

9/21/25

Sermon Title: The Fulfillment of Prophecy and the Light of Restoration

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Jeremiah 52:1–34

### The Fall of Jerusalem

(Jeremiah 52:1) Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah.

(Jeremiah 52:2) He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done.

(Jeremiah 52:3) It was because of the LORD's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:4) So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. They encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it.

(Jeremiah 52:5) The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

(Jeremiah 52:6) By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city had become so severe that there was no food for the people to eat.

(Jeremiah 52:7) Then the city wall was broken through, and the whole army fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls near the king's garden, though the Babylonians<sup>[a]</sup> were surrounding the city. They fled toward the Arabah,

(Jeremiah 52:8) but the Babylonian<sup>[c]</sup> army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered,

(Jeremiah 52:9) and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him.

(Jeremiah 52:10) There at Riblah the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah.

(Jeremiah 52:11) Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon, where he put him in prison till the day of his death.

(Jeremiah 52:12) On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

(Jeremiah 52:13) He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down.

(Jeremiah 52:14) The whole Babylonian army, under the commander of the imperial guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem.

(Jeremiah 52:15) Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest people and those who remained in the city, along with the rest of the craftsmen and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:16) But Nebuzaradan left behind the rest of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

(Jeremiah 52:17) The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried all the bronze to Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:18) They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service.

(Jeremiah 52:19) The commander of the imperial guard took away the basins, censers, sprinkling bowls, pots, lampstands, dishes and bowls used for drink offerings—all that were made of pure gold or silver.

(Jeremiah 52:20) The bronze from the two pillars, the Sea and the twelve bronze bulls under it, and the movable stands, which King Solomon had made for the temple of the LORD, was more than could be weighed.

(Jeremiah 52:21) Each pillar was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; each was four fingers thick, and hollow.

(Jeremiah 52:22) The bronze capital on top of one pillar was five cubits<sup>[1]</sup> high and was decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze all around. The other pillar, with its pomegranates, was similar.

(Jeremiah 52:23) There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; the total number of pomegranates above the surrounding network was a hundred.

(Jeremiah 52:24) The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers.

(Jeremiah 52:25) Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men, and seven royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land, sixty of whom were found in the city.

(Jeremiah 52:26) Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

(Jeremiah 52:27) There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed. So Judah went into captivity, away from her land.

(Jeremiah 52:28) This is the number of the people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: in the seventh year, 3,023 Jews;

(Jeremiah 52:29) in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem;

(Jeremiah 52:30) in his twenty-third year, 745 Jews taken into exile by Nebuzaradan the commander of the imperial guard. There were 4,600 people in all.

### **Jehoiachin Released**

(Jeremiah 52:31) In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah and freed him from prison.

(Jeremiah 52:32) He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat of honor higher than those of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:33) So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes and for the rest of his life ate regularly at the king's table.

(Jeremiah 52:34) Day by day the king of Babylon gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived, till the day of his death.

This is the final chapter of the Book of Jeremiah.

Although the prophet Jeremiah concluded in chapter 51 his prophecies concerning God's judgment on Judah and the surrounding nations, the book of Jeremiah ends with the record of Jerusalem and Judah being overthrown by Babylon.

There is a clear purpose in this.

Through the prophet Jeremiah, God had repeatedly warned the people of Judah about the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of Judah, urging them to turn back from evil.

Yet the people of Judah did not repent to the end.

They continued in idolatry and in morally corrupt, wicked deeds.

Therefore, God pronounced judgment just as He had warned.

He declared that He would use Babylon to destroy Jerusalem and Judah.

Thus, the fall of Jerusalem and Judah stands as evidence that God's judgment against them was fulfilled exactly as prophesied.

At the same time, it proclaims that God's judgment upon the nations—especially Babylon—and His promise of Israel's restoration will likewise be fulfilled.

The author earnestly hopes that, through these events, the people of Israel would come to recognize the majesty of God's word, fear Him, and return to Him.

In 586 BC, in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, Judah was completely destroyed, just as God had spoken.

Jerusalem was captured, and King Zedekiah was taken into captivity.

King Zedekiah of Judah did not follow the example of his father, King Josiah, who had been faithful before God, but instead did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.

God's wrath was poured out upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He drove them out from the land He had given them.

(Jeremiah 52:1) Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah; she was from Libnah.

(Jeremiah 52:2) He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done.

(Jeremiah 52:3) It was because of the LORD's anger that all this happened to Jerusalem and Judah, and in the end he thrust them from his presence. Now Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

God took away wisdom and understanding from King Zedekiah so that he could no longer make sound judgments.

Thus, even though he had clearly witnessed with his own eyes what had happened to King Jehoiachin at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, he recklessly rebelled against Babylon.

As a result, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon became furious, and in the ninth year of King Zedekiah (588 BC), he attacked Jerusalem.

Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to the city for two years, and when the food supply inside the city ran out, he broke through the walls and entered.

When the wall was breached, King Zedekiah tried to escape, but he was eventually captured and brought before King Nebuchadnezzar.

There, before Zedekiah's very eyes, Nebuchadnezzar put his sons to death.

He then had Zedekiah's eyes gouged out in front of the people, bound him with chains, and carried him off to Babylon.

King Zedekiah ultimately ended his life in a Babylonian prison.

(Jeremiah 52:4) So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with

his whole army. They encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it.

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(Jeremiah 52:8) but the Babylonian<sup>[a]</sup> army pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered,

(Jeremiah 52:9) and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he pronounced sentence on him.

(Jeremiah 52:10) There at Riblah the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes; he also killed all the officials of Judah.

(Jeremiah 52:11) Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon, where he put him in prison till the day of his death.

It was the consequence of a vassal betraying his sovereign.

The people of Judah were driven out of the land that God had given them.

Nebuzaradan, the commander of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, along with all the forces under his command, tore down the walls surrounding Jerusalem and set fire to the temple, the royal palace, and every house.

This was the result of refusing to surrender and resisting until the end.

(Jeremiah 52:12) On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan commander of the imperial guard, who served the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

(Jeremiah 52:13) He set fire to the temple of the LORD, the royal palace and all the houses of Jerusalem. Every important building he burned down.

(Jeremiah 52:14) The whole Babylonian army, under the commander of the imperial guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem.

Babylon did something most unusual—they even set fire to the temple.

This was because the priests and false prophets associated with the Jerusalem temple incited the people to resist and fight against Babylon until the end.

Once the city walls were destroyed, the city was left completely exposed to outside threats.

Those who resisted Babylon were slaughtered mercilessly, while those who surrendered and the remaining people were taken into captivity.

(Jeremiah 52:15) Nebuzaradan the commander of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest people and those who remained in the city, along with the rest of the craftsmen and those who had deserted to the king of Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:16) But Nebuzaradan left behind the rest of the poorest people of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

Only the poor, who seemed to have neither the ability nor the will to resist Babylon, were left behind.

In addition, they looted the articles of the temple.

(Jeremiah 52:17) The Babylonians broke up the bronze pillars, the movable stands and the bronze Sea that were at the temple of the LORD and they carried all the bronze to Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:18) They also took away the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes and all the bronze articles used in the temple service.

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(Jeremiah 52:21) Each pillar was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; each was four fingers thick, and hollow.

(Jeremiah 52:22) The bronze capital on top of one pillar was five cubits<sup>10</sup> high and was decorated with a network and pomegranates of bronze all around. The other pillar, with its pomegranates, was similar.

(Jeremiah 52:23) There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; the total number of pomegranates above the surrounding network was a hundred.

The temple articles, which were the most valuable items at that time, were taken to Babylon.

The officials were executed.

(Jeremiah 52:24) The commander of the guard took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest next in rank and the three doorkeepers.

(Jeremiah 52:25) Of those still in the city, he took the officer in charge of the fighting men, and seven royal advisers. He also took the secretary who was chief officer in charge of conscripting the people of the land, sixty of whom were found in the city.

(Jeremiah 52:26) Nebuzaradan the commander took them all and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

(Jeremiah 52:27) There at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, the king had them executed. So Judah went into captivity, away from her land.

The high priest Seraiah, the deputy priest Zephaniah, three temple doorkeepers, one military commander, seven of the king's attendants, one scribe in charge of mustering the people, and sixty common men were captured and executed.



The ruling class of Judah was completely destroyed.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, a total of 4,600 people were taken captive to Babylon.

(Jeremiah 52:28) This is the number of the people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: in the seventh year, 3,023 Jews;

(Jeremiah 52:29) in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem;

(Jeremiah 52:30) in his twenty-third year, 745 Jews taken into exile by Nebuzaradan the commander of the imperial guard. There were 4,600 people in all.

The report of Judah's downfall concludes, and suddenly the text mentions the pardon of Jehoiachin.

God caused the head of Jehoiachin to be lifted up.

To "lift up the head" means to restore someone's status.

In the very year he ascended the throne, Evil-Merodach, king of Babylon (the son of King Nebuchadnezzar), pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and treated him with honor.

(Jeremiah 52:31) In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the year Awel-Marduk became king of Babylon, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, he released Jehoiachin king of Judah and freed him from prison.

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For the exiles of Israel, who were worn out by an unending life of captivity and lived each day in despair, the news of Jehoiachin's pardon must have been a ray of light.

Upon hearing of the pardon of King Jehoiachin of Judah, they would have cherished the hope that God's people, Israel, would not end in total destruction but would one day be restored.

However, here we come to a question:

Why did God lift up the head of King Jehoiachin and not King Zedekiah?

The answer is found when we look at the genealogy of the Lord.

(Matthew 1:10) Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, Amon the father of Josiah,

(Matthew 1:11) and Josiah the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the exile to Babylon.

(Matthew 1:12) After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,

(Matthew 1:13) Zerubbabel the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, Eliakim the father of Azor,

(Matthew 1:14) Azor the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Akim, Akim the father of Elihud,

(Matthew 1:15) Elihud the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, Matthan the father of Jacob,

(Matthew 1:16) and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.

The royal line of Judah continues not through King Zedekiah, but through Josiah → Jehoiakim → Jehoiachin (Jeconiah) ... and ultimately to Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the fact that God lifted up the head of King Jehoiachin rather than King Zedekiah serves as very important proof that Jesus is indeed the Christ whom God had promised.

Jesus is the very Christ promised by God.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,  
the Word of God is fulfilled without the slightest error or omission.  
When Judah ignored God's warning to repent and continued in idolatry and wicked deeds, God pronounced judgment on them.  
And as foretold, in 586 BC they were destroyed by Babylon and driven out of the Promised Land.  
Yet, God did not utterly destroy them.

God promised that He would restore them.  
As He had spoken, after seventy years, they returned to their homeland through King Cyrus of Persia.  
But that was not the complete restoration.  
The full restoration will be accomplished through Jesus Christ on the last day.

Today, in Israel, many are repenting and receiving Jesus Christ as Lord.  
A revival similar to what happened on the day of Pentecost is coming upon Israel.  
When this final revival breaks out in Jerusalem, Jesus will return.  
And Israel will be fully restored.

Israel is the true olive tree, and we are the wild olive branches grafted into it.  
On the day of the Lord's coming, we too, together with Israel the true olive tree, will be fully restored and enter into the Kingdom of God.

With hope for that day, let us live our lives looking only to Jesus Christ, the ray of hope, regardless of whatever difficulties we may face in this world.