

Jeremiah 29:1-14 ¹ Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon; ² (After that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;) ³ By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) saying, ⁴ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; ⁵ Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; ⁶ Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. ⁷ And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. ⁸ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. ⁹ For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD. ¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. ¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. ¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart. ¹⁴ And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

I. Introduction

- A. God caused Israel's captivity in Babylon
- B. God instructed them to seek the peace of Babylon in prayer
- C. God tells them that He gives them a future hope

II. The Difficulty

- A. Captivity
 - 1. In a strange culture in Babylon
 - 2. Surrounded by many foreign languages

B. Confusion

1. From many self-proclaimed false prophets
2. Even in Babylon false prophets proclaimed a quick return home
3. Only Ezekiel & Daniel were God's prophets in Babylon
4. While only Jeremiah was God's prophet in Jerusalem

C. Cause

1. Exile from home for their sins in false worship
2. Punishment for their sins

III. Directions

A. Settle

1. Settle down & make a new home
2. Marry & create new families
3. Build homes & plant gardens to grow food
4. Their captivity would last for 70 years

B. Succeed

1. God's makes opportunities
2. God wants His people to move forward even in captivity
3. God puts light into dark places

IV. Devotion

A. From God

1. God does not love judgement
2. God takes no pleasure in death of the wicked
3. Rather God takes pleasure in thoughts of peace, of hope, & a new future

B. For God

1. Anyone can find God

Luke 11:9-10⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

2. God will perform His good word toward that person

James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

V. Directions (Applications to Life)

- A. Everyone in some kind of captivity
- B. Matters who you listen to
- C. Only happy if you accept & make the best of unchangeable circumstances
 - 1. Do ordinary things during extraordinary times
 - 2. Women want to improve men
 - 3. Men want to fix women
- D. God knows what He is doing
- E. You do not have to worry
 - Psalm 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*
- F. Tighten your hold on God & your troubles become less

VI. Conclusion

- A. Silver refining only finished when face reflected in liquid metal
- B. God only puts Christian in furnace of trials only long enough to bring out impurities in life