

# Jeremiah 52:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea that was in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

## Analysis

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**Also the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brasen sea**—meticulous inventory of the temple's bronze furnishings being plundered begins here. The **pillars of brass** (תְּמֹזִים, amudei hanechoshet) refer to Jachin and Boaz, the two massive bronze pillars Solomon erected at the temple entrance (1 Kings 7:15-22), each 27 feet high, crowned with ornate capitals. These pillars symbolized God's strength and establishment of His house—their names meant 'He establishes' (Jachin) and 'In Him is strength' (Boaz). Their destruction signified God's strength departing from the temple.

**The bases** (בָּאָסָתִים, hammekhonot) were the ornate bronze carts that held lavers for ritual washing (1 Kings 7:27-37). **The brasen sea** (יָם, yam hanechoshet) was the massive bronze basin holding thousands of gallons for priestly purification (1 Kings 7:23-26), resting on twelve bronze bulls. The Chaldeans **brake** these sacred objects—not merely took them, but **carried all the brass of them to Babylon**, melted down as raw material. This desecration fulfilled warnings that Israel's idolatry would result in God giving His glory to foreigners (Isaiah 42:8, 48:11). The temple's magnificent bronze works, crafted for God's glory, became Babylonian plunder—the tragic end of objects made for worship perverted by the people's unfaithfulness.

## Historical Context

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Solomon's temple furnishings represented extraordinary craftsmanship and enormous wealth. The bronze pillars alone required advanced metallurgy—each was cast hollow, about 3 inches thick, requiring massive molds and foundries. The bronze sea weighed approximately 27 tons when empty. These objects had stood for nearly 400 years (967-586 BC), symbols of God's presence and Israelite worship. Their destruction devastated survivors psychologically and theologically—how could God's house be plundered? The answer lay in understanding that God never promised to protect structures while people violated covenant. The pillars Jachin and Boaz proclaimed God's establishment and strength, but these attributes belonged to God Himself, not the building. When the people forsook God, the structure lost divine protection. Babylon's practice of plundering conquered temples served both economic and religious purposes: the valuable metals enriched Babylon's treasury, while humiliating conquered peoples' gods demonstrated Marduk's supposed supremacy. Ironically, Daniel later demonstrated Yahweh's superiority over Babylon's gods (Daniel 1-6), and Babylon itself fell to Persia within 50 years. The temple vessels were eventually returned under Cyrus (Ezra 1:7-11), though the bronze objects destroyed here had to be recreated for the second temple.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. What does the destruction of the temple's bronze pillars teach about the difference between sacred symbols and God's actual presence?
2. How had Israel's unfaithfulness transformed objects meant for God's glory into mere plunder for pagans?
3. In what ways might modern believers mistake religious buildings or symbols for God's true presence?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאַתָּה עֶמְוֹד יְהִי הַבָּיִת  
H853 Also the pillars H5982 all the brass H5178 אֲשֶׁר נָחֲשָׂת מִן H834 that was in the house H1004 of the LORD H3068

וְאַתָּה וְאַתָּה נָחֲשָׂת מִן בָּיִת  
H853 and the bases H4350 H853 sea H3220 all the brass H5178 that was in the house H1004

וְאַתָּה שָׁבֵר וְאַתָּה נָחֲשָׂת מִן כָּל  
of the LORD H3068 brake H7665 the Chaldeans H3778 and carried H5375 H853 H3605 all the brass H5178 יְהִי הַבָּיִת

בְּכָלָה:  
of them to Babylon  
H894

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