

RUN WITH THE HORSES

Jeremiah Series Guide
Part 8



WEEK 8

Sermon Notes:

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

This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. 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. 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, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

Jeremiah 29:10-14

Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:11-13

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

Matthew 16:24-26 ESV

Commentary

EXILE IS TRAUMATIC AND TERRIFYING. Our sense of who we are is very much determined by the place we are in and the people we are with. When that changes, violently and abruptly, who are we? The accustomed ways we have of finding our worth and sensing our significance vanish. The first wave of emotion recedes and leaves us feeling worthless, meaningless. We don't fit anywhere. No one expects us to do anything. No one needs us. We are extra baggage. We aren't necessary.

Israel was taken into exile in 587 B.C. The people were uprooted from the place in which they were born. The land they had been promised to them, which they had possessed, in which their identity as a people of God had been formed, was gone. They were forced to travel across the Middle Eastern desert seven hundred miles, leaving home, temple and hills....Now in a new land, Babylon.

Eugene Peterson, Run With The Horses, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2009), pgs. 142-143.

In exile, the Israelites....complained bitterly about the terrible circumstances in which they were forced to live. They longed, achingly for Jerusalem....They wallowed in self-pity.

Eugene Peterson, Run With The Horses, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2009), p. 145.

Jeremiah's letter is a rebuke and a challenge: "Quit sitting around feeling sorry for yourselves. The aim of a person of faith is not to be as comfortable as possible but to live as deeply and thoroughly as possible - to deal with the reality of life, discover truth, create beauty, act out love. You didn't do it when you were in Jerusalem. Why don't you try doing it here, in Babylon? Don't just get along waiting for some miraculous intervention....The only opportunity you will ever live by faith is in the circumstances you are provided this very day: this house you live in, this family you find yourself in, this job you have been given, the weather conditions that prevail at this moment."

Eugene Peterson, Run With The Horses, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2009), p. 148.

All of us are given moments, days, months, years, of exile. What will we do with them? Wish we were someplace else? Complain? Escape into fantasies? Drug ourselves into oblivion? Or build and plant and marry and seek shalom of the place we inhabit and the people we are with. Exile reveals what really matters, which is to seek the Lord with all our hearts.

Eugene Peterson, Run With The Horses, (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2009), p. 152.

Small Group Guide

This section is to be used to turn the message into a small group. Gather up some people, find a space to meet, and use this as a guide.

Connect with each other, introduce yourself and share a bit about who you are. Each week you are together, go a little deeper and more personal. Everyone wants to belong somewhere.

Summarize. Take turns summarizing the message in your own words. allow everyone to participate in summarizing the message. Not a personal application yet, just take turns summarizing the message and build it in its entirety. Make sure you as a small group leader are filling any gaps; the main point, scripture, and the end of the message.

Personal. This section will allow you to go deeper and be sensitive to God's activity in people's lives. Ask questions and facilitate questions around what God is saying and doing in the lives of the people you're leading.

Do you allow self-pity and victimization to rule your circumstances?

What did you get out of it and why?

Go over the main scriptures from the message.

Application. Take this time to ask what everyone will be doing with what they heard from the message.

What will you do with what you heard?

From what you heard out of the message, what is God asking you to be or to do?

Pray. Take some time to pray with each other.

Jeremiah Reading Plan:

Join our entire church family in reading through the book of Jeremiah together.

Jeremiah 36-40



Series inspired by "Run With The Horses".

Peterson, Eugene. *Run With The Horses*. Illinois: Intersivity Press, 2009.