

## “RUIN, REDEMPTION, AND RESTORATION”

Studies in the Book of Jeremiah

Jeremiah 29:1-32

### “A Credible Witness in an Age of Deception”

**Introduction:** This passage of Jeremiah contains a message of hope for the people from Judah who were taken captive to Babylon prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and a message of judgement on three false prophets living among the captives in Babylon.

#### I. Seek the *Shalom* of the City (Jeremiah 29:1-7)

A. Jeremiah sends a letter to the captives in Jerusalem by way of an envoy sent from King Zedekiah to King Nebuchadnezzar. The Lord instructs the people to settle in, prepare homes, plant gardens, and grow their families. On the one hand, God is faithful to His promise to Abraham. On the other hand, God tells them to seek the *shalom* of the city. This term *shalom* means peace – not just the absence of conflict, but the overall well-being of the city.

#### II. The Promise of Holistic Restoration (Jeremiah 29:8-14)

A. The false prophets were deceiving the people with lies of a swift end to their captivity. The people owed God 70 Sabbath years, so God removed them from the land for 70 years so the land could get its rest (Leviticus 25:18-22; 2 Chronicles 36:21). God’s covenant with Abraham was not made void by the Mosaic covenant (Galatians 3:17-18). Violating the Mosaic covenant resulted in captivity, God’s faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant resulted in the preservation of a remnant and future restoration to the land.

B. The people this letter was originally written to were descendants of Abraham and beneficiaries of the unconditional covenant. People who are saved, in Christ, born again, are partakers of the New Covenant – the new covenant allows believers to participate in the blessings of Abraham (Galatians 3:9). There is a future and a hope for the Christian (Romans 8:18)

C. Revival always starts with repentance and sometimes repentance is motivated through hardship. God predicted in Deuteronomy 4:29 that the people would commit idolatry, go into captivity, and start seeking the Lord. In the original context seeking the Lord involved doing the commands recorded in the Law of Moses. Seeking the Lord requires intentionality (Psalm 53:2). God promised to restore the people relationally and geographically.

### III. The Danger of False Prophecy (Jeremiah 29:15-32)

- A. False prophets were spewing lies among the captives in Babylon. The people who submitted to the captivity had the opportunity to be a blessing to the city, the people who refused to submit would be a curse to their place of captivity. Some of the people rejected real servants of God but followed fake prophets who lied in God's name.
- B. Ahab and Zedekiah were prophesying lies in the name of the Lord. God used Nebuchadnezzar to execute them by fire. This punishment would be so severe that these liars would be remembered through a curse. Not only did they lie in God's name they were sleeping with other men's wives.
- C. Shemaiah was another false prophet lying in the name of the Lord. He sent a letter to Jerusalem trying to appoint a new high priest and ordering the new priest to persecute Jeremiah. Shemaiah's lies were judged as teaching rebellion against the Lord.
- D. Jeremiah was a credible witness faithfully proclaiming the word of the Lord. Ahab, Zedekiah, Shemaiah, and Hananiah (Jeremiah 28) were liars, false witnesses. God is not oblivious to people lying in His name (2 Peter 2:1-3).

**“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” (John 4:23)**

Dr. Erin Daniel Bell

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