



JEREMIAH

Jeremiah

July 22

[2 Chronicles 36:13-18](#), [Jeremiah 29:11](#)

God's discipline gives hope

King Josiah died, and after a time, Zedekiah became king of Judah. He did not follow the Lord as King Josiah had done. The Lord had promised Josiah that He would not bring disaster on Jerusalem as long as he was alive. But now, the destruction of Jerusalem was about to happen. Yet, even at this time, Jeremiah still pleaded with the people to leave their idols and turn back to the Lord.

Then, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked the Israelites in Judah, raided the Temple of the Lord and took many men, women and children back to Babylon as slaves—just as the Lord had said.

Jeremiah, who was still in Judah, wrote a letter to those who had been taken to Babylon, telling them of the Lord's promise: "When your seventy years in Babylon are over, I will show you mercy and bring you back home. For I know the plans I have for you; plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

What is the difference between discipline and punishment?

Discipline could be illustrated by a motorist who is fined for speeding and gets another chance to drive within the speed limit.

Punishment could be illustrated by a motorist who has been caught speeding many times, but, because he refuses to slow down, has his driver's license taken away.

The Lord uses discipline to stop us from doing something that is wrong (sinful). It is His way of correcting and training us. The Lord wants us to accept His discipline; not stubbornly rebel against it. Discipline is the loving action of our heavenly Father to keep us within His plan for our lives and to give us hope.

Punishment only comes to those who keep ignoring God's warnings and refuse to obey Him.

Verse for today

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. [Proverbs 1:7](#)