

**Date:** 1/12/25

**Sermon Title:** Judgment on Judah's Disobedience

**Preacher:** Pastor Kim Soon-bae

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 25:1-14

**(Jeremiah 25:1)** The word came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

**(Jeremiah 25:2)** So Jeremiah the prophet said to all the people of Judah and to all those living in Jerusalem:

**(Jeremiah 25:3)** "For twenty-three years—from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah until this very day—the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

**(Jeremiah 25:4)** And though the Lord has sent all his servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention.

**(Jeremiah 25:5)** They said, 'Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the Lord gave to you and your ancestors forever and ever.

**(Jeremiah 25:6)** Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; do not arouse my anger with what your hands have made. Then I will not harm you.'

**(Jeremiah 25:7)** But you did not listen to me," declares the Lord, "and you have aroused my anger with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves."

**(Jeremiah 25:8)** Therefore the Lord Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words,

**(Jeremiah 25:9)** I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the Lord, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin.

**(Jeremiah 25:10)** I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp.

**(Jeremiah 25:11)** This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

**(Jeremiah 25:12)** But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the Lord, "and will make it desolate forever.

**(Jeremiah 25:13)** I will bring on that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations.

**(Jeremiah 25:14)** They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

The passage contains the word of God that came to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in 605 BC.

The vision of the baskets of figs recorded in the previous chapter was shown to Jeremiah about three months after King Jehoiakim of Judah died and his son Jehoiachin ascended to the throne. In contrast, the message in this chapter was given eight years earlier.

**(Jeremiah 25:1)** "The word came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon."

Interestingly, the chronology of both the king of Judah and the king of Babylon is recorded together, highlighting the historical significance of the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (605 BC), as the backdrop for this message.

This year marked a critical turning point in history when Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, led the Babylonian army to victory in the Battle of Carchemish, decisively defeating Pharaoh Necho II of Egypt and securing dominance over the Near East.

With Babylon's triumph at Carchemish, control over Syria and Canaan shifted from Egypt to Babylon.

Moreover, the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, this same year, holds profound significance in redemptive history.

It was the year when the reality of the disaster coming from the north, as prophesied by Jeremiah, became unmistakably clear.

It was also the first time the people of Judah experienced the calamity of being taken into exile in Babylon.

Following his victory over Egypt at Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar advanced into Judah, capturing its people as exiles.

Daniel, the prophet, was among those taken captive at this time.

Jeremiah points out that Judah's suffering is a result of their endless disobedience and stubbornness.

Reflecting on his 23 years of ministry, Jeremiah tells the people of Judah that they have neither obeyed nor listened to the word of God.

Despite God continually sending not only Jeremiah but also all His servants to warn them to turn away from their evil ways and deeds and return to Him, the people of Judah refused to listen and persisted in following their wicked paths.

**(Jeremiah 25:2)** "Jeremiah the prophet said to all the people of Judah and all those living in Jerusalem,

**(Jeremiah 25:3)** 'From the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah until this very day—twenty-three years—the word of the Lord has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

**(Jeremiah 25:4)** And though the Lord has sent all His servants the prophets to you again and again, you have not listened or paid any attention."

Jeremiah was called as a prophet in the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah (627 BC).

From that time until the present (605 BC), a period of 23 years, Jeremiah faithfully proclaimed the word of God to the people of Judah.

However, they consistently rejected the message.

In addition to Jeremiah, God sent many other servants to urge the people to repent.

Before Jeremiah, prophets like Isaiah and Micah had been sent, and later, prophets like Habakkuk were also commissioned to call for repentance.

Despite these persistent efforts, the people of Judah hardened their hearts and refused to repent.

This kind of rebellion was not unique to this time.

The people of Judah had a long history of rejecting the word of God, delivered through His prophets, even in the generations before them.

A notable example of such defiance was during the time of Noah.

Before destroying the sinful world with a flood, God, through Noah, urged the people to repent for 120 years.

However, they persistently refused to turn from their wickedness.

Ultimately, their unrepentance provoked God's wrath, leading to their judgment and destruction.

The message delivered by Jeremiah and many other prophets to the people of Judah could be summed up in one word: **repent**.

They were called to turn away from their evil ways and wicked deeds.

They were urged not to worship foreign gods or idols.

**(Jeremiah 25:5)** "They said, 'Turn now, each of you, from your evil ways and your evil practices, and you can stay in the land the Lord gave to you and your ancestors forever and ever.'

**(Jeremiah 25:6)** 'Do not follow other gods to serve and worship them; do not arouse My anger with what your hands have made. Then I will not harm you.'

**(Jeremiah 25:7)** 'But you did not listen to Me,' declares the Lord, 'and you have aroused My anger with what your hands have made, and you have brought harm to yourselves.'"

Despite God's persistent call to repentance, the people of Judah refused to obey. By continuing to provoke God with the idols they made, they ultimately brought destruction upon themselves.

To live in the promised land of Canaan, the people of Judah had to uphold their covenant with God.

Canaan was the land God had given to His covenant people as their home.

However, the people of Judah failed to honor their covenant with God and ignored the warnings of the prophets He sent.

They disobeyed God's word, continuing in their evil ways and committing wicked deeds.

They worshiped foreign gods and idols, thereby breaking the first and second commandments of the Ten Commandments.

God had promised that if they obeyed even these two commandments, He would not harm them.

Yet, they disregarded His commands, provoking His anger and bringing calamity upon themselves as a result.

Judgment was declared upon Judah, who had ignored the word of God proclaimed by the prophets and refused to return to Him.

God announced that He would use King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon—who had defeated Egypt at the Battle of Carchemish and seized dominance over the ancient Near East—to bring destruction upon Judah.

He declared that Judah would become a spectacle of astonishment, mockery, and scorn, and its land would be reduced to eternal desolation.

**(Jeremiah 25:8)** "Therefore the Lord Almighty says this: 'Because you have not listened to My words,

**(Jeremiah 25:9)** I will summon all the peoples of the north and My servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,' declares the Lord, 'and I will bring them

against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn and an everlasting ruin."

The Babylonian army was not composed solely of its own soldiers.

It included troops from allied nations and soldiers conscripted from conquered peoples and regions, forming an imperial force.

Corresponding to the massive scale of the invading force, the scope of judgment extended beyond Judah to the surrounding nations, including Syria and all the lands of Canaan.

God refers to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as "My servant," indicating that he is carrying out God's will and commands.

This shows that God is using Nebuchadnezzar as an instrument of judgment to execute His plans for punishing Judah.

Despite being a pagan king, Nebuchadnezzar is fulfilling God's purpose by bringing judgment upon the people of Judah for their disobedience and wickedness.

God describes the extent of the devastation and judgment that will come upon Judah in such detail, saying that even the simplest joys of life will be erased.

In the destroyed land, the sounds of celebration, such as the joy of a festival or the voices of a bride and groom, will be silenced.

Even the ordinary, daily sounds—like the grinding of grain in a mill and the light of lamps in the darkness—will be absent.

This prophecy reveals the extent of the punishment—Judah will experience not only physical destruction but also a loss of all the normal comforts of life for a long period.

Furthermore, God declares that for seventy years, the people of Judah will serve the king of Babylon.

**(Jeremiah 25:10)** "I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of a lamp."

**(Jeremiah 25:11)** "This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years."

After seventy years, God promises to judge Babylon.

Just as Judah and the surrounding nations were judged for their evil deeds, Babylon will also face judgment for their actions.

God declares that He will make Babylon and its land, including the Chaldeans, a desolate wasteland.

The empire that made other nations an "eternal ruin" will itself become an eternal ruin.

**(Jeremiah 25:12)** "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their guilt," declares the Lord, "and I will make it desolate forever."

**(Jeremiah 25:13)** "I will bring upon that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations."

**(Jeremiah 25:14)** "They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

Babylon was used as an instrument of God's judgment against the disobedient people of Judah.

However, despite being used by God to execute His judgment, Babylon would eventually face judgment for its own sins.

After seventy years of ruling and receiving service from other nations, Babylon itself would be humbled and would serve other nations and great kings.

God's prophetic word was fulfilled in 539 BC when Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the king of Persia (modern-day Iran).

Despite using Babylon as an instrument of judgment against Judah, God did not let the empire go unpunished for its own wickedness.

This event demonstrates that while God may use nations and rulers as instruments of His judgment, He holds them accountable for their actions as well. No one is exempt from God's justice, and even those who are used to carry out His purposes will face consequences for their sin.

This serves as a reminder that God's sovereignty governs not only His judgment of His people but also the nations and rulers of the world.

Beloved members of Church of God's Dream,

The God we believe in is a God of love and also a God of justice.

He is the Creator of the world, and He governs it with justice.

Many people misunderstand God's love and justice.

They view love and justice as opposing concepts and focus only on the aspects of God's love that they want to emphasize.

However, love without justice is not true love—it leads to indulgence and chaos.

On the other hand, justice without love is merely fear and brings no benefit.

Love and justice are not separate but are two sides of the same coin.

They are intertwined and work together, showing us that true love upholds justice, and true justice is rooted in love.

God disciplines His children with love and justice to guide them back to the right path and to save them from the destructive consequences of their sin.

His discipline is not out of anger or vengeance but out of a deep desire to restore them to life.

Just as an earthly father disciplines his children for their well-being, our Heavenly Father disciplines us for our ultimate good, so that we can share in His holiness and receive the fruit of righteousness and peace.



In Hebrews, it is explained that God's discipline, though painful at the moment, is a sign of His love and care.

It is meant to bring about growth, repentance, and transformation, leading to eternal life.

Through discipline, we are taught to live in accordance with God's will, to avoid paths that lead to destruction, and to grow in holiness.

(Hebrews 12:7) "Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?"

(Hebrews 12:8) "If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all."

(Hebrews 12:9) "Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live?"

(Hebrews 12:10) "They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness."

(Hebrews 12:11) "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Through God's loving discipline, we are shaped and refined, ultimately bringing forth the fruit of righteousness, peace, and eternal life.

Let us truly listen to God's words and obey His guidance.

May we be receptive to His warnings and repent before experiencing any correction.

Turning back to Him with a humble heart leads us to healing and restoration. God's love and grace are always available to those who seek Him earnestly.

Believe that the path God leads us on is always good, beautiful, and the perfect way to eternal life.

His love for us is so immense that He gave His life for us.

Believing in His love and trusting His guidance brings us peace and assurance, knowing that He will always lead us toward what is best for us.