

The Fulfillment of Jeremiah's Prophecies

Jeremiah 52

Jeremiah 52:1-11 - *"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. ² He also did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. ³ 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.*

⁴ Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, 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. ⁵ So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. ⁶ By the fourth month, 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. 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.

⁸ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and they overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. All his army was scattered from him. 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. ¹⁰ Then the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. And he killed all the princes of Judah in Riblah. ¹¹ He also 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."

Background Notes

Jeremiah 51 was the conclusion of the last main section of Jeremiah. From chapter 46-51, God's judgments were pronounced on the foreign nations surrounding Israel. Jeremiah's lengthy prophecy of judgment against Babylon was recorded in chapters 50-51. Some of this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, when the destruction of End Time Babylon occurs, as predicted in Revelation 17-18.

At the end of Jeremiah 51, Jeremiah asked a man named Seraiah to give an object lesson to the Jewish captives who were already in Babylon. Seraiah tied a stone to a scroll containing Jeremiah's prophecy against Babylon and threw it into the Euphrates River, dramatizing the future destruction of Babylon. It reminds us of what we read in Revelation 18:21 about the fall of Babylon in the future End Times: *"Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore."*

Jeremiah 52 is an historical appendix, or epilogue, to the book. It is almost identical to what is contained in parts of 2 Kings 24-25. It was added to the end of Jeremiah to show that his prophecies about the fall of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah all took place exactly as predicted.

Doctrinal Points

1. The word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled - exactly as predicted!

Because of the sins of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah, culminating in the evil ways of King Jehoiakim and King Zedekiah (v1-3), God allowed the Babylonian army to besiege Jerusalem for 1 ½ years. No food was left in the city (v4-6). When the wall was finally breached, King Zedekiah and his small military force tried to escape to the Arabah (v7), but they were captured and brought to Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah's officers were executed (v8-9). After he was forced to watch the executions of his sons, Zedekiah himself was blinded and taken away in fetters to Babylon (v10-11).

Jeremiah 52:12-16 - *“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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ And all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down all the walls of Jerusalem all around. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poor of the land as vinedressers and farmers.”*

Verses 12-16 described Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the Temple. 2 Kings 25:8 says *“the seventh day of the fifth month of the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar,”* whereas Jeremiah 52:12 says *“the tenth day of the fifth month of the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.”* Is that a contradiction in the Bible? No. Evidently Nebuzaradan came into Jerusalem on this seventh day, and he burned down the Temple on the tenth day. Jeremiah was left among *“the poor of the land”* who were not taken captive (v16), but were left as farmers. The rest of the people were taken as captives to Babylon.

Jeremiah 52:17-23 - *“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. ¹⁸ They also took away the pots, the shovels, the trimmers, the bowls, the spoons, and all the bronze utensils with which the priests ministered. ¹⁹ The basins, the firepans, the bowls, the pots, the lampstands, the spoons, and the cups, whatever was solid gold and whatever was solid silver, the captain of the guard took away. ²⁰ The two pillars, the Sea, the twelve bronze bulls that 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. ²¹ Now concerning the 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. ²² A capital 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 pomegranates was the same. ²³ There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates, all around on the network, were one hundred.”

This section of chapter 52 described the looting of the Temple before it was burned. The Babylonians wanted all those items because they were made of gold, silver, and bronze. Back in chapter 27 Jeremiah had predicted that these very items would be taken to Babylon. In chapter 28 the false prophet Hananiah said that the Temple treasures would remain in Jerusalem, and those that were already taken to Babylon would be returned shortly. Jeremiah, of course, was right. He predicted the true word of the Lord.

Jeremiah 52:24-30 - *“The captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵ He also 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. ²⁶ And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took these and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷ Then 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.”*

²⁸ These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, three thousand and twenty-three Jews; ²⁹ in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred and thirty-two persons; ³⁰ in 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.”

Verses 24-30 numbered the captives who were taken to Babylon. In harmonizing the numbers of captives given here and elsewhere, keep in mind that Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem several times, starting in 605 BC, when Daniel and others were taken into captivity. Also keep in mind that sometimes counts of the captives included only the males. And by the way, Seraiah (v24) is not the same Seraiah in chapter 51, who did the object lesson in Babylon. And Zephaniah (v24) was not the minor prophet, Zephaniah.

Jeremiah 52:31-34 - *“Now 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. 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. ³³ So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life. ³⁴ And 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.”*

Verses 31-34 recorded King Jehoiachin's release from prison in Babylon, when the king of Babylon showed him favor. The fact that Jehoiachin was released from prison is a note of hope, because it was the first sign of Jeremiah's promise that Israel would be restored. So - as to judgment and restoration, the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled - exactly as predicted.

2. The word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah will be fulfilled - exactly as predicted!

We've seen that Jeremiah's prophecies about the fall of the kingdom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple were fulfilled exactly as predicted, down to the last detail. Furthermore, we've seen that Jeremiah's prediction of the 70-year captivity and then deliverance and return (chapter 25) was fulfilled exactly as prophesied.

Do you think all the prophecies given by Jeremiah about the future will be fulfilled exactly as prophesied? Of course they will! And that includes the New Covenant, the return of the Jews to the Land of Israel, and a spiritual restoration to the Lord (Jeremiah 31-32). The word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah will be fulfilled - exactly as predicted!

Practical Application

Take special note of what is belabored in Scripture!

As we come to the end of our studies of the book of Jeremiah, you've got to admit that there was a lot of prophecy in this book about the judgment of God. It seems that Jeremiah **belabored** the subject of the judgment of God against sin! This is also true of the other Old Testament prophets. Wouldn't you agree?

Why so much about judgment? It's because God's judgment is a very important topic. God wants us to know that **He must judge sin** - not only the sins of Israel and the foreign nations, but our personal sins as well.

The good news is that God has provided salvation from the problem of sin, and His judgment of sin. The Lord Jesus Christ underwent the judgment of God for our sins when He died on the cross as our Substitute. Unfortunately, most people ignore God's plan of salvation because they don't think God is serious about judging sin. Some even deny that God exists! A word to the wise is sufficient.

Take special note of what God belabors in Scripture!