

GOOD NEWS IN BAD PLACES

Pastor Ken Ritz * January 28, 2018 * New Life Vineyard Church

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

The Story Of The Exile

- Israel splits in two during the reign of Solomon's son.
 - Judah (south)
 - Israel (north)
- Israel (north) conquered by Assyria in 720BC, never returns, lost forever.
- Judah (south) conquered by Babylon in 586BC, taken in exile to Babylon. Thousands return to Jerusalem after 70 years and take the name Israel again.

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Jerusalem... our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?
Psalm 137:1-4

Jeremiah writes from Jerusalem to the exiled people in Babylon.
Jeremiah 29:4-11

Two Bad Strategies For How To Live In Exile

1. _____
2. _____

God's Directions For How To Live In Exile

"This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 'Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.' Jeremiah 29:4-7

3. Don't Assimilate or Isolate, but

Defn. Permeate: To pass into or through every part of: as in...
Bright sunshine permeated the room.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, [God's] own purchased, special people... Beloved, I implore you as aliens and strangers and exiles [in this world] to abstain from the sensual urges (the evil desires, the passions of the flesh, your lower nature) that wage war against the soul. 1 Peter 2:9-11 (AMP)

We Are _____ with a mission.

...seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper... 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 29:6-7,11

**All scriptures from NIV unless otherwise noted*