IN PRISON – literally, "in the house of visitations," in penal servitude, which may have been a little less dishonorable than incarceration, for which reason he may also have had an honorable burial. Cf. chap. 34, 1-5. (Kretzmann)

**52:12** *tenth day.* The parallel in 2Ki 25:8 reads “seventh day”; one of the numbers is a copyist’s error, but we cannot tell which (see vv. 22, 25, 31). (CSB)

Nebuchadnezzar’s general, Nebuzaradan, arrived at Jerusalem three days before he ordered the temple pillaged and burned. (TLSB)

 FIFTH MONTH – Answering nearly to our August. (ACC)

**52:13** SET FIRE TO THE TEMPLE – Thus perished this magnificent structure, after it had stood four hundred and twenty-four years three months and eight days. It was built A.M. 2992, and destroyed A.M. 3416. (ACC)

**52:14** BROKE DOWN ALL WALLS – They broke all its fortifications were demolished down to the very foundations. (Kretzmann)

**52:15** WHO HAD GONE OVER – The deserters to the Chaldeans during the siege. (ACC)

**52:16** POOREST PEOPLE – These were those who had no possessions in money or goods. (Kretzmann)

 POOREST…WORK VINEYARDS AND FIELDS – This was so that the country would not revert to a wilderness on account of total neglect. (Kretzmann)

**52:18–19** See notes on 1Ki 7:40, 45, 50. (CSB)

**52:18** ALSO TOOK – This included all those items used for the altar of burnt offerings in the Court of the Priests. (Kretzmann)

**52:20** *twelve bronze bulls.* See note on 1Ki 7:25. (CSB)

**52:21–23** See notes on 1Ki 7:15–22. (CSB)

**52:21** THICK AND HOLLOW – The thirty-five cubits of 2 Chron. 3, 15 either refer to a different cubit, or they give the sum total of both pillars less the bases. (Kretzmann)

**52:22** ON THE TOP – That is, of its upper part, where it curved away from the shaft. (Kretzamnn)

 *five.* The parallel in 2Ki 25:17 reads “three” (see NIV text note there), probably a copyist’s error. (CSB)

**52:23** POMEGRANATES ON THE SIDES – These were set towards the four winds or sides. (Kretzmann)

**52:24** SERAIAH –He is not identical with the man named chap. 51:59. (Kretzmann)

**52:25** OFFICER IN CHARGE – This is the commander of the city forces. (Kretzmann)

 *seven.* The parallel in 2Ki 25:19 reads “five”; see note on v. 12. (CSB)

 CHIEF OFFICER – This was an officer in the direct service of the commander-in-chief. (Kretzmann)

 WHO WERE FOUND IN THE CITY – These were either leaders in the rebellion or such as had distinguished themselves in the defense of the city. (Kretzmann)

**52:27** LAND OF HAMATH – This was the Syrian province in the extreme northern part of Palestine. (Kretzmann)

 HAD THEM EXECUTED – This was for the part they had taken in the rebellion of Judah. (Kretzmann)

 AWAY FROM THEIR LAND – There follows a summary or enumeration of the prominent captives. (Kretzmann)

**52:28** *seventh year.* Of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign (see vv. 29–30), which was 597 b.c. (CSB)

 *3,023.* Probably includes only adult males, since the corresponding figure(s) in 2Ki 24:14, 16 are significantly higher. (CSB)

**52:29** *eighteenth year.* 586 b.c. In v. 12 the same year is called the “nineteenth year”; the difference is due to alternate ways of computing regnal years (for a similar case see note on Da 1:1). (CSB)

**52:30** *twenty-third year.* 581 b.c. (CSB)

 *taken into exile by Nebuzaradan.* Either (1) to quell further rebellion (see v. 3), or (2) in belated reprisal for Gedaliah’s assassination (see 41:1–3). (CSB)

*Jehoiachin Released*

**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.**

**52:31–34** Paralleled almost verbatim in 2Ki 25:27–30 (see notes there). Jeremiah and Kings thus conclude with the same happy ending. (CSB)

**52:31** *twenty-fifth.* The parallel in 2Ki 25:27 reads “twenty-seventh”; see note on v. 12. (CSB)

**52:34** *till the day of his death.* See v. 11. Since the phrase does not appear in the parallel verses in 2 Kings in either case, its intention is probably to highlight the contrast between Zedekiah, who remained in prison till the day he died (see v. 11), and Jehoiachin, who was released from prison and treated well by the Babylonian kings till the day he died. (CSB)