

## Adam Clarke:

## Introduction

This chapter was added after Jeremiah's time probably by Ezra, after the return from the captivity, of which it gives a short account, nearly the same as in 2 Kings 24:18-20, and 2 Kings 25:1-21. It is very properly subjoined to the preceding prophecies, in order to show how exactly they were fulfilled. It likewise forms a proper introduction to the following Lamentations, as it gives an account of the mournful events which gave rise to them. Zedekiah's evil reign and rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 52:1-3. Jerusalem is taken by the Chaldeans after a siege of eighteen months, Jeremiah 52:4-7. Zedekiah pursued and taken in the plains of Jericho, and his whole army dispersed, Jeremiah 52:8, Jeremiah 52:9. The king's sons and all the princes of Judah slain in Riblah, Jeremiah 52:10. Zedekiah has his eyes put out by order of the Chaldean monarch; and is afterward bound in chains, carried to Babylon, and imprisoned for life, Jeremiah 52:11. Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, burns and spoils the city and temple, Jeremiah 52:12-19. The two pillars of the temple, with their dimensions and ornaments, Jeremiah 52:20-23. The officers of the temple, and several others, carried away captives into Babylon, and then slain by order of Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 52:24-27. The number of Jews that Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive in the seventh year of his reign, Jeremiah 52:28; in his eighteenth year, Jeremiah 52:29; and in his twenty-third year, Jeremiah 52:30. Evil-merodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, in the year of his accession to the throne of Babylon, (which was in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity, and the one hundred and ninety-first from the building of Rome, according to the computation of Varro), orders Jehoiachin to be taken out of prison, and treats him kindly for the remainder of his life, Jeremiah 52:31-34.

## Verse 1

Zedekiah was one and twenty years old - See 2 Kings 24:18.

## Verse 2

And he did - evil - This and the following verse are the same as 2 Kings 24:19.

## Verse 3

Through the anger of the Lord - Here is a king given to a people in God's anger, and taken away in his displeasure.

## Verse 4

Ninth year - tenth month - Answering nearly to our January.

## Verse 5

So the city was besieged - It held out one year and six months.

## Verse 6

And in the fourth month - See the notes on Jeremiah 39:1, etc. The fourth month answers nearly to our July.

## Verse 8

The army of the Chaldeans pursued - See on 2 Kings 25:5 (note).

## Verse 9

King of Babylon to Riblah - See the note on Jeremiah 39:5.

## Verse 11

He put out the eyes of Zedekiah - See on Jeremiah 39:7 (note).

## Verse 12

Now in the fifth month - Answering nearly to our August.

## Verse 13

And burned the house of the Lord - 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.

## Verse 15

Those that fell away - The deserters to the Chaldeans during the siege.

#### Verse 16

The poor of the land - See on Jeremiah 39:1 (note).

#### Verse 17

Also the pillars - See on Jeremiah 27:19 (note).

#### Verses 18-23

In reference to these verses see the parallel texts Exodus 27:3 (note); 2 Kings 25:14-16 (note); 1 Kings 7:47 (note); 1 Kings 7:15 (note); 2 Chronicles 3:15 (note); 1 Kings 7:20 (note), and the notes.

#### Verse 24

The second priest - See the note on 2 Kings 25:18.

The three keepers - The priests who stood at the door to receive the offerings of the people, see 2 Kings 20:9, and 2 Kings 23:4.

#### Verse 25

Seven men - that were near the king's person - These were privy counsellors.

#### Verses 28-30

On these verses Dr. Blayney has some sensible remarks; I will extract the substance. These verses are not inserted in 2 Kings 25. Are we to conclude from these verses that the whole number of the Jews which Nebuchadnezzar, in all his expeditions, carried away, was no more than four thousand six hundred? This cannot be true; for he carried away more than twice that number at one time and this is expressly said to have been in the eighth year of his reign, 2 Kings 24:12-16. Before that time he had carried off a number of captives from Jerusalem, in the first year of his reign, among whom were Daniel and his companions, Daniel 1:3-6. These are confessedly not noticed here. And as the taking and burning of Jerusalem is in this very chapter said to have been in the fourth and fifth months of the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, those who were carried into captivity at the date of those events cannot possibly be the same with those that are said to be carried away either in the eighteenth or twenty-third year of that prince. Nor, indeed, is it credible that the number carried away at the time that the city was taken, and the whole country reduced, could be so few as eight hundred and thirty-two, (see Jeremiah 52:29); supposing a mistake in the date of the year, which some are willing to do without sufficient grounds.

Here then we have three deportations, and those the most considerable ones, in the first, in the eighth, and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar, sufficiently distinguished from those in the seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third years. So that it seems most reasonable to conclude with Abp. Usher, in *Chronologia Sacra*, that by the latter three the historian meant to point out deportations of a minor kind, not elsewhere noticed in direct terms in Scripture.

The first of these, said to have been in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, was one of those that had been picked up in several parts of Judah by the band of Chaldeans, Syrians, and others, whom the king of Babylon sent against the land previously to his own coming, 2 Kings 24:2.

That in the eighteenth year corresponds with the time when the Chaldean army broke off the siege before Jerusalem, and marched to meet the Egyptian army, at which time they might think it proper to send off the prisoners that were in camp, under a guard to Babylon.

And the last, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, was when that monarch, being engaged in the siege of Tyre, sent off Nebuzaradan against the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighboring nations, who at the same time carried away the gleanings of Jews that remained in their own land, amounting in all to no more than seven hundred and forty-five.

Josephus speaks of this expedition against the Moabites and Ammonites, which he places in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar; but mentions nothing done in the land of Israel at that time. Only he says that after the conquest of those nations, Nebuchadnezzar carried his victorious arms against Egypt, which he in some measure reduced, and carried the Jews whom he found there captives to Babylon. But the Egyptian expedition was not till the twenty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, i.e., the thirty-fifth of Nebuchadnezzar, as may be collected from Ezekiel 29:17; so that those who were carried away in the twenty-third year were not from Egypt, but were, as before observed, the few Jews that remained in the land of Judah.

#### Verse 31

In the twelfth month - Answering nearly to our twenty-fifth of April, A.M. 3442.

Lifted up the head of Jehoiachin - This phrase is taken from Genesis 40:13. It is founded on the observation that those who are in sorrow hold down their heads, and when they are comforted, or the cause of their sorrow

removed, they lift up their heads. The Hebrew phrase, lift up the head, signifies to comfort, cheer, make happy.

#### Verse 32

Spake kindly - Conversed freely with him.

Set his throne - Gave him a more respectable seat than any of the captive princes, or better than even his own princes had, probably near his person.

#### Verse 33

And changed his prison garments - That is, Jehoiachin changed his own garments, that he might be suited in that respect to the state of his elevation. Kings also, in token of favor, gave caftans or robes to those whom they wish to honor.

And he did continually eat bread before him - Was a constant guest at the king's table.

#### Verse 34

And - there was a continual diet given him - This was probably a ration allowed by the king for the support of Jehoiachin's household. For other particulars, see the note on 2 Kings 25:30.

All the days of his life - I believe these words have been by mistake added from the preceding verse. There, they are proper; here, they are tautological. They are wanting in the Septuagint and in the Arabic.

The preceding words,  $\times\phi\chi'' \times^{TM}\times\bullet\chi\bullet \times\check{z}\times\bullet\chi^a\chi\bullet$  (ad yom motho),  $\hat{\alpha}\epsilon\omega$  to the day of his death,  $\hat{\alpha}\epsilon\bullet$  are wanting in two of De Rossi's and one of Kennicott's MSS.

Coverdale ends thus: - All the days of his life until he died. This is better than the common Version.

Immediately after this verse my old MS. Bible adds the following words: And done is aftir that into caitifte is brought Israel, and Jerusalem is bestroide, satte Jeremye the prophet weepund, and weiled with this lamentation Jerusalem; and with bitter inwit sighand and criand weilawai, seide. Then follows in red letters: Here beginneth the Lamentation of Jeremye, that is intitle Cenoth; with the sortynge out of Ebrue letters.

Aleph: How sitteth aloon the city, etc. See something of a similar kind from other authorities, at the beginning of Lamentations.