

# Obedience and God's Discipline

Psalm 79

*CENTRAL QUESTION:*

*Why does God allow discipline in our lives, and what does obedience to His Word really mean?*

## I. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE (UNDERSTANDING GOD'S JUDGMENT)

Key Scripture: Psalm 79:1-4 "O God, the nations have invaded the land of your people, your inheritance. They have defiled your sacred temple. They've laid Jerusalem in ruins. They've given the dead bodies of your servants as food for the birds of the heavens, the flesh of your godly ones, to the beast of the earth..."

Historical Context: The Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC as divine judgment upon Israel for their chronic sin and faithlessness.

Why This Happened:

- Israel broke the covenant
- They were unjust and had no mercy
- They rejected the Word of the Lord repeatedly
- They refused to listen to God's prophets

Reality: There is always a consequence to sin and disobedience.

## II. GOD'S PATIENCE AND WARNING

### A. THE PROPHET JEREMIAH'S MINISTRY

Key Scripture: Jeremiah 23:16-17 "Your prophets have predicted for you falsehood and delusions and foolish things. They have not exposed your iniquity, and you to avert your captivity by causing you to repent."

Timeline: Jeremiah preached for 23 years (and his ministry continued for 40 years total) before Jerusalem's destruction.

What Happened:

- God gave Israel continuous warnings through His prophets
- The people rejected every warning
- They preferred prophets who tickled their ears with false prophecies
- They would not listen to the true Word of God

Key Truth: The Lord is patient and slow to anger. He is just. What He says will happen, it will come to pass.

## B. THE PATTERN OF DISOBEDIENCE

Key Scripture: Deuteronomy 11:13-14 "If you would diligently heed like commands which I command you this day, but the Lord your God, serve him with all your heart and mind, and with your entire being. I will give the rain for your land in the seasons, the early rain, and the latter rain, that you may gather every grain your new wine on you and your rule."

Key Scripture: Deuteronomy 28:6 "Blessed will you be when you send me and bless when you go out. The Lord will cause your enemies to rise up against you, to be defeated before your face..."

The Truth About Consequences:

- Obedience brings blessing
- Disobedience brings curses
- God's commandments are like guardrails on a highway to keep us from driving off and killing ourselves
- Discipline is not God being mean; it's God being merciful

## III. THE DIFFICULTY OF OBEDIENCE (WHY ISRAEL STRUGGLED)

Key Scripture: Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the murderers of the prophets, those who stoned, the ones I sent you. How long have I been desiring to take care of you, nurture you, prosper you in the way that I wanted to make man."

Why It Was Hard for Israel:

- They had to keep 613 laws without the Holy Spirit
- They could not see God's love on this side of the cross
- They did not have the Holy Spirit to empower them
- They were stiff-necked and hard-hearted

God's Heart:

- God was jealous because He created Israel for His purpose
- He wanted to gather them like a mother hen gathers her chicks
- He longed to prosper them and take care of them
- But they rebelled and turned away

Hebrew Insight: God says "I'm jealous. I created you for me and my purpose."

## IV. GOD'S JUDGMENT AND FUTURE CONSEQUENCE

Key Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 1:8 "Christ is coming back. God is going to pour out his judgment and his vengeance. He's going to deal out retribution upon those who do not know or perceive or become acquainted with God, and upon those who ignore and refuse to obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Call for Help: Psalm 79:9 "Help us, oh God, oh God of our salvation, for the glory of your name. Rescue us. Forgive us of our sins, for your name's sake."

Key Truth:

- God always had a remnant (faithful individuals who obeyed)
- Even in judgment, God offers a way out
- Destruction is coming, but we have a way of escape through Christ

## V. WHAT TRUE CHRISTIANITY LOOKS LIKE (THE CALL TO OBEDIENCE)

### A. TRUE FAITH REQUIRES ACTION

Key Scripture: Luke 12:47 "And that servant who knew his master's will, but did not compare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

What This Means:

- You can believe in God and still not be a true Christian (even Satan believes in God)
- Christianity is not just intellectual agreement; it's active obedience
- We are saved by grace, but the proof is in the pudding

### B. WE ARE CALLED TO BE FOLLOWERS, NOT JUST BELIEVERS

Key Scripture: John 14:15 "If you love me, keep my commandments."

The Mark of a True Disciple:

- There should be a desire to do what He says
- Reading God's Word should bring correction and conviction
- We should want to obey because we love Him, not because we have to
- Obedience should flow from a grateful heart

### C. JESUS CAME ON A RESCUE MISSION

Key Scripture: Isaiah 53:6 "All we like sheep have gone astray and done our own thing. And they've laid. And. But God has laid upon him the iniquity of us all."

What Jesus Offers:

- Grace and truth

- Compassion and love for all who come
- A call to repent and turn
- A way out from the destruction that's coming
- Forgiveness for our rebellious, deliberate sins

D.A.Tozer's Challenge: "Submit and obey are hard words, but necessary if we could be true Christians. Yeah. The true followers of Christ will not ask if I embrace this truth. What will cost me? Rather they say this is the truth. God help me."

## VI. WHAT GOD EXPECTS FROM HIS FOLLOWERS

Key Scripture: Matthew 12:48-50 "Jesus said 'Who are you to judge another man's servant?' Rather, 'Whoever does the will of my Father is my family.'"

God's Marching Orders for His Soldiers:

- Every believer has specific commands from Jesus
- We must ask ourselves: "What has Jesus told me to do?"
- We must ask: "Why am I not doing it?"

Key Truth: If the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords tells you to do it, you can do it. He will equip you. He will give you the power and the strength to do so.

### A. THE GREAT COMMISSION

Key Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20 "Go into the highways and angles." (Go and make disciples of all nations)

What This Means:

- Not everyone is called to preach from the pulpit
- God uses different gifts and abilities in His body
- We are all part of the same body with different functions
- Each person has a unique role to play in God's kingdom

### B. THE HEART OF GOD

Key Scripture: Luke 15:4 "If I have a hundred sheep and one gets lost, which one am I going to go find?"

Truth: It's not God's will that any should perish and go to hell and be destroyed. If the Holy Spirit is living in us, it should be our will too.

## VII. THE REALITY OF GRACE AND JUDGMENT

Key Scripture: Romans 11:19-21 "You will say named branches were broken, pruned off, so that I might be drafted in. That is true. But they were broken and pruned off because of their unbelief, their lack of real faith. And you are star through faith because you believe so. Do not become a proud and conceited, but rather stand in all and be reverently afraid."

What We Need to Understand:

- We will all be judged for what we know and what we do with it
- Believers and nonbelievers will both be judged
- Believers will not be judged the same way as nonbelievers
- Judgment determines our eternal rewards and positioning in heaven

The Grace of God:

- Even when we fail, God still loves us
- If you're washed in the blood and filled with the Spirit, you're still going to be in His presence
- You might lose some reward, but you'll still be in eternity with the King
- Grace and mercy are always available to those who repent

The Personal Testimony: A tree story shows that when we disobey, consequences come. But even in consequences, we experience God's goodness, kindness, compassion, and mercy through Christ.

## VIII. READING THE WORD AND LISTENING FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Key Truth: It's important that we read the word of God and know the Word of God for ourselves.

What Happens When We Read:

- We get correction
- We get conviction
- We get peace
- We get direction for our lives

The Challenge: Every time you read the New Testament and you surrendered your life to Christ, what is he told you to do? Ask yourself why you ain't doing it.

### A. THE TEMPLE AS A HOUSE OF PRAYER

Key Scripture: Matthew 21:13 (Temple passage about the tables being flipped)

Why Jesus Flipped the Tables:

- The space where Gentiles and women came to pray had been taken over
- Jesus wanted everyone to have access to God
- He wants all of us to come to Him
- He wants all of us to be able to come and worship

The Significance: Jesus sent His Son to chase down a rebel army. He came for everyone.

## IX. LIVING IN THE NEW COVENANT

Key Truth: We are a New Testament church living under a better covenant through Christ.

The Old Covenant Required:

- Keeping 613 laws
- Physical circumcision
- An external system of rules and regulations

The New Covenant Provides:

- The Holy Spirit living within us
- Freedom from the burden of keeping all the laws
- The grace to obey and the power to follow through
- A personal relationship with Jesus Christ

What This Means for Us:

- We have more resources than Israel had
- We have the Holy Spirit living in us
- We have experienced God's grace through Christ
- There's no excuse for us not to obey and follow through

## X. PRACTICAL APPLICATION (WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW)

Daily Practice:

1. Read the Word of God regularly
2. Ask yourself: "What has Jesus told me to do?"
3. Listen for His voice and His direction
4. Obey what He's told you, even when it costs you something

Personal Reflection Questions:

- Are you actively reading through the New Testament?
- What specific commands has Jesus given you that you're not yet obeying?
- Are you willing to pay the cost of true discipleship?
- How can you be involved in God's mission to reach the lost?
- What would it look like to truly surrender your life to Christ's will?

The Challenge: Will you commit to obedience not because you have to, but because you love Him and want to serve Him? Will you join the Spirit in what He's already doing?

## KEY TAKEAWAY:

God's discipline is not punishment; it's a sign of His love and desire to keep us from harm. True Christianity means:

- Actively obeying the commands of Jesus
- Reading and knowing God's Word for yourself
- Being willing to pay the cost of discipleship
- Joining God in His mission to reach the lost
- Growing into the Jesus-version of yourself through the power of the Holy Spirit

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

- Why do you think Israel struggled so much with obedience even after seeing God's miraculous power?
- What specific areas of your life is God calling you to greater obedience?
- How has God shown you His grace and mercy in the midst of your failures?
- What would it look like to truly follow Jesus with your whole heart?
- Who in your life needs to hear the Gospel, and what's stopping you from reaching out?
- Are you willing to be part of God's kingdom work, whatever the cost?

Scripture References for Further Study: Psalm 79 | Deuteronomy 11:13-14 | Deuteronomy 28:6 | Matthew 23:37 | 2 Thessalonians 1:8 | Luke 12:47 | John 14:15 | Isaiah 53:6 | Matthew 12:48-50 | Matthew 28:19-20 | Luke 15:4 | Romans 11:19-21 | Jeremiah 23:16-17 | Lamentations 2:14