

# Jeremiah 52:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

## Analysis

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**And in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, which served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem,**

This verse records the arrival of Babylon's official who would destroy the temple—arguably the most traumatic moment in Old Testament history. The dating (August 14, 586 BCE, approximately one month after the wall's breach) shows the systematic, deliberate nature of Babylon's judgment. Nebuzar-adan's title "captain of the guard" (rav-tabachim, "chief executioner") reveals his grim role overseeing destruction and deportation.

The phrase "served the king of Babylon" (omed lifnei, "stood before") indicates his high rank—a royal courtier executing Nebuchadnezzar's direct orders. Yet from the prophetic perspective, he ultimately serves God's purposes, unknowingly fulfilling divine decree (27:6). This demonstrates the inscrutable sovereignty whereby God accomplishes His will through agents who don't acknowledge Him—a mystery provoking both awe and humility.

Theologically, this verse teaches:

1. God's judgments execute with historical precision at divinely appointed times
2. pagan rulers and their servants unwittingly fulfill God's purposes

3. the most tragic events in redemptive history occur within God's sovereign plan
4. human agents remain responsible for their actions even while fulfilling divine purposes.

The tension between divine sovereignty and human responsibility finds clear illustration here.

## Historical Context

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Nebuzar-adan appears multiple times in Jeremiah (39:9-14; 40:1-5; 52:12-30), consistently portrayed as the Babylonian official managing Jerusalem's destruction and population deportation. The one-month gap between wall breach (verse 7) and temple destruction (verse 12) likely involved securing the city, dealing with resistance, and preparing for systematic demolition.

Archaeological evidence confirms massive destruction of Jerusalem during this period. Excavations show burn layers from the early sixth century BCE across the city. The temple's destruction was so traumatic that Jewish tradition commemorates it annually on Tisha B'Av (ninth of Av). Remarkably, both the First Temple (586 BCE) and Second Temple (70 CE) were destroyed on the same date, demonstrating the providential patterns in redemptive history. The destruction made diaspora Judaism possible, transforming ethnic nationalism into covenantal identity defined by Torah rather than territory.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

1. How does understanding that God used Babylon to judge His own people challenge nationalist assumptions about 'Christian nations'?
2. In what ways does the temple's destruction (and rebuilding in Christ—John 2:19-21) demonstrate that God's purposes transcend earthly institutions?
3. How should awareness of God's sovereignty over tragic events affect Christian response to suffering and persecution?

## Interlinear Text

לְחֵגֶת	בְּעַשְׂרֵה	לְחֵגֶת	שָׁנָה
day of the month	Now in the fifth	in the tenth	day of the month
H2320	H2549	H6218	H2320
H1931			year
			H8141
וְנִבְכַּדְרָאצֵר	שָׁנָה הָעָשָׂה	מֶלֶךְ	מֶלֶךְ
which was the nineteenth	year	king	king
H8672	H6240	H8141	H5019
	king of Nebuchadrezzar		king
			H4428
בֶּבֶל	רָבִיב	טָבֵחַ יְמִינָה	לִפְנֵי
of Babylon	came	captain	which served
H894	H935	H5018	H6440
	Nebuzaradan	of the guard	
		H2876	
		H5975	
מֶלֶךְ בְּיֹרְשָׁלָם:	בֶּבֶל		
king of Babylon	into Jerusalem		
H4428	H894	H3389	

## Additional Cross-References

**2 Kings 25:8** (Kingdom): And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

**Jeremiah 39:9** (References Babylon): Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the

city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained.

**Jeremiah 52:29** (References Jerusalem): In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two persons:

**Zechariah 8:19** (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace.

**2 Kings 24:12** (Kingdom): And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

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