

## Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Egypt's Broken Arm (April 29, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 30:20–26

20 In the eleventh year, in the first *month*, on the seventh of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,  
 21 “Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, behold, it has not been bound up for healing or wrapped with a bandage, that it may be strong to hold the sword.  
 22 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong and the broken; and I will make the sword fall from his hand.  
 23 I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.  
 24 For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he will groan before him with the groanings of a wounded man.  
 25 Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt.  
 26 When I scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands, then they will know that I am the LORD.’”

## Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—Fall of the Great Tree (June 21, 587 BC)

Ezekiel 31

### Description of the Great Tree

1 In the eleventh year, in the third *month*, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,  
 2 “Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his hordes,  
 ‘Whom are you like in your greatness?  
 3 ‘Behold, Assyria *was* a cedar in Lebanon  
 With beautiful branches and forest shade,  
 And very high,  
 And its top was among the clouds.  
 4 ‘The waters made it grow, the deep made it high.  
 With its rivers it continually extended all around its planting place,  
 And sent out its channels to all the trees of the field.  
 5 ‘Therefore its height was loftier than all the trees of the field  
 And its boughs became many and its branches long  
 Because of many waters as it spread them out.  
 6 ‘All the birds of the heavens nested in its boughs,  
 And under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth,  
 And all great nations lived under its shade.  
 7 ‘So it was beautiful in its greatness, in the length of its branches;  
 For its roots extended to many waters.  
 8 ‘The cedars in God’s garden could not match it;  
 The cypresses could not compare with its boughs,  
 And the plane trees could not match its branches.  
 No tree in God’s garden could compare with it in its beauty.  
 9 ‘I made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches,  
 And all the trees of Eden, which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it.

### Fall of the Great Tree

10 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Because it is high in stature and has set its top among the clouds, and its heart is haughty in its loftiness,  
 11 therefore I will give it into the hand of a despot of the nations; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away.  
 12 Alien tyrants of the nations have cut it down and left it; on the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen and its boughs have been broken in all the ravines of the land. And all the peoples of the earth have gone down from its shade and left it.  
 13 On its ruin all the birds of the heavens will dwell, and all the beasts of the field will be on its *fallen* branches  
 14 so that all the trees by the waters may not be exalted in their stature, nor set their top among the clouds, nor their well-watered mighty ones stand *erect* in their height. For they have all been given over to death, to the earth beneath, among the sons of men, with those who go down to the pit.”  
 15 ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “On the day when it went down to Sheol I caused lamentations; I closed the deep over it and held back its rivers. And *its* many waters were stopped up, and I made Lebanon mourn for it, and all the trees of the field wilted away on account of it.

16 I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall when I made it go down to Sheol with those who go down to the pit; and all the well-watered trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, were comforted in the earth beneath.  
 17 They also went down with it to Sheol to those who were slain by the sword; and those who were its strength lived under its shade among the nations.  
 18 "To which among the trees of Eden are you thus equal in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth beneath; you will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with those who were slain by the sword. So is Pharaoh and all his hordes!" declares the Lord God."

### The Fall of Jerusalem (July 29, 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:2-7	Jeremiah 39:2-7	Jeremiah 52:5-11	2 Chronicles 36:17b
<p>2 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.</p> <p>3 On the ninth day of the <i>fourth</i> month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>4 Then the city was broken into,</p> <p>and all the men of war <i>fled</i> by night</p> <p>by way of the gate between the two walls beside the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city.</p> <p>And they went by way of the Arabah.</p> <p>5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho and all his army was scattered from him.</p> <p>6 Then they captured the king and brought him to the king of Babylon at Riblah,</p> <p>and he passed sentence on him.</p>	<p>2 in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, in the ninth <i>day</i> of the month,</p> <p>the city <i>wall</i> was breached.</p> <p>3 Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came in and sat down at the Middle Gate: Nergal-sar-ezer, Samgar-nebu, Sar-sekim the Rab-saris, Nergal-sar-ezer <i>the</i> Rab-mag, and all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon.</p> <p>4 When Zedekiah the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, they fled and went out of the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls;</p> <p>and he went out toward the Arabah.</p> <p>5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho;</p> <p>and they seized him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him.</p>	<p>5 So the city was under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.</p> <p>6 On the ninth <i>day</i> of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.</p> <p>7 Then the city was broken into,</p> <p>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 <i>was</i> by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city.</p> <p>And they went by way of the Arabah.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>17b who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He <i>gave them</i> all into his hand.</p>

<p>7 They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes,</p> <p>then put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon.</p>	<p>6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes at Riblah; the king of Babylon also slew all the nobles of Judah.</p> <p>7 He then blinded Zedekiah's eyes and bound him in fetters of bronze to bring him to Babylon.</p>	<p>10 The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and he also slaughtered all the princes of Judah in Riblah.</p> <p>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.</p>	
--	--	--	--

### Nebuzaradan Oversees the Pillaging and Destruction of Jerusalem (August 25–28, 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:8–10, 13–17	Jeremiah 39:8	Jeremiah 52:12–14, 17–23	2 Chronicles 36:18–19
<p>8 Now on the seventh day of the fifth month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.</p> <p>13 Now the bronze pillars which were in 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 the bronze to Babylon.</p> <p>14 They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the spoons, and all the bronze vessels which were used in <i>temple</i> service.</p> <p>15 The captain of the guard also took away the firepans and the basins,</p> <p>what was fine gold and what was fine silver.</p> <p>16 The two pillars, the one sea, and the stands which</p>		<p>12 Now on the tenth <i>day</i> 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>18 They also took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the basins, the pans and all the bronze vessels which were used in <i>temple</i> service.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>20 The two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, and the stands, which King</p>	<p>18 All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought <i>them</i> all to Babylon.</p>

<p>Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.</p> <p>17 The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits,</p> <p>and a bronze capital was on it; the height of the capital was three cubits, with a network and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these</p> <p>with network.</p> <p>9 He burned</p> <p>the house of the LORD, the king’s house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every great house he burned with fire.</p> <p>10 So all the army of the Chaldeans who <i>were with</i> the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem.</p>	<p>8 The Chaldeans also burned with fire</p> <p>the king’s palace and the houses of the people,</p> <p>and they</p> <p>broke down the walls of Jerusalem.</p>	<p>Solomon had made for the house of the LORD—the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight.</p> <p>21 As for the pillars, the height of each pillar <i>was</i> eighteen cubits, and it <i>was</i> twelve cubits in circumference and four fingers in thickness, <i>and</i> hollow.</p> <p>22 Now a capital of bronze was on it; and the height of each capital was five cubits, with a network and pomegranates on the capital all around, all of bronze. And the second pillar was like these, including pomegranates.</p> <p>23 There were ninety-six exposed pomegranates; all the pomegranates <i>numbered</i> a hundred on the network all around.</p> <p>13 He burned</p> <p>the house of the LORD, the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; even every large house he burned with fire.</p> <p>14 So all the army of the Chaldeans who <i>were with</i> the captain of the guard broke down all the walls around Jerusalem.</p>	<p>19a Then they burned</p> <p>the house of God</p> <p>19c and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles.</p> <p>19b and broke down the wall of Jerusalem,</p>
---	---	--	---

### Jerusalem’s Leaders Executed and the City Exiled to Babylon (August 25–28, 587 BC)

2 Kings 25:11–12, 18–21	Jeremiah 39:9–10	Jer 52:15–16, 24–28a, 29	2 Chronicles 36:20a
<p>18 Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.</p> <p>19 From the city he took one official who was overseer of the men of war, and five of the king’s advisers who were found in the city; and the scribe of the captain of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city.</p> <p>20 Nebuzaradan the captain of</p>		<p>24 Then the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three officers of the temple.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>26 Nebuzaradan the captain of</p>	

<p>the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21a Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. 11 Then the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the people, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away into exile. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land</p> <p>to be vinedressers and plowmen. 21b So Judah was led away into exile from its land.</p>	<p>9 As for the rest of the people who were left in the city, the deserters who had gone over to him and the rest of the people who remained, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard carried <i>them</i> into exile in Babylon. 10 But some of the poorest people who had nothing, Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard left behind in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at that time.</p>	<p>the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27a Then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. 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. 16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land</p> <p>to be vinedressers and plowmen. 27b So Judah was led away into exile from its land. 28a These are the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away into exile: 29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar 832 persons from Jerusalem;</p>	<p>20a Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon;</p>
---	--	--	---

Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation La Habra, Calif. Used by permission. All rights reserved. For Permission to Quote Information visit <http://www.lockman.org>.

### **Chronological Notes**

- 1) For the calculation of the date of the fall of Jerusalem, see the following definitive paper: Rodger C. Young, "When Did Jerusalem Fall?" *JETS* 47.1 (Mar 2004): 21–38.
- 2) From that article, the following paragraphs are important to understand today's reading: "The writings of Jeremiah end with chapter 51 (Jer 51:64), so his methods of dating are not automatically applicable to the contents of chapter 52. The contents of that chapter, except for verses 28 through 30, are all parallel to passages in the last two chapters of 2 Kings, so the methods already determined for these chapters in 2 Kings (Tishri, non-accession reckoning) can be applied to the corresponding verses in Jeremiah 52. Verses 28 through 30 are independent of the Book of Kings and are interesting enough to require special consideration. Jer 52:28–30 gives the number of captives taken by Nebuchadnezzar in his seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third years. There is one thing certain about the counting of captives—the captives themselves are in no position to do it. Every king and pharaoh must have had an official assigned to this task, so that the number of those vanquished could be recorded on a stela or in the annals glorifying the king's exploits. Thus the list of captives in Jer 52:28–30 could not have originated in a Judean record—it came from the official records of Nebuchadnezzar. The years of the monarch would therefore be the Nisan, accession years used in Babylon. This is an independent verification of the use of non-accession years when Jeremiah and the author of the last two chapters of 2 Kings referred to Nebuchadnezzar: the seventh (accession) year of Jer 52:28 corresponds to the eighth (non-accession) year of 2 Kgs 24:12, and the eighteenth (accession) year of Jer 52:29 corresponds to the nineteenth (non-accession) year of 2 Kgs 25:8. These are not mistakes, as some have assumed. They are a valuable clue that the synchronisms to Nebuchadnezzar in 2 Kings were to be taken in a non-accession sense, and this conclusion could have been reached from these texts alone without going through the more thorough analysis of the present article" (p. 36).