

Context Matters – Session 1

Reading: [Jeremiah 29:1-14](#)

- I. God puts us in difficult circumstances, but provides a means of comfort within them ([Jeremiah 29:4](#)). In this context, He allowed the Jews to live in their own homes while in captivity. He graciously allows for this, and tells them they are to make the best of this captivity, both for them and those who were their captors.
- II. Satan wants to convince us that life should be easier than it is ([Jeremiah 29:8, 9](#)). He uses a game plan against us, to fool us into believing that we should never suffer, that we should have wealth and health, and if we are not experiencing it, something is wrong with us or with our faith. This is the falsehood of the “prosperity gospel” being taught in many churches today. But God clearly teaches that hardship is a necessary part of our journey in this life.
- III. God uses hardships in this life to redeem His people for Himself. He commanded the Jews to set aside each 7th and 15th year as a rest from planting, yet they disobeyed this command for 70 years. So, he pronounced upon them, and indeed engineered the following 70 years of Babylonian captivity for the purpose of teaching his people.

Context Matters – Session 1 (Continued)

[Jeremiah 29:11](#) is misused if taken out of the context of this entire chapter. God knows the plans He has for YOU (Plural, *not singular*). This is a reference to His people... Plans of welfare, actually peace (*SHALOM*) – NOT the absence of war, but the presence of well-being in all circumstances... A future with *hope* – This is hope in what will come, not hope in what we now see. If there is nothing but blessing right now, all the time, there is no reason for hope.

[Romans 5:3](#) provides *hope* as a byproduct of suffering.