

7/27/25

Sermon Title: God's Promise of Salvation to Baruch

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Jeremiah 45:1-5

(Jeremiah 45:1) When Baruch son of Neriah wrote on a scroll the words Jeremiah the prophet dictated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, Jeremiah said this to Baruch:

(Jeremiah 45:2) "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to you, Baruch:

(Jeremiah 45:3) You said, 'Woe to me! The LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am worn out with groaning and find no rest.'

(Jeremiah 45:4) But the LORD has told me to say to you, 'This is what the LORD says: I will overthrow what I have built and uproot what I have planted, throughout the earth.

(Jeremiah 45:5) Should you then seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them. For I will bring disaster on all people, declares the LORD, but wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.'"

God promised salvation to Baruch, the scribe of the prophet Jeremiah, who wrote on a scroll all the words the Lord had spoken through Jeremiah concerning Israel, Judah, and all the nations, as Jeremiah dictated them.

Baruch suffered persecution and hardship alongside Jeremiah because of this.

In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim of Judah, Baruch, son of Neriah, as a scribe, wrote down on a scroll all the words that the Lord had spoken to Jeremiah from the days of King Josiah concerning Israel, Judah, and all the nations, as Jeremiah dictated them.

Since Jeremiah was under confinement and not free to go, Baruch went to the temple in his place and read the scroll aloud to all the people.

However, the king had the scroll brought to him and burned it, and he tried to have both Jeremiah and Baruch arrested.

Because of this, Baruch was regarded as a traitor to Judah and suffered rejection and persecution alongside Jeremiah.

(Jeremiah 36:20) After they put the scroll in the room of Elishama the secretary, they went to the king in the courtyard and reported everything to him.

(Jeremiah 36:21) The king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he brought it from the room of Elishama the secretary and read it to the king and all the officials standing beside him.

(Jeremiah 36:22) It was the ninth month, and the king was sitting in the winter apartment, with a fire burning in the firepot in front of him.

(Jeremiah 36:23) Whenever Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a scribe's knife and threw them into the firepot, until the entire scroll was burned in the fire.

(Jeremiah 36:24) The king and all his attendants who heard all these words showed no fear, nor did they tear their clothes.

(Jeremiah 36:25) Even though Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them.

(Jeremiah 36:26) Instead, the king commanded Jerahmeel, a son of the king, Seraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet. But the Lord had hidden them.

This event took place in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim. It occurred twenty years before the present time—when Johanan, the commander of the army officers, the other military leaders, and the remaining people of Judah rejected God's command to stay in the land of Judah and instead went down to Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch with them.

However, Jeremiah did not include the account of Baruch writing down the text on a scroll as Jeremiah dictated it and reading it aloud before the people in chapter 36. Instead, he placed it in chapter 45, after recording all the events that occurred following the fall of Judah.

Chapter 36 contains the prophetic words concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem and Judah; chapters 37–38 describe the actual fall of Jerusalem and Judah; chapters 39–44 depict the confusion among those left in Judah after the fall and their eventual flight to Egypt. Then in chapter 45, Jeremiah returns to focus on Baruch, who had written the scroll prophesying the destruction.

Why is this?

The intention seems to be to link chapters 36 through 45 together, emphasizing that the word of the Lord spoken through the prophet was fulfilled exactly as foretold.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah of Judah, after Baruch son of Neriah had written all the words Jeremiah dictated on the scroll, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah.

(Jeremiah 45:1) When Baruch son of Neriah wrote on a scroll the words Jeremiah the prophet dictated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, Jeremiah said this to Baruch:

The fourth year of Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah of Judah (605 BC), was marked by a pivotal event in the history of the Near East.

In the Battle of Carchemish, the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon decisively defeated the forces of Pharaoh Necho of Egypt.

As a result of this event, Babylon emerged as the dominant power in the region, overtaking Egypt.

Judah, which had been serving Egypt, became confused in its foreign policy, wavering uncertainly and ultimately facing a crisis.

In this context, Baruch the scribe recorded the words of the Lord as spoken by the prophet Jeremiah to Judah and its people.

However, the message was one of judgment against Jerusalem and Judah.

Because of the sins and wickedness of the people, God warned of judgment.

Yet the people did not repent or return to Him.

Therefore, God declared that He would hand them over to Babylon and urged them to surrender to the Babylonians.

Baruch's heart must have been filled with anguish as he wrote down this devastating message.

(Jeremiah 45:2) "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to you, Baruch:

(Jeremiah 45:3) You said, 'Woe to me! The LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am worn out with groaning and find no rest.'

Baruch acknowledged, to some extent, that the people of Judah had sinned against God and therefore deserved His judgment.

However, he never imagined that God would hand over His chosen people, Judah, to a foreign nation like Babylon and allow them to be destroyed.

To make matters worse, the people of Judah, including the king, viewed him as a traitor alongside Jeremiah and persecuted him.

Burdened and sorrowful, Baruch cried out to God, lamenting that he could find no rest.

Hearing Baruch's lament, God comforted and encouraged him, assuring him that He knew the anguish in his heart.

Through Jeremiah, God reminded Baruch that He is the Creator of the world and holds absolute sovereignty over all the earth.

(Jeremiah 45:4) But the LORD has told me to say to you, 'This is what the LORD says: I will overthrow what I have built and uproot what I have planted, throughout the earth.'

Everything is under God's sovereignty.

This applies not only to Judah and the entire earth, but also to the personal life of Baruch.

God is a God of justice.

Although Judah had made a covenant with God, they did not keep it.

They disobeyed His word and committed evil deeds.

Despite God's warnings of judgment, they did not repent or return to Him.

Therefore, they could not escape judgment.

Judah was expected to live as God's covenant people.

God also speaks to Baruch's personal struggles.

He promises to grant salvation to Baruch even in the midst of judgment.

(Jeremiah 45:5) Should you then seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them. For I will bring disaster on all people, declares the LORD, but wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.”

Just as God promised salvation to Ebed-Melek the Cushite, who saved Jeremiah's life, He also gave a promise of salvation to Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe and faithful companion.

(Jeremiah 38:7) But Ebed-Melek, a Cushite, an official in the royal palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. While the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate,

(Jeremiah 38:8) Ebed-Melek went out of the palace and said to him,

(Jeremiah 38:9) “My lord the king, these men have acted wickedly in all they have done to Jeremiah the prophet. They have thrown him into a cistern, where he will starve to death when there is no longer any bread in the city.”

(Jeremiah 38:10) Then the king commanded Ebed-Melek the Cushite, “Take thirty men from here with you and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies.”

(Jeremiah 38:11) So Ebed-Melek took the men with him and went to a room under the treasury in the palace. He took some old rags and worn-out clothes from there and let them down with ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.

(Jeremiah 38:12) Ebed-Melek the Cushite said to Jeremiah, “Put these old rags and worn-out clothes under your arms to pad the ropes.” Jeremiah did so, (Jeremiah 38:13) and they pulled him up with the ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard.

(Jeremiah 39:15) While Jeremiah had been confined in the courtyard of the guard, the word of the Lord came to him:

(Jeremiah 39:16) “Go and tell Ebed-Melek the Cushite, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: I am about to fulfill my words against this city—words concerning disaster, not prosperity. At that time they will be fulfilled before your eyes.

(Jeremiah 39:17) But I will rescue you on that day, declares the Lord; you will not be given into the hands of those you fear.

(Jeremiah 39:18) I will save you; you will not fall by the sword but will escape with your life, because you trust in me, declares the Lord.’”

God told Baruch not to seek great things for himself in this world.

Honestly, there was another inner conflict within Baruch.

He came from a prominent family in Judah.

His grandfather Maaseiah was a high official who oversaw Jerusalem during the reign of King Josiah, and his brother Seraiah served as a chamberlain.

Naturally, Baruch also desired a high-ranking position, but he was discouraged because that aspiration had not been fulfilled.

To him, God said not to pursue worldly things.

At the same time, He promised salvation.

God assured him that, when He judges Judah and all nations, He would protect Baruch’s life wherever he may be.

I will give you your life as a prize of war” means that, just as plunder is given as a reward for victory in battle, God will protect his life even in the face of danger.

Judah will soon be destroyed according to God’s will.

Nevertheless, Baruch will be saved.

The God who rules over all the earth will give Baruch’s life as a spoil.

Life is in God’s hands.

Neither the king of Judah nor the people who persecuted him can take his life.

Beloved members of Church of God Dreams,

From chapters 36 to 45, as we witness God’s prophecies of judgment toward Jerusalem and Judah and see their eventual destruction, we see the God who rules and reigns over this world.

Through it all, we see that blessing comes to those who obey God's word, while judgment comes to those who disobey.

God promised blessing and salvation to Baruch, who carried out the mission entrusted to him amid persecution and suffering, faithfully obeying God’s Word. He promised to preserve Baruch’s life as a spoil even in the midst of judgment. This promise of salvation given during Baruch’s lamentation must have been a great comfort to him, and it surely became the driving force that enabled him to fulfill his mission to the end.

The world constantly pressures us to achieve great things—to pursue wealth, power, and human approval—as if that is the definition of success. But God shows us a different path.

He calls us to live humbly in obedience to His Word.

And He promises to bless and give life to those who do.

There is nothing more precious than life.

Even if a person possesses all the power, fame, and riches of the world, it is all meaningless if they lose their life.

These things will vanish like dew on the day of judgment.

But God has promised eternal life to those who are in Christ.

He has promised to save us on the day of judgment.

This promise is a great source of comfort and strength to those of us who suffer, groan, and struggle as we strive to obey God's Word in this world.

It is the power that enables us to carry out our mission to the end.

Let us offer a song of thanksgiving and praise to God who has promised us eternal life.

Let us all trust in His promise, humbly obey His Word, and faithfully fulfill our calling.