

God's Plan for Endurance in Exile

From the prophet Jeremiah to the children of Israel exiled in Babylon...

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 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. 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.

For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the Lord. “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. 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. 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.”

God commanded them to increase and gave them a strategy for thriving and flourishing in captivity. They couldn't leave and had no control over their freedom. Improvement in their circumstances would only come through their prayers and actions on behalf of their exiled city. Exile cannot hinder God's purpose (Gen 22:17-18) for His people. He tells them to build, plant, pursue Him, and pray for and impact the community to which they had been exiled.

Build

What is God calling you to build, create or develop?

What relationships is He calling you to establish or pour into?

Plant

What are you sowing? Growing? Consuming? Ask the Spirit to show you if change is in order.

How are you nourishing your children/friends/family/community?
...your own soul?

Pursue Him

How are you seeking God? What needs to change? Be added? Or deleted?

What voices are you listening to? Who among them is God calling you to mute or pause?

Pray for and Impact Your Community

What should you pray for a Christ follower when you pray for the welfare of the community, state or country? Write that prayer here:

What need of yours would be met if the welfare of our community/country improved?
