

Our Mission:

*To share Christ with the world
and grow disciples for Jesus*



Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

Background:

The prophet declares that Babylon is the agent of God's justice. As in the journey out of Egypt, generations will pass before they are able to re-enter the promised land. Yet not all is lost. God will honor his covenant with Israel. There will be an opportunity for their children's children to return and reclaim what their ancestors had squandered away.

Theology Connection:

Some would suggest that the Old Testament is all about the LAW and the New Testament is the chronicle of God's LOVE. Here, however, we see God's GRACE in action. Despite their rebellion against God's designs, nonetheless he promises them a day of restoration. This is the God who always holds before his children a promised HOPE, no matter their status or current circumstances.

Application:

Jeremiah 29.11 is a familiar bible verse. It is not often considered within its context. If so, it might have even greater meaning. Jeremiah offers a word of hope to the exiles, but clearly it is not a false hope. It is not a promise that everything is going to be alright, but instead God acknowledges that he will never fully abandon us. This is a message that not only might give us hope, but it is a promise for us to share in the midst of a broken world.

The Text: Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-14

¹This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

⁴This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:

⁵"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. ⁷Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

⁸Yes, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the Lord.

¹⁰This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

¹²Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

¹⁴"I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

ADULT

When we think of prosperity, we often associate it with financial security. When the bible speaks of prosperity, its focus is upon something far less tangible. Prosperity is the good character and values we are able to pass on to our descendants. When you look back (and forward) do you see yourself and your descendants as being prosperous?

YOUTH

Please read Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

” The prophet’s letter to the exiles in Jeremiah 29, which has travelled across a vast distance in order to bring comfort and much needed advice to those who find themselves under imperial rule a long way from home, emerges as a powerful testimony to resilience and survival.”

What do you think God’s plan is for you?

How can you, in your life situation, work at being a blessing to others?

How can you take steps this week to align your plans with God’s plans?

Let us pray:

Dear God,

Thank you for the example of Jeremiah. Please help me listen to you so you can use me to bless others. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

CHILDREN’S

God says in Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” God has a plan for our lives. We might try to live our lives the way we want to, but we will only really be of great value to anyone when we are doing what God has planned for us. He has an important plan for each of us, and God wants us to find it and fulfill it--all with His help, of course! When we discover what God’s plans are for us, we find great joy in being what God made us to be. As a matter of fact, we’ll find a lot of satisfaction in doing things we never dreamed of!

Think:

1. Do you know what God’s plan for your life is?
2. How can you discover God’s plan for you?
3. Where can you find God’s teachings and plans?

Memorize:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

Pray:

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank You for having a plan for our lives. Help us to discover those plans and allow You to help us see them. We want to live in ways that are useful and pleasing to You.

In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen!