

Jer. 52:1 ¶ Zedekiah *was* one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

Jer. 52:2 And he did *that which was* evil in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

Most commentators agree that this chapter was an addendum to the book by someone else—possibly Ezra. Much of the information recorded in this chapter was addressed in chapter 39. 2Kings 25 and 2Chronicles 36 are also parallel passages to this chapter.

We are informed that Zedekiah began to reign when he was 21 and that his evil reign lasted for 11 years. Both he and Jehoiakim were sons of the good king Josiah. Because the reference is to the mother, it makes me think that she had the greater influence on her sons.

Jer. 52:3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Jer. 52:4 And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.

Jer. 52:5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.

Jer. 52:6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

Point is made that Judah's troubles were due to the judging hand of Almighty God. Even though He had instructed the people to submit to the king of Babylon, Zedekiah chose to rebel. The Chronicler was clear in declaring that this rebellion was really against God.

2 Chronicles 36:13 "And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel."

In response to Zedekiah's rebellion, Nebuchadnezzar mounted a siege against Jerusalem that lasted about 18 months. During that time food became very scarce in Jerusalem.

Jer. 52:7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which *was* by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans *were* by the city round about;) and they went by the way of the plain.

Jer. 52:8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

Finally, the walls of the city were breached and the king and all the men of war fled to the plains of Jericho. It wasn't long, however, before they were overtaken by the Babylonian army and King Zedekiah was captured.

Jer. 52:9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him.

Jer. 52:10 And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

Jer. 52:11 Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

Zedekiah was taken to Riblah to stand judgment before Nebuchadnezzar. Neb made him watch the murder of his sons and then blinded him. He was then bound in chains, taken to Babylon and placed in prison until his death. I am reminded of the words of the prophet Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 12:13 "My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there."

Jer. 52:12 ¶ Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, which *was* the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, *which* served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, **Jer. 52:13** And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire: **Jer. 52:14** And all the army of the Chaldeans, that *were* with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

A few weeks later Nebuzaradan led a contingent of soldiers to Jerusalem and proceeded to burn down the temple as well as all the other prominent structures in the city. They also destroyed the city walls.

Adam Clarke notes that the temple had stood for 424 years, 3 months and 8 days before its destruction.

Jer. 52:15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.

Jer. 52:16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vinedressers and for husbandmen.

Nebuzaradan then chose some of the survivors to take captive to Babylon and chose some to be left behind to tend the land.

Jer. 52:17 Also the pillars of brass that *were* in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that *was* in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

Jer. 52:18 The caldrons also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

Jer. 52:19 And the basons, and the firepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; *that which was of gold in gold, and that which was of silver in silver,* took the captain of the guard away.

Jer. 52:20 The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brasen bulls that *were* under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the LORD: the brass of all these vessels was without weight.

Jer. 52:21 And *concerning* the pillars, the height of one pillar *was* eighteen cubits; and a fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof *was* four fingers: *it was hollow.*

Jer. 52:22 And a chapter of brass *was* upon it; and the height of one chapter *was* five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapters round about, all of brass. The second pillar also and the pomegranates *were* like unto these.

Jer. 52:23 And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; *and* all the pomegranates upon the network *were* an hundred round about.

This section of verses itemizes the treasures that were taken from Jerusalem to Babylon. Most of the gold and silver had already been taken, so this time the majority of the haul was brass. There was so much brass that they didn't even try to weigh it.

I think this listing is included to emphasize the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

Jeremiah 27:19–22 “For thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels that remain in this city, Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem; Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; They shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.”

Jer. 52:24 ¶ And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door:

Jer. 52:25 He took also out of the city an eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city.

Jer. 52:26 So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah.

Jer. 52:27 And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land.

The Seraiah mentioned here seems to be different since he is identified as the chief priest. Nebuzaradan made sure that the top spiritual leaders and military leaders were taken to stand judgment before Nebuchadnezzar. He also took 60 other survivors that were left in the city. All were put to death.

Jer. 52:28 *This is the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand Jews and three and twenty:*

Jer. 52:29 *In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons:*

Jer. 52:30 *In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.*

These verses seem to be summarizing the three major deportations (606, 597 and 586 BC) of Jews that were carried captive to Babylon. The first one included Daniel and his three friends. The total number of captives taken is listed at 4,600. Chuck Smith makes the point that this is a very small number considering the total population.

Jer. 52:31 ¶ *And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the first year of his reign lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison,*

Jer. 52:32 *And spake kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon,*

Jer. 52:33 *And changed his prison garments: and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life.*

Jer. 52:34 *And for his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.*

JFB has an interesting commentary on this section: “**Evil-merodach** — son and successor of Nebuchadnezzar [LYRA]; and the *Hebrew* writers say that during Nebuchadnezzar’s exclusion from men among beasts, Evil-merodach administered the government. When Nebuchadnezzar at the end of seven years was restored, hearing of his son’s misconduct and that he had exulted in his father’s calamity, he threw him into prison, where the latter met Jeconiah and contracted a friendship with him, whence arose the favor which subsequently he showed him. God, in his elevation, rewarded his having surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar.”