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PRAYER

Lord Jesus, in the same way that you were resilient in your convictions when the world was seemingly moving in the opposite direction, show us how to live selflessly and in conviction without compromise when the world would have us live selfishly and in opposition to your righteousness. Help us to see that your righteousness is what is best for us and what glorifies you! In Jesus' name, Amen.

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

Name a time when you felt welcomed in an unfamiliar environment. Who helped you feel welcome and what was it about them that did that for you?

NOTES

WORD

⁴ “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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. ⁸ 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, ⁹ for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰ “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.

¹¹ 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. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ 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.

[JEREMIAH 29:4-14](#)

God has plans that are for prosperity and not harm, with hope and future at their core. But what happens when (like Jeremiah and the people of Israel and Judah during this time), God’s plans don’t look like the plans you had in mind?

Jeremiah proclaims this to the Jews, much like God does in our circumstances:

- 1. He is the one working all things for our good, even if they don’t seem good to us in our own eyes (vs 4, 14; also Romans 8:28).**
- 2. He calls us to plant and build where we are (vs 5).**
- 3. He calls us to think fruitfully and multi-generationally where he has us (vs 6).**
- 4. He calls us to active compassion for where he has us (vs 7).**
- 5. He calls us to seek him and diligently call on him in prayer (vs 12,13).**

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = non-existent, 10 = overflowing), how would you rate your compassion for the city you are in RIGHT NOW? Why do you rate it this way?
2. Consider where you are right now in your every day life. Are you able to see God working in the way you are living? Why or why not?
3. What is the greatest obstacle that is currently a hindrance or will be a hindrance towards God’s plan for your life?
4. What issues do you sense are present in our culture that God wants to increase your understanding in, so as to know what he thinks? How do you plan to learn about his view and heart on that issue?
5. His plan is not found without diligent seeking (vs 12, 13). What will you do to diligently seek his plan? Or are you satisfied to figure it out on your own (see Proverbs 3:5-6)?

PRAYER LIST