

23.16 Jerusalem Falls (Jeremiah 39:1–10; 52:6–30; 2 Kings 25:2–21; 2 Chronicles 36:17–21; Psalms 94; 74; 79; Lamentations)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] Brackets indicate a remark to the teacher that will not be read aloud; they also show answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials. Please give credit to the sources of pictures. Likenesses of characters might change with the variety of pictures. Hopefully, this isn’t too confusing to young minds.
- Chains

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print on colorful cardstock and cut apart.

- *Chaldeans*: the Babylonians—the soldiers and people from Babylon
- *blind*: being unable to see
- *Sabbath*: time of rest. God commanded one day out of seven be dedicated to Him in worship with no ordinary work. He also commanded one year out of every seven to be a year of rest to the Lord in which no crops were planted and the land could have rest. Israel had not kept this command for 490 years, which amounted to seventy years of unkept Sabbath rest.

Scripture: (ESV)

Jeremiah 39:1 In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and besieged it. (2 Kings 25:1 And they built siegeworks all around it.) (52:6 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.) 2 In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city. 3 Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: [four named men] with all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon. 4 When Zedekiah king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out of the city at night by way of the king’s garden through the gate between the two walls; and they went toward the Arabah. (52:7 . . . and the Chaldeans were around the city.) 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. (52:8 . . . and all his army was scattered from him.) And when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence on him. 6 The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes, and the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. 7 He put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains to take him to Babylon (52:11 . . . and put him in prison till the day of his death).

52:12 In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month—that was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard, who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. 13 And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 14 And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. 15 And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive some of the poorest of the people and the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the artisans. 16 But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen.

17 And the pillars of bronze that were in the house of the Lord, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried all the bronze to Babylon. 18 And they took away the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the basins and the dishes for incense and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service; 19 also the small bowls and the fire pans and the basins and the pots and the lampstands and the dishes for incense and the bowls for drink offerings. What was of gold the captain of the

guard took away as gold, and what was of silver, as silver. 20 As for the two pillars, the one sea, the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, and the stands, which Solomon the king had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these things was beyond weight. 21 As for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, its circumference was twelve cubits, and its thickness was four fingers, and it was hollow. 22 On it was a capital of bronze. The height of the one capital was five cubits. A network and pomegranates, all of bronze, were around the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with pomegranates. 23 There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates were a hundred upon the network all around.

24 And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest and the three keepers of the threshold; 25 and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the men of war, and seven men of the king's council, who were found in the city; and the secretary 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. 26 And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27 And the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile out of its land.

28 This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive: in the seventh year, 3,023 Judeans; 29 in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem 832 persons; 30 in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Judeans 745 persons; all the persons were 4,600.

2 Chronicles 36:17 Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. 18 And all the vessels 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 princes, all these he brought to Babylon. . . . 20 He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

Introduction/Review:

Nebuchadnezzar's army had besieged Jerusalem [locate] for about one and a half years. Unable to go in or out of the city, people were starving, for the famine was very bad and the bread was gone.

Jeremiah had been prophesying, even speaking directly to King Zedekiah and pleading with him to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar. Why did Jeremiah want Zedekiah to surrender to Nebuchadnezzar? God had said that if he surrendered, the city would not be burned and Zedekiah would live.

Today we'll find out whether or not Zedekiah surrendered. But first, I want to remind you about a prophecy made by Ezekiel that might give you the answer before we tell it. While Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem, where did Ezekiel prophesy? [In Babylon; locate]. Even though he was far away from Jerusalem, Ezekiel's picture prophecies and messages about Jerusalem and King Zedekiah were sure for they had come from the Lord.

Ezekiel's picture prophecy in Ezekiel 12 was to carry his belongings at night through a hole he had dug in the wall. God had said, "Tell the people, 'I am a sign to you. As I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall be carried away into captivity. And the prince who is among them (meaning King Zedekiah) shall bear his belongings on his shoulder at evening and go out. They shall dig through the wall to carry them out through it. He shall cover his face, so that he cannot see the ground with his eyes. He shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there'" (Ezekiel 12:11-13).

What would King Zedekiah carry? [His belongings.] When would he do it? [At night.] How would he get out of the city? [Through a hole in the wall.] What would he do to his face? [Cover it.] Would he be caught? [Yes.] Where would he go? [To the land of Babylon.] Would he see the land of Babylon? [No.] Why

wouldn't he see it? We don't know the answer to that question, nor do we know a lot of other details yet. However, we know the end of the story. Let's get into the details.

Story:

Jerusalem's fall

After one and a half years of battering Jerusalem's wall, the Chaldeans finally broke through it and entered the city. Six Chaldean princes, ✓proving they had captured the city and were in control, sat in one of the entrances to the city. Now, while armies still surrounded the area, the Chaldeans would find the King Zedekiah. The moment of truth had come. Would Zedekiah surrender as Jeremiah had pled?

Zedekiah's capture

No. Learning that Jerusalem was taken, Zedekiah, his family, nobles, and soldiers escaped the city "by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls." ✓Some Bible scholars think this was an opening to a tunnel from the king's garden to a place toward the plains northeast of Jerusalem.¹ Hadn't Ezekiel said Zedekiah would "dig through the wall to get through it"? Would they totally escape? No. God through Ezekiel had said, "He shall be caught in My snare."

When Zedekiah, his family, nobles and soldiers ran northeast from Jerusalem, downhill about fifteen miles toward Jericho [locate], the army of the Chaldeans pursued and caught up with him in the plains near that city. That's when all of Zedekiah's army deserted him and scattered, and the Chaldeans captured Zedekiah, his mother, his sons, and his nobles.

King Nebuchadnezzar had set up his headquarters in Riblah [locate], some distance north of Israel. His soldiers took Zedekiah, his sons, and his nobles to Nebuchadnezzar for judgment. It was not a lenient judgment. As Zedekiah watched, Nebuchadnezzar slew Zedekiah's sons and his nobles. But after that Zedekiah could see no more, for Nebuchadnezzar put out his eyes. He bound him in chains, and the Chaldeans marched him to Babylon, where he stayed in prison until he died. Thus, Ezekiel's prophecy was fulfilled: "I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there." Why didn't he see Babylon? [He was blind.]

The sack of Jerusalem

Meanwhile, back in Jerusalem, what was happening? Within one month's time the two pillars of bronze, the bases, the bronze laver, the pots, shovels, snuffers, spoons, firepans, bowls, cauldrons, candlesticks, decorative bulls—everything of bronze, gold, or silver, large or small—was broken up (if it was large) and taken away from Jerusalem. The Chaldeans searched in rich men's houses, the king's house, and the Temple for treasures and took every one of them.

Without mercy, Nebuchadnezzar slew young and old, men and women. Those who surrendered he marched off to Babylon to become slaves, and he left the very poor people of the land to take care of the vineyards and fields.

What had Jeremiah said would happen if Zedekiah didn't surrender? [The city would be burned.] Had Zedekiah surrendered? [No.] Therefore, what happened to the city? [It was burned.] Yes. One month after capturing the city, the Chaldeans broke down the walls of Jerusalem and burned the Temple, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem. Just as Jeremiah had said, Jerusalem was burned with fire and totally destroyed.

How long would Jerusalem stay destroyed? Jeremiah had prophesied this as well. The people of Israel had not paid attention to the Sabbath days and the Sabbath years that God had established. Every seven years they had been commanded to have a year of Sabbath—of rest for the land. Now those seventy years when the land should have rested would be made up. Jerusalem would lie waste and the land would rest for seventy years in order to pay off the Sabbaths.

God does His holy will

God does all His holy will. He had prophesied for years and years that this day would come. It came. The people were taken away; the city was destroyed.

God still does all His holy will. For years and years the Bible has shown us that we should live for God. God has said there is a final day of judgment coming upon all those who reject His Son, Jesus Christ. That day will come just as surely as the day of Jerusalem's destruction came. Will you be ready when Jesus comes to judge the world? Will you be one of His children, living for and serving Him?

¹“It seems by this [Ezekiel 12:12], that when the king, and his nobles and servants, made their escape, they not only went forth between two walls, but broke through one, in order to get away; which was done, not by the king himself, but by his servants [“They shall dig”]” ([Ezekiel 12:12 - Bible Verse Meaning and Commentary \(biblestudytools.com\)](#)).

The opening lay “either between the wall of the city and the outworks, as some; or between the old wall and the new one Hezekiah built, ([2 Chronicles 32:5](#)); as others; or rather between the wall of the city and the wall of the king's garden; this being a private way, they took it. The Jews have a fable . . . that there was a cave or vault underground, from the king's house to the plains of Jericho; and by this way the king went that he might not be seen; but God prepared a hind, which the Chaldean army saw, and pursued, and which went into the cave, and they after it; and when they were at the mouth of the cave they saw Zedekiah coming out of it, and took him” ([Jeremiah 39:4 - Bible Verse Meaning and Commentary \(biblestudytools.com\)](#)).

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:
Jesus predicted another destruction of Jerusalem, a second one after His death: “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. . . .²² for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. . . . For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles” (Luke 12:20–24). That destruction took place in A.D. 70.
- God does all His holy will. What He says will happen will happen. Pay attention to Him.
- God punishes sin. It may take a long time, even 490 years, but God will punish sin.

Activities:

- Play dough: bundles; wall with a hole; chains
- Snack: A starvation menu of 1 graham cracker and a small cup of water
- Play with plastic soldiers, having the Chaldeans chase and capture the Jerusalem soldiers.
- Play act Zedekiah's attempt to escape and his being captured and led to Babylon.
- Watch a well-done cartoon video, “Nebuchadnezzar Tears Down God's City,” at [Bible Stories for the Young : Stories \(biblestoriesonline.com\)](#). (Click on “Stories” and scroll about halfway down the page.)
- Sing “To Babylon,” found below.
- Showing the “Sections of the Jerusalem to Jericho Road” chart found below, tell about the downhill travel of Zedekiah and his pursuers. This road descended was about 3400 feet in about 15 miles. (Colorado students might be familiar with the change in elevation from Idaho Springs, Colorado, to Denver—a distance of 32 miles. That descent is 400 feet less than from Jerusalem to Jericho in twice the distance but certainly seems very steep.)
- Review questions: (Game: Make a paper chain with 8 links. For each question answered correctly, a

student may tear off a chain link. Or do the inverse of this: have strips and tape ready to make a paper chain for each question answered correctly.)

1. How long did the Chaldeans besiege Jerusalem before they conquered it? [One and a half years.]
2. What did Zedekiah do—surrender, as Jeremiah had urged, or get out of there? [Get out of there.]
3. Did the Babylonians capture Zedekiah? [Yes.] Where? [Near Jericho.]
4. Ezekiel had prophesied, “God will bring him to Babylon; yet he shall not see it.” How could he go to Babylon and not see it? [Zedekiah’s eyes were put out; he was blind but was led to Babylon.]
5. Name two things the Chaldeans did to the Temple. [Cut up the large valuable items of bronze, silver, and gold so that they could take them; burned it.]
6. Name two things the Chaldeans did to the city of Jerusalem. [Broke down its walls; burned it.]
7. What happened to the people living in Jerusalem? [Some had to go to Babylon; the poorest remained in the area.]
8. Jeremiah had prophesied the people of Judah would be in exile in Babylon 70 years. Why that many—70? [That’s how many years the people had failed to keep God’s Sabbath years.]

Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)

- Psalm 1 (The KJV has visuals at [psalm 1 - Bing images](#) words only, and [Tree & Psalm 1 - Openclipart](#) with a tree in the picture. The ESV has one at [\(840\) Pinterest](#) with a lamp and a Bible in the picture.)

1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.

3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

6 for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Handwork:

- Print the clipart of the Temple’s destruction; it is found at the end of this lesson. Students will color the picture and draw a red arrow from the Temple to Babylon.

Chaldeans

blind

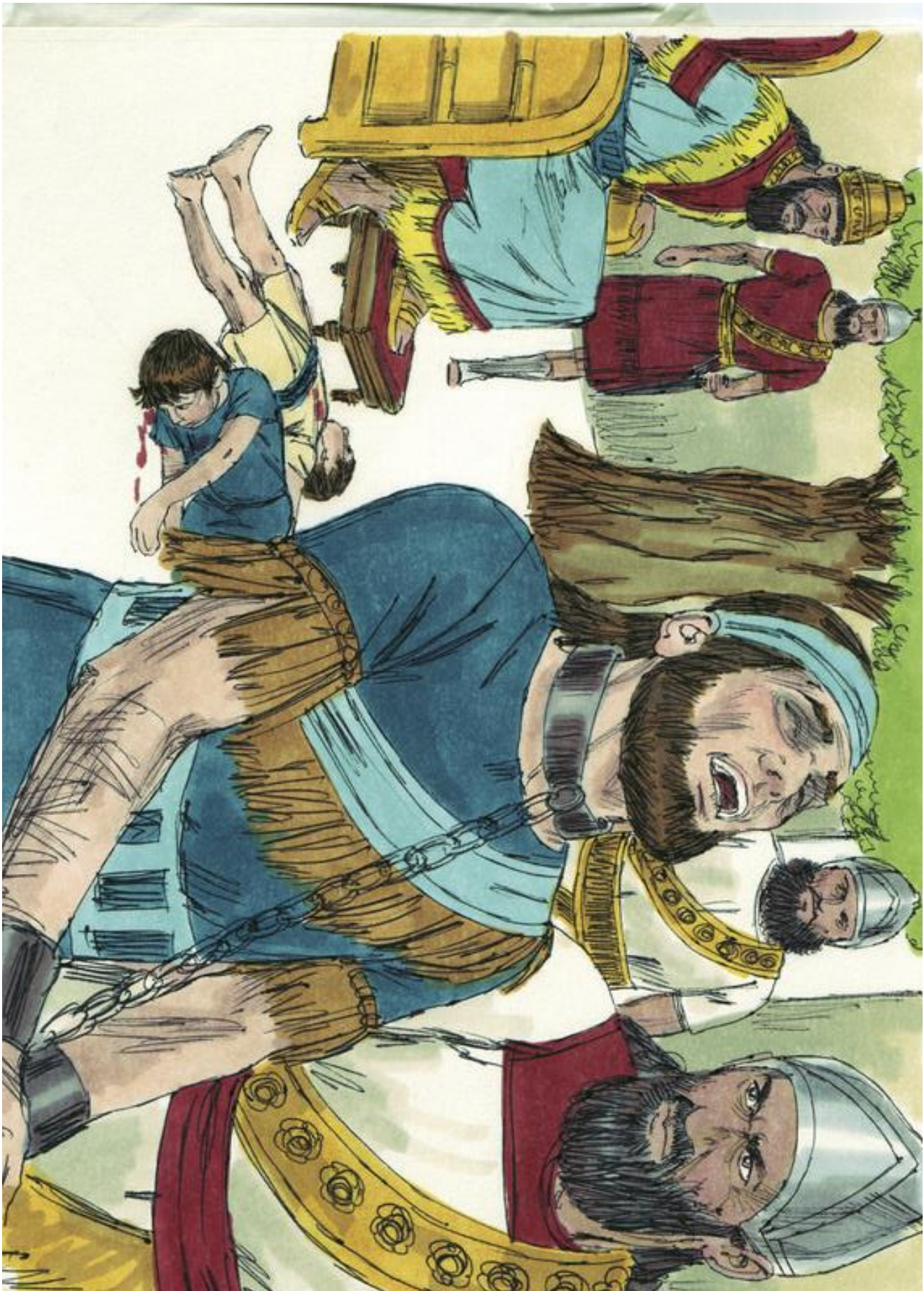
Sabbath

exiles



[The Bible In Paintings: BABYLON CONQUERS JUDAH \(freerepublic.com\)](http://freerepublic.com) 9altered)







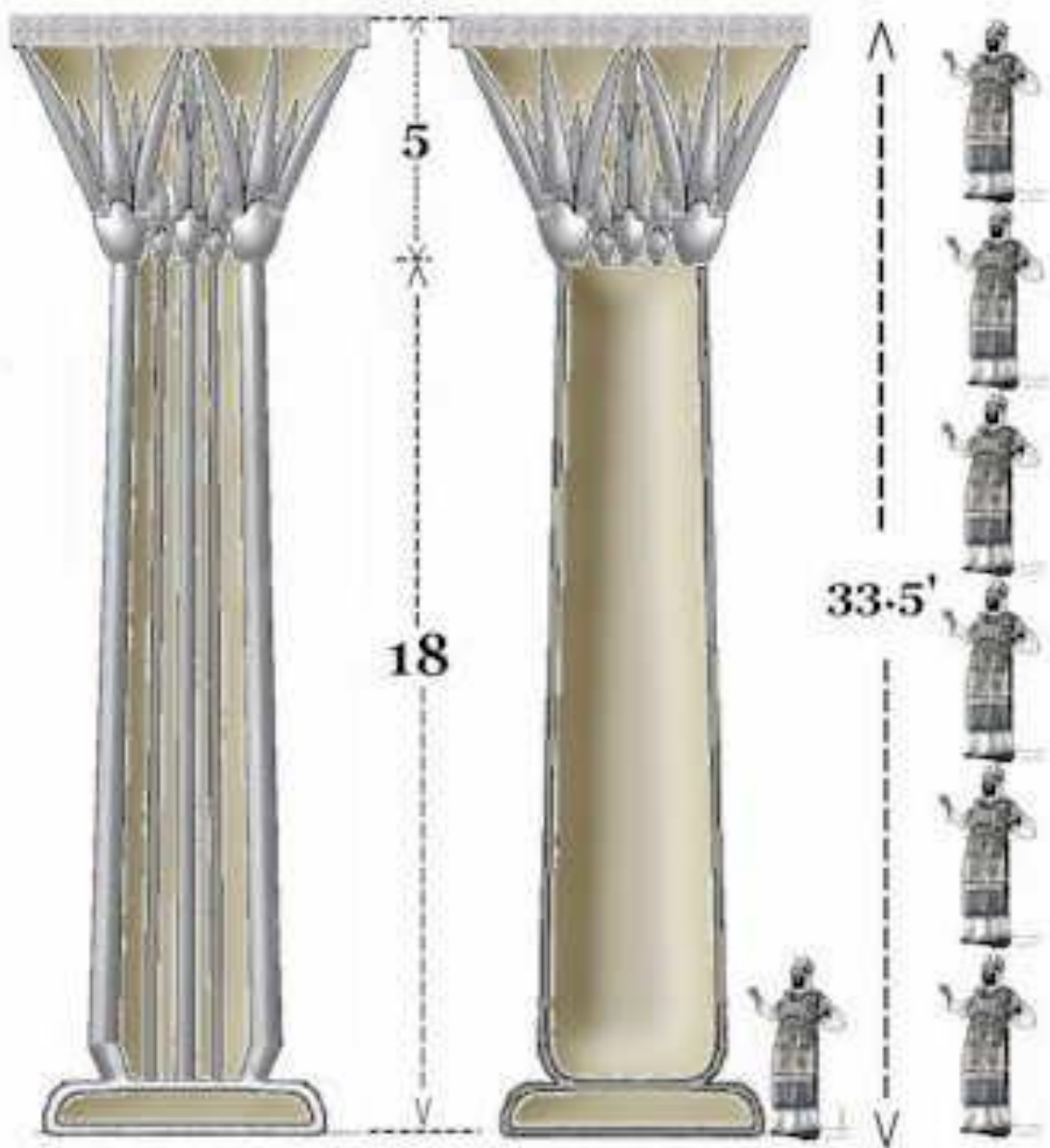


Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the King of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death. And burned the house of the Lord; and the king's house,

Jeremiah. LIII 11. 13.



Unknown source



Hebrew Cubit = 17.5" High Priest = 5.5'

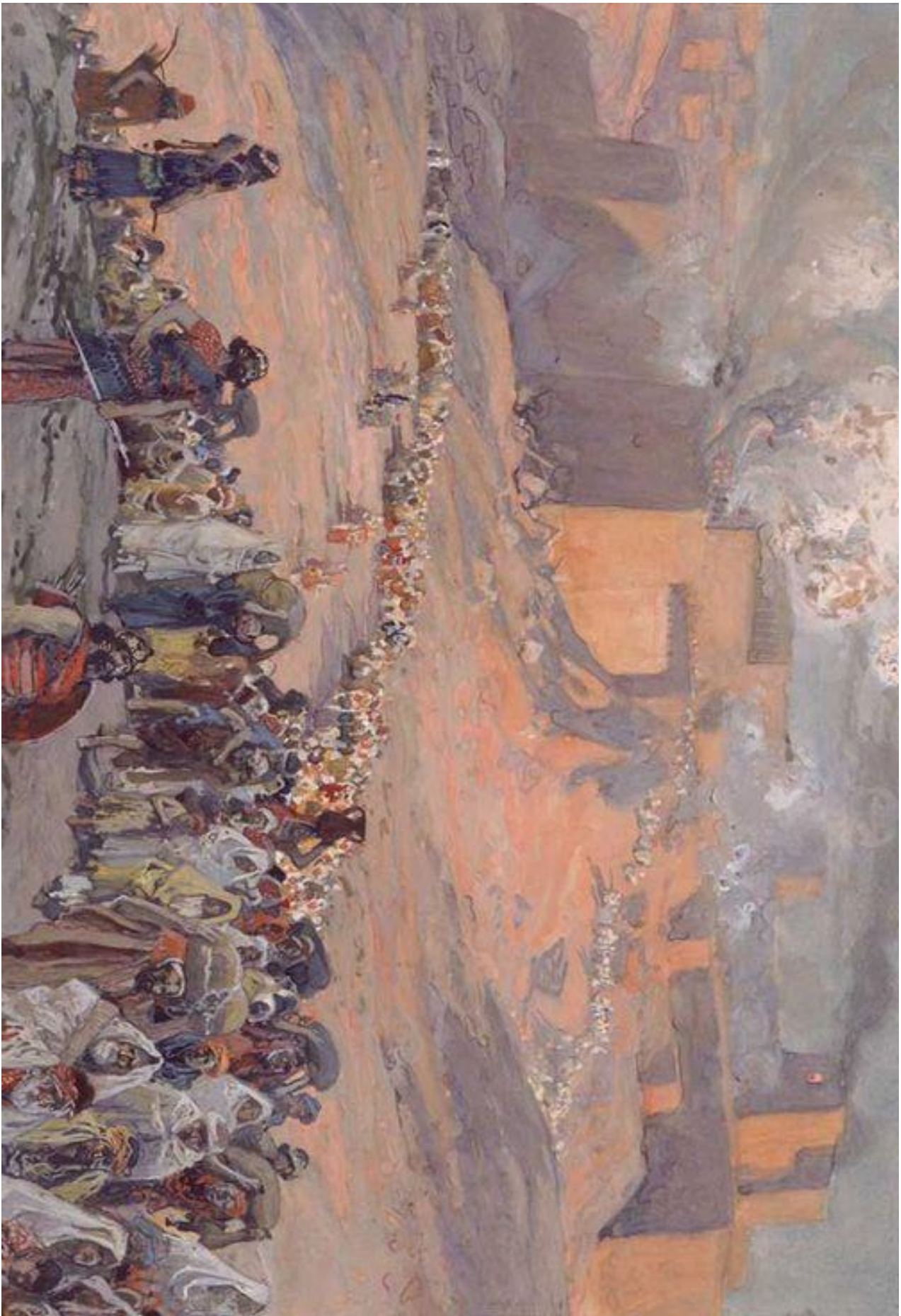
Pillar height 26 feet, 3 inches
Capital height +7 feet, 3+ inches
Total 33 feet, 6 inches



<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/uJfOByYOmG/hqdefault.jpg>



Unknown source



[nebuchadnezzar's conquest of jerusalem - Search Images \(bing.com\)](#)

To Babylon

Words (slightly altered) from an old Bible story book

M. Alexander

1.Neb - u - chad - nez - zar of Bab - y - lon was a great and might - y king. He

5
fought a - gainst Je - ru - sa - lem and broke down ev' - ry - thing. 2.He

9
took the Tem - ple's pre - cious gold a - way to Bab - y - lon. 3.The ves - sels of the

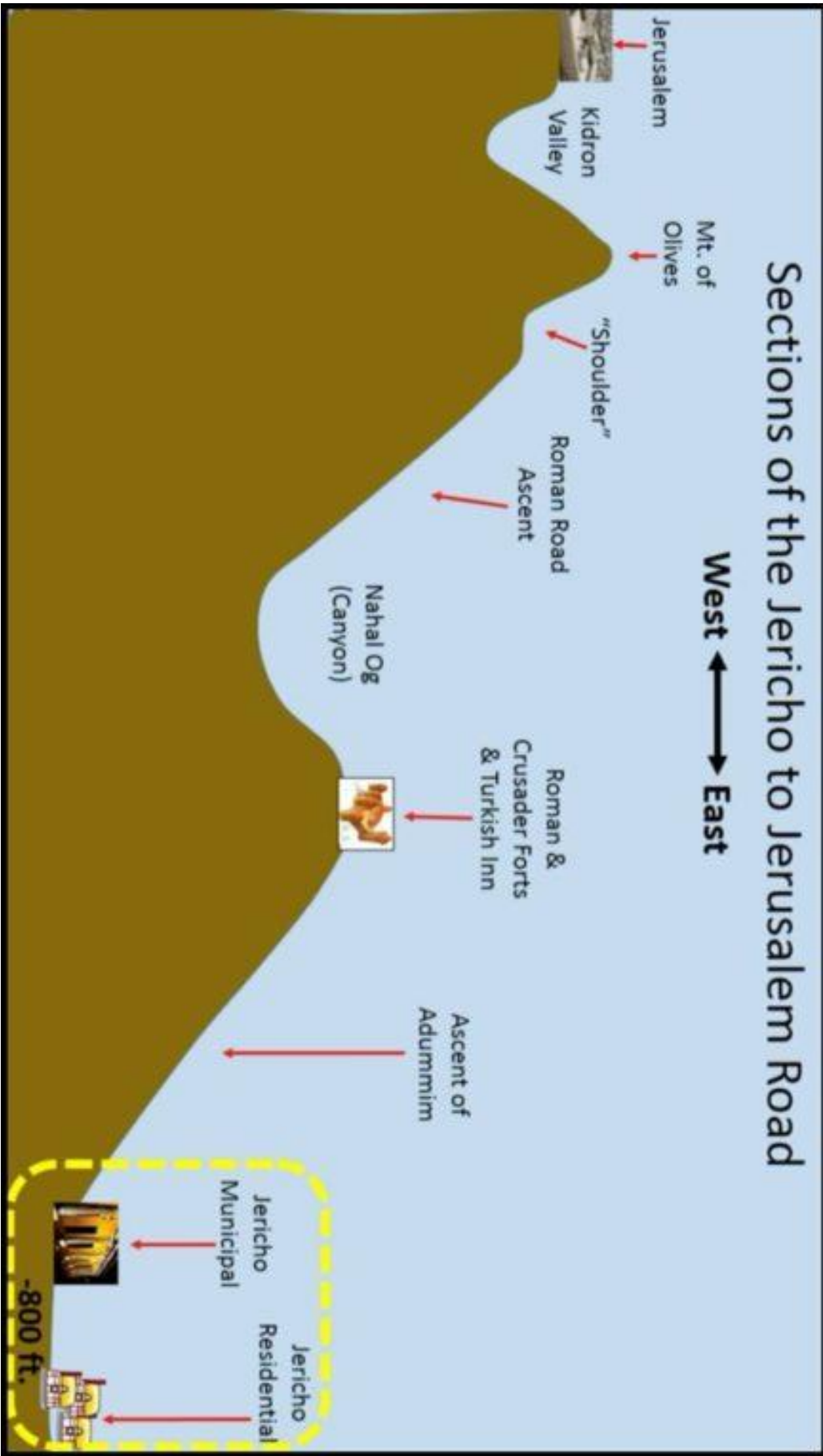
14
house of God, the sil - ver all was gone. 4.The king was ta - ken pri - son - er and

19
man - y peo - ple too. 5.They were en - slaved in Bab - y - lon and

23
had hard work to do. 6.It was a sad and bit - ter day

27
when they were car - ried far a - way. *Glissando*

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and follows the lyrics. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 5, 9, 14, 19, 23, and 27 marked at the beginning of their respective lines. The final measure of the piece is marked with a wavy line and the word 'Glissando' written above it.



The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Exile of Judah
in 586 B.C. (Jeremiah 52:12-40)

