

# 07

JEREMIAH 29:4-14

## WORKING & WAITING

### THIS WEEK'S **focus**

If we don't see the point of an activity, we usually don't want to keep doing it. (What's the point of homework? What's the point of keeping my room clean?) However, if we can see the long term payoff, we're more likely to embrace it. (Doing my homework means better grades? I guess I should do my homework!) In today's session, God's people had been forcefully taken from their home to a foreign and frightening place. Who would be able to find purpose in such a terrible situation? But the exile wasn't the end for them. God committed to protect and prosper His people, and He promised that one day, He would bring them home. His people needed long-term vision to comfort them and help them see that their future in God could focus their faith in the present.



### CENTRAL **truth**

Our future in God focuses our faith today.



EXPLORE

# scripture

JEREMIAH 29:4-14

## JEREMIAH 29:4-7

**4** This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the exiles I deported from Jerusalem to Babylon: **5** “Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. **6** Find wives for yourselves, and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and give your daughters to

men in marriage so that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there; do not decrease. **7** Pursue the well-being of the city I have deported you to. Pray to the LORD on its behalf, for when it thrives, you will thrive.”

## JEREMIAH 29:8-10

**8** For this is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: “Don’t let your prophets who are among you and your diviners deceive you, and don’t listen to the dreams you elicit from them, **9** for they are prophesying falsely to you in my name.

I have not sent them.” This is the LORD’s declaration. **10** For this is what the LORD says: “When seventy years for Babylon are complete, I will attend to you and will confirm my promise concerning you to restore you to this place.

## JEREMIAH 29:11-14

**11** “For I know the plans I have for you” — this is the LORD’s declaration — “plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. **12** You will call to me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. **13** You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your

heart. **14** I will be found by you” — this is the LORD’s declaration — “and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and places where I banished you” — this is the LORD’s declaration. “I will restore you to the place from which I deported you.”

# DAILY devotions

## MEMORIZE JEREMIAH 29:11

### 7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

# JEREMIAH 29:4-7

## DWELL

Sometimes this life can feel a bit like one giant “in-between” moment. Why are we here? One of the main reasons we’re here on earth in this in-between time is to multiply, to spread our faith to new believers. God is building a forever family, and that family isn’t complete yet. Though we’re *in* the world, we’re not *of* this world, and we long for our true and eternal home. Christ commissioned us to share His good news and bring as many people home with us as possible. We’re surely going home. In the meantime, we multiply.

→ What are some ways we can use our time in this life to bring glory to God and good to others?

↪ Who is one person you know who needs to hear about Jesus? How you can pray for that person today?

## MEMORIZE

Write Jeremiah 29:11 in a journal each day this week and read it aloud 2–3 times. If you’d like, you can decorate the margins with doodles related to the verse.

## PRAY

Thank the Lord that you’re a worker with Him in the harvest of bringing people into God’s family. Pray for people by name who you know need to hear about Jesus.

day 2

# JEREMIAH 29:8-9

## DWELL

Modern conveniences can be great, but if we're not careful, we can start to believe everything in life should be fast and easy. This was a danger for even the ancient people of Judah. God had used the exile to purge His people of idol worship. The false prophets said it would be over quickly; the true prophets said to settle in because God was doing something life-changing. When God gives us challenges, He also gives us His strength and stamina to embrace them. We might want to escape, but it's when we embrace the trial that we're given grace for the transformation.

← Why would the false prophets be sharing messages that weren't from God?

↓ Why does God allow us to go through difficulties? What good can come of walking with Him through difficulties?

## MEMORIZE

Write Jeremiah 29:11 on a note card and post it somewhere you'll see it regularly, or save it as the lock screen on your phone. Say it aloud 2–3 times whenever you see it.

## PRAY

Thank the Father that He will never leave you or abandon you. Ask Him to lead you and strengthen you through every difficulty you encounter.

day 3

# JEREMIAH 29:10-14

## DWELL

"I will restore you to the place from which I deported you." That's not only a promise given to Judah; that's a promise to us. We were created *on* purpose, *for* purpose: to know God and glorify and enjoy Him forever. Through rebellion against God we became separated from Him, and we're powerless to bring ourselves back. This is why God came to us in Jesus Christ. We are made for heaven—eternity with God. Trust in Jesus gives us access to our intended home. He restores us to the place we were created to belong. He is our way home.

← How do you think the original readers of Jeremiah's letter would have felt when reading that God still had a plan for their lives?

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↔ Knowing God has good plans for our future, how can you comfort and encourage someone going through a difficult time?

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## MEMORIZE

Every time you wash your hands today, say as much of Jeremiah 29:11 aloud as you can remember.

## PRAY

Thank the Lord for making a way for you to spend eternity with Him. Declare your trust in His future plans for you and ask Him to lead to comfort and encourage others.

day 4

# PSALM 139:13-18

## DWELL

↑ Does this passage reveal something about God that is new to you? If so, what?

↪ How should this passage shape the way you pray each day?

King David was amazed by God's intimate knowledge of him. God knows everything about you—past, present, and future. God formed you in your mother's womb. The plan for every day of your life was plain to God before you took a breath. No number is large enough to measure how often He thinks about you. God not only had plans for David's future and Judah's future, He has wonderful plans for your future. The best part is that no matter where His plan takes you or what His plan requires of you, He will always be there with you.

## MEMORIZE

Ask 2–3 people today if you can practice reciting Jeremiah 29:11 for them.

## PRAY

Thank the Father that He knows you, loves you, and has a wonderful plan for your life. Ask Him to lead you in His good plans for you today.

day 5

# COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

## DWELL

↻ Why is it important for us to know God's will?

→ Who is a trusted and wise leader you could talk to about discovering God's will for you in this season?

If we're truly following Jesus, we'll want to walk worthy of Him, fully pleasing Him. We'll also want to be fruitful in every good work we do. To do that, we must walk in His will for us. The good news is that we can be completely filled with the knowledge of God's will. Through the truth of God's Word, the leading of His Spirit, and other wise believers in our lives, we can know what God's will for us is in each season of our lives. Knowing His will helps us be fruitful in His plans.

## MEMORIZE

Write out each of the words of Jeremiah 29:11 on note cards or scraps of paper, and mix them up. See if you can put them in the correct order from memory.

## PRAY

Ask the Lord to show you what He can use in your life right now to glorify Him and bring His goodness to others. Ask Him to use your life for His plans.