

# WAITING WITH HOPE





## Introduction: God's People in Exile

The people of Israel were carried into exile in Babylon. They were far from home, surrounded by a foreign culture, and unsure what the future would hold. Many longed for quick deliverance, but through the prophet Jeremiah, God taught them how to live with faith and hope in the waiting.

This guide builds from Jeremiah 29 and other Scriptures to show us how to trust God's plan while we wait, how to live fully today, and how to bless others even in difficult seasons.

### Reflection Questions:

- When have you experienced a season where life felt 'on hold'?
- How do you usually respond when God asks you to wait?

## Truth 1: Trust the Author of the Story

Jeremiah 29:4 (ESV) — \**"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon."*\*

God reminded His people that they were not in Babylon by accident. He Himself allowed their circumstances for a greater purpose. Even powerful kings like Nebuchadnezzar were under God's authority (Jeremiah 27:6). This shows us that God is the true Author of our stories—He controls the final outcome.

Jeremiah 29:12–13 (ESV) — \**"Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart."*\*

Waiting is not wasted. God uses waiting to draw us closer to Himself. He promises that when we pray and seek Him wholeheartedly, He will hear us.

### Reflection Questions:

- How can trusting God as the Author of your story change the way you view your waiting?
- What might it look like to seek Him with all your heart this week?

## Truth 2: Plant Seeds in the Waiting

Jeremiah 29:5–6 (ESV) — \**"Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease."*\*

Instead of telling His people to sit and wait for rescue, God told them to build, plant, and grow. They were to make the most of the season they were in. Ecclesiastes 9:10 (ESV) — \**“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.”\**

We are called to be faithful in today’s work instead of living for ‘someday.’ The waiting season is not wasted—it is a field where God calls us to plant seeds of faithfulness.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- What are some practical ways you can ‘plant’ and invest in the present season?
- Where are you tempted to live only for the future instead of serving faithfully now?

### **Truth 3: Pray for the Place You Are In**

Jeremiah 29:7 (ESV) — \**“But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”\**

Even though God’s people were in a land they did not choose, He commanded them to bless it. Their well-being was tied to the well-being of their community. We are called to the same posture: to pray for our workplaces, our neighborhoods, and our nations. Our prayers and actions bring blessing not only to others but also to us.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- Who can you begin praying for in your community this week?
- What practical step can you take to bless your workplace, school, or neighborhood?

### **Closing: Hope in God’s Greater Plan**

Jeremiah 29:10–11 (ESV) — \**“For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”\**

This promise reminded Israel that God’s plan was bigger than their immediate comfort. It required patience, but it pointed to His good purposes. Romans 12:12 (ESV) — \**“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”\**

Our hope is not in quick fixes or perfect circumstances, but in Christ. Because of Jesus, our

sins are forgiven, our lives have meaning, death is not the end, and our eternal future is secure in heaven. Jesus is King—and He is our living hope.

