

# Jeremiah 52:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

## Analysis

**And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about** (וְאַתְּ־כָל־חֻמֹּת יְרוּשָׁלָם), ve'et-kol-chomot Yerushalaim)—systematic destruction of Jerusalem's fortifications ensured the city could never again serve as a military stronghold or center of rebellion. The Hebrew chomot (walls) represented not just physical defense but Jerusalem's symbolic status as an inviolable city. Demolishing these walls fulfilled the covenant curses of Deuteronomy 28:52: 'He shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land.'

This destruction reversed the glory of Solomon's and Hezekiah's fortifications. For generations, Jerusalem's walls symbolized divine protection (Psalm 48:12-13), but that protection depended on covenant faithfulness. When Judah persistently violated covenant, the walls became meaningless—God Himself fought against the city (Jeremiah 21:5). Ezekiel had prophesied that God's glory departed from the temple before Babylon attacked (Ezekiel 10-11), meaning Jerusalem fell not despite God's presence but because of His absence due to their sin. The wall demolition was comprehensive (kol-chomot, 'all the walls'), leaving Jerusalem utterly defenseless. This would remain true until Nehemiah's rebuilding 140 years later (Nehemiah 1-6).

## Historical Context

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Jerusalem's walls, constructed and strengthened over centuries by David, Solomon, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, were considered among the ancient world's strongest fortifications. Archaeological excavations have uncovered portions of these walls, some with massive stones showing evidence of deliberate destruction—particularly along the eastern slope of the City of David and near the temple mount. The demolition required systematic effort by Babylon's military engineers, likely taking weeks. This contrasts with the quick breach (verse 7)—destroying walls completely prevented future use, while breaching them allowed entry. Ancient Near Eastern practice involved destroying conquered cities' walls to prevent rebellion, leaving populations vulnerable and dependent on imperial protection. The psychological impact was devastating: walls represented security, identity, and divine favor. Their destruction symbolized that God had removed His protection from Jerusalem. Josephus records that the wall demolition was so thorough that visitors later struggled to believe a great city had existed there. The ruins remained until Persian King Artaxerxes permitted Nehemiah to rebuild (445 BC), approximately 141 years after this destruction.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. What does the destruction of Jerusalem's walls teach about the difference between false and true security?
2. How had Israel mistaken physical fortifications for God's protection, and what does this reveal about misplaced trust?
3. In what ways might Christians today trust in external securities rather than covenant faithfulness to God?

## Interlinear Text

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כָּל וְאֶת כָּל חַמָּוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם סָבִיב נִתְצַוָּה כָּל

H853 H3605 all the walls of Jerusalem round about brake down H3605

H2346 H3389

H5439

H5422

כָּל וְאֶת כָּל פְּשָׁדֵם רָאשׁ יְמִינָה נְבָבָה

And all the army of the Chaldeans that were with the captain

H2428

H3778

H834 H854

H7227

טַבְּחִים:

of the guard

H2876

## Additional Cross-References

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**Nehemiah 1:3** (References Jerusalem): And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

**2 Kings 25:10** (References Jerusalem): And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.