

The Fall of Jerusalem

Jeremiah 39:1-14

Jeremiah 52

2 Kings 24:18-20

2 Kings 25:1-21, 27-30

2 Chronicles 36:11-21

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Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had held Jerusalem under siege for two and a half years. All the food in the city was gone. Then the Babylonian army succeeded in breaking down a section of the wall and entered the city.

Zedekiah king of Judah fled toward the Jordan Valley. But Babylonian troops caught up with him on the plains of Jericho and took him to Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah was forced to watch as his sons were executed. Then his eyes were gauged out, he was bound, and he was carried off to Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar's army plundered the Temple of its remaining riches, including the two beautifully ornamented bronze pillars at its entrance which were broken up and carted off, all the bronze articles used in worship, and anything made of gold or silver that hadn't already been taken – cups, incense burners, sprinkling bowls, lampstands, and so on.

The Temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and all the important buildings in Jerusalem, even the people's homes were burned to the ground. Everything was destroyed. Then the walls of the city were systematically torn down. The people who still remained were either executed or carried off into exile. Only a few of the poorest people were left behind in Judah to work the vineyards and fields.

Jeremiah was found in chains among all the Judeans being taken into exile. Nebuchadnezzar ordered he be released. "Look after him; see that he isn't harmed; and give him whatever he wants." The prophet chose to return home to Judah and to live with those of his people who were still in the land.