

# **Jeremiah 52 - Historical Appendix; Zedekiah; Evil-Mardoch**

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VII. Historical appendix (Jer 52:1-34)

In a sense the book of Jeremiah is already finished with the 51 chapters. There is a 52nd chapter, the scribe of which we don't know. It is classically conically part of the book of Jeremiah. it appears to be something that a scribe added, like an appendix to the book. It includes essentially the material found in 2 Kings 24:18—25:30. There are a few things that are different, a few details added. There are a few things that might appear to be discrepancies but not really when they are studied. It appears that this historical appendix is here to demonstrate the fulfillment of God's prophecies.

The context is the conclusion of a 40 year ministry by Jeremiah in which he particularly predicted that Zedekiah would be defeated by Nebuchadnezzar and that Judah would fall

to Babylon.

Jeremiah throughout his whole ministry was in effect harassed by a large group of false prophets emphasizing the opposite of what Jeremiah was predicting. The false prophets were predicting in detailed, articulate terms that King Zedekiah would be victorious over King Nebuchadnezzar. They could easily draw many analogies in Israel's history, particularly the one that surfaces in Isaiah when he comforted Hezekiah by pointing out that it was going to be all right and it was.

How dangerous it is to accept at face value an appealing message.

## **Jeremiah 52**

(1) Destruction (52:1-30)

(A) Jerusalem besieged (52:1-5)

(a) Cause (52:1-3)

**1** Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned for eleven years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

**1** Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

**1** Zedekiah was 21 years old when he began to rule, and he ruled for 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

**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.

- This is not the Jeremiah who was the author of the book. *Jeremiah* was apparently a common name and this was a different Jeremiah. Again, Zedekiah is the brother of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim and therefore a son of Josiah and thus an heir to the throne.

**2** He did evil in the sight of the LORD, in accordance with everything that Jehoiakim had done.

**2** He did evil in the sight of the LORD like all that Jehoiakim had done.

**2** Zedekiah had done evil in the LORD's sight, just as Jehoiakim had done.

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

**3** For because of the anger of the LORD *this* came about in Jerusalem and Judah, until He drove them out from His presence. And Zedekiah revolted against the king of Babylon.

**3** For through the anger of the LORD *this* came about in Jerusalem and Judah until He cast them out from His presence. And Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

3 Because Jerusalem and Judah had angered the Lord, he cast them out of his presence. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon,

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.

- Zedekiah is here accredited with ignoring Jeremiah and listening to the false prophets

(b) Duration (52:4-5)

**Nebuchadnezzar's 3rd Siege of Judah; The Destruction of Jerusalem (v1-21; Cf. 2 Chr 36:17-21; Jer 52:4-30)**

4 Now it came about in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth *day* of the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it, and built a bulwark all around it.

4 Now it came about in the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth *day* of the tenth month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, camped against it and built a siege wall all around it.

4 and in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with all his army. He encamped near it and set up siege works all around it.

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.

5 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

5 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

5 The city was under siege until the eleventh year of the reign of King Zedekiah.

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

- That is a long time, almost two years

— The fall of Jerusalem is recorded 4x in the OT (2 Kings 25; 2 Chr 36:11-21; Jer 39:1-14; 52)

(B) Zedekiah (52:6-11)

(a) Escaped (52:6-7)

6 On the ninth *day* of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

6 On the ninth *day* of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.

6 By the ninth *day* of the fourth month the famine became so severe that there was no food for the people of the land.

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.

- The city was under siege; it was sealed off. There was famine and there was cannibalism. There was the anguish of the mother's watching their children starve. There was pestilence and disease.

7 Then the city was breached, and all the warriors fled and left the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls which was by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. And they went by way of the Arabah.

7 Then the city was broken into, and all the men of war fled and went forth from the city at night by way of the gate between the two walls which was by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. And they went by way of the Arabah.

7 The wall of the city was broken through, and all the soldiers fled, leaving the city at night through the gate between the two walls next to the king's garden, even though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah.

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.

(b) Captured (52:8-9)

8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook Zedekiah in the desert plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him.

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

8 The Chaldean army went after the king, overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho, and all his troops were scattered from him.

**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.

9 Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.

9 Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.

9 They captured the king and brought him to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where the king of Babylon passed judgment on him.

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.

- In other words Nebuchadnezzar had his command post in Riblah some distance from the actual siege going on in Jerusalem and here is where we have recorded where Zedekiah is judged.

(c) Forced to watch the execution of his sons (52:10)

10 And the king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the commanders of Judah in Riblah.

10 The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the princes of Judah in Riblah.

10 The king of Babylon killed Zedekiah's sons before his eyes, and he also killed all the Judean officials at Riblah.

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

(d) Blinded (52:11a)

(e) Imprisoned (52:11b)

11 Then he blinded the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him with bronze shackles and brought him to Babylon and put him in prison until the day of his death.

11 Then he blinded the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon and put him in prison until the day of his death.

11 He blinded Zedekiah and bound him in bronze shackles. Then the king of Babylon took him to Babylon and put him in prison until he died.

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.

- This is the fulfillment of the prophecy that Zedekiah would not see the Babylonian captivity even though he would die there.

(C) Buildings burned (52:12-14)

**12** Now on the tenth day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who was in the service of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

**12** Now on the tenth day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who was in the service of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

**12** In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month—it was the nineteenth year of the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem.

12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,

13 And he burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every large house he burned with fire.

13 He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every large house he burned with fire.

13 He burned the LORD's Temple, the king's house, and all the houses in Jerusalem. He also burned every public building with fire.

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:

14 So the entire army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard tore down all the walls around Jerusalem.

14 So all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem.

14 All the Chaldean troops who were with the captain of the guard tore down all the walls around Jerusalem.

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.

- Their obvious intention was to destroy it so that it would never be rebuilt again.

Nebuchadnezzar had endured three rebellions; he had enough of this, this time it is over.

He burns it to the ground.

#### (D) People exiled (52:15-16)

15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took into exile some of the poorest of the people, the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen.

15 Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away into exile some of the poorest of the people, the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the artisans.

15 Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest of the people, the rest of the people left in the city, the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the craftsmen.

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.

16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and farmers.

16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen.

16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and farmers.

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

- Remember that was also a prophecy. Nebuzaradan did not know he was fulfilling prophecy

(E) Temple plundered (52:17-23)

17 Now the bronze pillars which belonged to the house of the LORD and the stands and the bronze sea, which were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans smashed to pieces and carried all their bronze to Babylon.

17 Now the bronze pillars which belonged to the house of the LORD and the stands and the bronze sea, which were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried all their bronze to Babylon.

17 The Chaldeans broke in pieces the bronze pillars that were in the LORD's Temple and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the LORD's Temple, and they carried all the bronze to Babylon.

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

18 They also took the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the pans, and all the bronze vessels which were used in temple service.

18 They also took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the pans and all the bronze vessels which were used in *temple* service.

18 They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the pans, and all the bronze utensils that were used in the temple service.

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.

19 The captain of the guard also took the bowls, the firepans, the basins, the pots, the lampstands, the pans, and the drink offering bowls, whatever was fine gold, and whatever was fine silver.

19 The captain of the guard also took away the bowls, the firepans, the basins, the pots, the lampstands, the pans and the drink offering bowls, what was fine gold and what was fine silver.

19 The captain of the guard took away the bowls, the fire pans, the basins, the pots, the lamp stands, the pans, and the bowls for libations, both those made of gold and those made of silver.

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.

20 The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, *and* the stands, which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.

20 The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, *and* the stands, which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.

20 There was too much bronze to weigh in the two pillars, the one sea, the twelve bronze oxen that were under the sea, and the stands which King Solomon had made for the LORD's Temple.

20 The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brazen 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.

21 As for the pillars, the height of each pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and it *was* twelve cubits in circumference and four fingers in thickness, *and* hollow.

21 As for the pillars, the height of each pillar *was* eighteen cubits, and it *was* twelve cubits in circumference and four fingers in thickness, *and* hollow.

21 Each of the pillars was twelve cubits high and its circumference twelve cubits. It was hollow and about a handbreadth thick.

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.

22 Also, a capital of bronze was on top of it; and the height of each capital was five cubits, with latticework and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these, including pomegranates.

22 Now a capital of bronze was on it; and the height of each capital was five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these, including pomegranates.

22 On each pillar was a capital of bronze, and the height of each capital was five cubits. Latticework and pomegranates, all of bronze, were all around the capital. And the second pillar was like this, including the pomegranates.

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.

23 There were ninety-six exposed pomegranates; all the pomegranates *numbered* a hundred on the latticework all around.

23 There were ninety-six exposed pomegranates; all the pomegranates *numbered* a hundred on the network all around.

23 There were 96 pomegranates open to view. In all, there were 100 pomegranates all around the latticework.

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

- Temple implements returned under Cyrus the Persian (Ezra 1:7-11) vs. Babylon in Dan 5

(F) Priests and officials put to death (52:24-27)

**24** Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.

**24** Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.

**24** The captain of the guard arrested Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the next ranking priest, and the three guards of the gate.

**24** And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the door:

25 He also took from the city one official who was overseer of the warriors, seven of the king's advisers who were found in the city, the scribe of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and sixty men from the people of the land who were found inside the city.

25 He also took from the city one official who was overseer of the men of war, and seven of the king's advisers who were found in the city, and the scribe of the commander 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.

25 From the city he arrested one of the officers who had been in charge of the troops, seven men from the king's personal advisors who were found in the city, the secretary of

the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land, and 60 men of the people of the land who were found inside the city.

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.

26 Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguards took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

26 Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

26 Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard arrested them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

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

27 Then the king of Babylon struck them and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was led into exile from its land.

27 Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was led away into exile from its land.

27 The king of Babylon struck them down and killed them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile from the land.

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.

(G) Exiles (52:28-30)

(a) 597 BC (52:28)

**28** These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar took into exile: in the seventh year 3,023 Jews;

**28** These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away into exile: in the seventh year 3,023 Jews;

**28** These are the people Nebuchadnezzar took into exile: in the seventh year, 3,023 Judeans;

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

(b) 586 BC (52:29)

29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar 832 persons from Jerusalem;

29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar 832 persons from Jerusalem;  
29 in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem;  
29 In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons:

(c) 582 BC (52:30)

30 in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took into exile 745 Jewish people; *there were* 4,600 people in all.  
30 in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile 745 Jewish people; there were 4,600 persons in all.  
30 in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took 745 people from Judah into exile. All the people taken into exile numbered 4,600.  
30 In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar 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 numbers are only the Jews and only the males so that alone implies that there were a lot more than mentioned here

(2) Hope: Jehoiachin's release (52:31-34)

**31** Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, showed favor to Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison.

**31** Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, showed favor to Jehoiachin king of Judah and brought him out of prison.

**31** In the first year of his reign, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, showed favor to King Jehoiachin of Judah by releasing him from prison on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah.

**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,

- Evil-Mardoch sounds like a strange name in the English but it is actually Avil-Marduke in the Babylonian records. Evil is not an adjective in describing his character, it is a name. Maradoch is the Hebrewization of Marduk. He was a son or two down from Nebuchadnezzar.

32 Then he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings who were with him in Babylon.

32 Then he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the thrones of the kings who were with him in Babylon.

32 He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the other kings who were in Babylon with him.

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

33 So Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes, and had his meals in the king's presence regularly all the days of his life.

33 So Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes, and had his meals in the king's presence regularly all the days of his life.

33 Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes and regularly dined with the king as long as he lived.

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

34 And as his allowance, a regular allowance was given to him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day, all the days of his life until the day of his death.

34 For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king of Babylon, a daily portion all the days of his life until the day of his death.

34 As for his living expenses, a regular allowance was given him daily by the king of Babylon as long as he lived, until the day of his death."

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.

There is a Jewish tradition that during the period that Nebuchadnezzar was indisposed, Daniel was the one who cared for him. Evil-Mardoch was in charge for a while, but there is also a tradition that he screwed up and got caught doing something that he shouldn't have and was put in prison for a while. While in prison, he gets acquainted with Jehoiachin so later on when he gets out and Nebuchadnezzar dies and Evil-Mardoch is in charge, he remembers Jehoiachin in prison. He doesn't free him but he takes him out of prison and puts him on special rations, after all he is a king in exile under arrest, but he is not abused. All that is just a tradition. Cuneiform tablets were found with lists of the rations that Evil-Mardoch provided Jehoiachin. His daily diet has been found.