



Teach

“How to”

As well as

“What”

Prophecy
should...

Build Up

Cheer Up

Stir Up

The one who
prophesies speaks
to people for their
strengthening,
encouraging
and comfort
1 Cor. 14:2

Bible in a Year?

Gospels

New Testament

Chapter a Day

Daily Notes:

e.g. Word for You Today

<https://www.wordlive.org>



Main theme?
Book type?
Author?
To whom?
Why?
Circumstances?

Is there...

a fact?

Believe it!

a command?

Do it!

a promise?

Claim it!

Reading to Grow in Faith & Take Action *(to become more like Jesus)*

Main theme?
Type of Book?
Author?

Writing to whom?
Purpose of writing?
Circumstances?



www.thebibleproject.com





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Discovering God's Best Plans in Life's Worst Pains

Jeremiah 29:1-14

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God's plans

A well know verse...

Jeremiah 29:11

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 a hope and a future

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To understand this verse in context, we need to consider most of chapters 28 and 29.

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The Truth about God's Plans

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 a hope and a future (11)

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- God has plans for you
- He knows what they are
- He plans no evil for you
- All that He plans for you is good
- God's plans bring hope
- His plans give you a future





The circumstances in which the truth was declared

God's people were in trouble

*This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the **exiles** and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people*

*Nebuchadnezzar had carried into **exile** from Jerusalem to **Babylon**. (v1)*

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They had brought this trouble upon themselves (see Jeremiah 2:1-13)

1 The word of the LORD came to me:
 2 "Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem: "I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.
 3 Israel was holy to the LORD, the firstfruits of his harvest; all who devoured her were held guilty, and disaster overtook them," declares the LORD.
 4 Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, all you clans of the house of Israel.
 5 This is what the LORD says: "What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves.

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6 They did not ask, 'Where is the LORD, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us through the barren wilderness, through a land of deserts and rifts, a land of drought and darkness, a land where no one travels and no one lives?'

7 I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruit and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable.

8 The priests did not ask, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied by Baal, following worthless idols.

9 "Therefore I bring charges against you again," declares the LORD. "And I will bring charges against your children's children.

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10 Cross over to the coasts of Kittim and look, send to Kedar and observe closely; see if there has ever been anything like this:

11 Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols.

12 Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD.

13 "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

- Trouble is not *always* of our own making
- We're living in a fallen universe
- But on this occasion it was their own fault

But despite this, God graciously offered them hope

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What to do while we're waiting for the situation to change...

Remind Yourself that God is in Control & God cares for you

*This is what the **Lord Almighty** (of hosts - armies) says to **all those I carried into exile (v4)***

- The Lord is Almighty
- Your situation isn't unique
- You are not a victim of circumstance
- God carries you

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What to do while we're waiting for the situation to change...

Engage fully with His Plans; don't Plot Your Own Escape!

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'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. (v5,6)

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- Participate fully in life
- Be ACTIVE in everyday things
- Enjoy the fruits of your efforts - prosper



What to do while we're waiting for the situation to change...

Pray for the Prosperity of Others

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. (v7)

- God has carried you to where you are
- Be generous and faith filled in outlook
- Don't curse the circumstance
- When others prospers, you prosper

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What to do while we're waiting for the situation to change...

Refuse to Engage in Wishing Thinking (Don't listen to false prophets)

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Yes, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the Lord. (v8,9)

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- What were they prophesying?
- They were prophesying that the trouble would be over in two years
- Was this politically motivated?
- Or was it just wishful thinking?

As background, we read from chapter 28...





Chapter 28:2-4 & 10-13... *This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. **Within two years** I will bring back to this place all the articles of the LORD’s house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed from here and took to Babylon. I will also bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and all the other exiles from Judah who went to Babylon”, declares the LORD, “for **I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.**” ...*

*Then the prophet **Hananiah took the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it**, and he said before all the people, ‘This is what the LORD says: “**In the same way I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon off the neck of all the nations within two years.**” ’ At this, the prophet Jeremiah went on his way.” ...*



After the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: “Go and tell Hananiah, ‘This is what the Lord says: **You have broken a wooden yoke, but in its place you will get a yoke of iron.*”*

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How does this affect our attitude to prophecy today?

- Make sure your motivation is right
- Beware of wishful thinking
- Don't attempt to predict the future unless **you know that you know** that the Lord has spoken to you!
- Make sure you're in line with Scripture

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Practice Patience; God's Timing is Perfect

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When 70 years are completed, I will come to you and fulfil my gracious promise (v10)

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The importance of the long-term perspective
cf. James 5:7-11

7 Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.

*8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. 9 Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! 10 **Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.** 11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.*



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What to do while we're waiting for the situation to change...

Seek God Himself

Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me and I will listen to 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. (v12-13)

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- We must seek him in the good times as well as the bad
- Israel's problem was that they only sought God in times of trouble
- God wants us to seek him for who he is, not just for what he can do for us





Remember...

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 a hope and a future (11)

- God has plans for you
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“Come to me, all you who are weary
and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take **my yoke** upon you and learn from
me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.

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For **my yoke** is easy and
my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30