

You Can Trust  
God's Plans  
For Your Life

Jeremiah 29



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**“For I know the plans  
I have for you,”  
declares the LORD,  
“plans to prosper you  
and *not* to harm you,  
plans to give you  
hope and a future.”**

**~Jeremiah 29:11~**

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# Background

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- Jeremiah's ministry began in 626 BC and ended around 586 BC.
- He began his prophetic ministry during the thirty-year reign of King Josiah.
- King Josiah began leading the nation back to godly worship.
- He led them away from the widespread idolatry that had been initiated by his father and grandfather.

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# Background

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- His great grandfather was King Hezekiah, who had led many religious reforms in Judah.
- But Josiah's grandfather and father led the people astray with false idol worship.
- King Josiah was poised to start a spiritual revival, but died before that could happen (2 Chronicles 35:20-25).
- Unfortunately, the kings after that "did evil in the sight of the Lord" (2 Kings 23:32).

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# Background

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- The Jewish nation was mired deep in idolatry and tried to prevent war by making political alliances.
- Because of their disobedience, God sent them into exile in Babylon. Jeremiah became known as “the Prophet of Doom” because of his message.
- In chapter 28, we meet Hananiah who falsely prophesied a future peace for Israel, saying they would return to Jerusalem within a few years.

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# Background

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- In our world we see modern-day Hananiahs predicting peace and prosperity. Everything will get better!
- Perhaps that is why people have pulled Jeremiah 29:11 out of context.
- We want a hope-filled future.
- We will see this in this election season: the world will get better if you elect me.
- We want hope and love without pain or sacrifice.

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# Background

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- In the midst of this, Jeremiah rebukes Hananiah and predicts his death.
- Ironically, this prediction is in the same chapter as the verse that many of us have hanging on our walls, the verse that shows up on graduation cards.
- Jeremiah predicts that peace and prosperity will come, but not quickly.

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# Background

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- Notice that God doesn't tell Jeremiah that He will tell him all His plans.
- Also, this promise was given to a specific people at a specific time, but the principle still applies to us today.
- God does not promise that He will tell us all His plans.
- We simply must rest in the comfort that God knows the plans He has for us.

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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“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.”

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- For I know the plans I have for you - God knows the plans He has for us, but we may not know them or even understand them.
- Declares the Lord – Jeremiah uses the phrase 170 times, are we listening to the Lord?
- In the Gospels we read that Jesus asked 307 questions, and He was asked 183 questions.
- How many of those questions did He answer?

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- The Christian life is less about getting answers from God and more about a relationship to Him.
- Matthew 6:33 - “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
- It’s not about our limited perspectives on life, but it is about His perspective, His plan, and His purposes.
- It’s all about “trusting God.”

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- Want to know who was good as listening to the Lord?
- Jeremiah.
- He has to declare that his homeland would be struck by famine and that they would be taken captive.
- Jeremiah reveals that there were times when he wanted to keep silent so people would not hate him and even try to kill him.
- But he could not remain silent (Jeremiah 20:9).

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- Plans to prosper you and not harm you - God's plan may not seem good to us at the time.
- Romans 8:28 - "all things work together for good."



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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- The next verse explains what Paul means by good.
- “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8:29).
- God wants to form us more into the likeness of Jesus so we can be more like Jesus.
- Which experiences in your life were the most important in forming you in Christlikeness? (trials, temptations, challenges, suffering)

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- To give you a future and a hope - Helen Keller -  
“Nothing can be done without hope.”
- But what is a biblical definition of hope?
- Hebrews 6:19 - “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”
- Hebrews 11:1 - “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

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# Jeremiah 29:11

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- We even see hope in unexpected places,
- Lamentations 3:2-22 - “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”
- Revelation 21:4 - “He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”

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# Jeremiah 29:12-13

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“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.”

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# Jeremiah 29:12-13

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- Then you will call upon me – Can we trust God?
  - God is omniscient - “Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, Lord, you know it altogether.”
  - God is omnipresent - C.S. Lewis - “If you picture Time as a straight line, God is the whole page.”
  - God is omnipotent - “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26).
  - God is omnibenevolent - God is good

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# Jeremiah 29:12-13

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- Pray to me, and I will hear you – If we pray according to His will, He listens.
- Prayer shifts our focus. “The purpose of prayer is not to share your agenda but to align with His.”
- Of the 150 Psalms, over half of them are “negative.”
- We can come to God when we have questions. We can come to Him because we are needy and need Him.

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# Luke 11:1-4

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- Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” And he said to them, “When you pray, say:
- “Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”

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# Luke 11:1-4

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- The Lord's Prayer makes three petitions about God followed by three about us.
- Father - uses the Aramaic word *abba*, hallowed - God's character, holiness, kingdom - His kingdom
- Daily bread - daily needs are subordinate to God's will
- Once the kingdom is a priority, our needs change: focus on forgiveness and guidance.

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# Jeremiah 29:12-13

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- You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart
- Some have called Jeremiah 29:13 one of the greatest evangelistic texts in the Old Testament.
- If we seek God, we will find God.
- But are we really seeking God in our schedules and in our daily lives?
- We need to seek God with all our heart.

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# Jeremiah 29:14

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“I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.”

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# Jeremiah 29:14

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- I will be found by you - God will show Himself and will no longer be hidden, show His face not His back.
- Bring you back from captivity - they repeatedly disobeyed the Lord, and yet God promised them undeserved freedom.
- Gather you from all nations - How could God gather what is dispersed?
- Psalm 147:2 - “He will gather the dispersions of Israel.”

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# Conclusion

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- We often consider Jeremiah 29:11-14 to be a spiritual security blanket.
  - God has a plan for me that is good and imminent.
  - That means any difficulty or suffering I'm going through will end soon, and good times are coming.
- As we have now seen, that's not what God was promising Judah. It's not what He is promising to us today in the 21st century.

“For I know the plans I have for you,  
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for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Jeremiah 29:11