

Reclaiming Jeremiah 29:11 and Properly Applying Its Truths, James Street

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Jeremiah 29:11

Well known Scriptures are seen everywhere in our culture. John 3:16, Philippians 4:13, and Romans 8:28 are well known. Jeremiah 29:11 is a scripture that the "Prosperity Gospel," uses that seems to promise goodness and material blessings on earth. God never promises prosperity to us in this life. Is the goal of godliness materialism?

Is the context of Jeremiah 29:11 verse 10 – that Babylon would come and judge Israel and take Hebrews away from their land for 70 years? Yes, it was. In 605 BC the exile began. In 537 BC, Israel was able to return, although it was a small portion of the nation, it missed a **key** promise. The problem was that the return was incomplete. 2 Tim. 3:16 tells us all Scripture is profitable for instruction in righteousness, what does Jeremiah 29:10-14 tell us about God?

3 Key Stepping Stones from the Old Testament, Jeremiah, and the New Testament:

1. OT Principle: There are bigger stakes in Jeremiah 29:11 than we often realize:

- a. What is Israel's Purpose? Gen. 12:1-3, to be an instrument of blessing to the nations. They were to be used to serve the blessings to every nation and people.
- b. How were they to carry it out? Ex. 19:6, by being a kingdom of kings and priests and a holy people leading others to God and His Savior Christ.
- c. Where were they to congregate? Deut. 12:5, they were to assemble at Jerusalem in Israel. They were to bring blessing to every nation and tongue at Jerusalem.

>>Israel fell short, they were exiled into Babylon for 70 years. They turned the holy city into a place of sin and debauchery, Isaiah 1:21-23. God's desire for Israel and Jerusalem is found in Is. 1:24-31 & 2:1-4. Messiah would come to establish the City.

>>What does it look like to the world that Israel failed, and the city and temple destroyed? Is God done with Israel?

>>The "Prosperity Gospel" undersells the promise of Jeremiah 29:11.

2. Jeremiah Principle: God has a brighter strategy with Jeremiah than we often realize:

- a. Looking at the context of verse 12-14: 1) Israel will seek after God with a new heart. A spiritual return is accompanied with a physical return: Jeremiah 24:6-7, "I will bring them back to this land," "with their whole heart;" Jer. 32:37-41, "gather them out of all countries," and "give them one heart and one way." Jer. 33:7-9, "cause captives to return" and "cleanse and pardon them." Deut. 30:1-6, "bring you back from captivity" and "Yahweh will circumcise your heart," God's promise given through Solomon, 1 Kings. 8:14-53. Lam. 5:21, "Turn us back to You, O Lord and we will be restored."
- b. When do they return? Daniel 9:24-27, at the end of human time on earth. Jer. 29:11 is looking forward to the coming King, Jesus, when He will reign on earth physically. Jeremiah 29:10 is a sample of the return, but not total fulfillment. Israel needs a righteous King and a people made righteous by Yahweh. Jeremiah includes this promise of a New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-40. The NC is the spiritual return to God by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:1-18, Heb. 8:1-13).

3. NT Principle: There is a better summation of Jeremiah 29:11 than we realize:

- a. 1 Peter provides a summation of Jeremiah 29:11: 1) Peter calls the elect, "sojourners" or "exiles" Christians without a home in this world. 2) The "future" God promises in Jeremiah is to be revealed in the last times, 1 Pet. 1:5. 3) The "hope" God promises in Jeremiah is a "living hope," 1 Pet. 1:3. The hope brings rest that will be fulfilled at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 1:13. It is hope that is coming in the next life.

Now we can understand Jeremiah 29:11.

- The stakes are much bigger than we realize in Jeremiah 29: V10 and in V12-14.
 - The plan to bring salvation to the world is in full gear.
- The passage is so much brighter than we understand. It involves Israel's spiritual return and a physical one.
- The blessing is so much better than we realize in Jeremiah 29:11. 1 Peter tells the exiles and sojourners that an eternal blessing is waiting and coming to those who believe.

Further Discussion and Application

1 Peter tells us to expect suffering in this life not blessing, 1 Peter 4:12-13. Verse 13 tells us the day we see Christ's glory that we would be glad with exceeding joy. What are some of the reasons for this joy? As an example, if we have experienced a serious illness that caused great permanent harm, what would be our reaction to Christ transforming our bodies? What glory does Yahweh receive from you for all eternity because you realize the effects of sin and the glory of imputed righteousness? If we have trial and lack here, what joy will we boast about when we are taken from this world and dwell in His presence? What sufferings will you praise the Lord for that are no longer a part of your life ever again? What trials?

Why do we live with hope of Christ's future coming? What does the Bible say in Titus 2:11-15 and 1 John 3:1-3 describes the life of a believer who hopes in the Lord's return? What are the actions of those who look forward to the coming of the Lord? 2 Timothy 4:6-8 describes Paul's heart and mind prior to his death. What did Paul finish? What was his reward? What is the reward for those who finish their race? What does this crown bestow upon believers?

Living a holy life is commanded by Peter in 1 Peter 1:16-17 because the believer in Christ has been redeemed by the blood of Christ. The power of the blood was to make us pure and clean. It was to cleanse our heart and make us fit for heaven. It also made us desire to obey and keep Jesus' commandments. Why is holiness a demonstration of the power of the blood of Christ? Why is sanctification a blessing? What does it entail in our thinking, actions, and knowledge of the Word of God? What changes about us because of sanctification?

What should we be doing more and more as we realize that we will soon see Jesus?