**Jeremiah 29:1-9, 24-32**

***“Planted In A Hostile Environment”***

Introduction:

1. God has planted us in a hostile environment.

2. Jeremiah 29:1-9, 24-32 God had planted Judah in a hostile environment:

You have been planted in a hostile environment. How can you grow in a hostile environment?

**I. THE PLACEMENT IN THE HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT 29:1-4**

 ***A. The Communication 1a***

*These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah sent…*

1. In this hostile environment…God has spoken:

 \*What to do…Promises made…Word of encouragement…Reminders of a Sovereign

 God (29:11).

 \*There is a reminder of our absolute dependence on Him (vss. 12, 13).

 **2.** We have in the Bible divine revelation which gives us words of instruction to live

 in a hostile environment.

 ***B. The Condition 1b-2***

**1.** In 597 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar took the cream of the crop…Jehoiachin (Jeconiah),

 the queen, artisan, craftsmen to beautify Babylon.

1. *Captive* is the word…*carried away. Residue of elders* is those who were left.
2. *Augustine* in the 2nd century wrote *The City of God*: *This race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the Devil.* Augistine later identified Babylon as a symbol of the City of Man.

 **4.** They were refugees in Babylon which was ruled by Satan.

 ***C. The Courier 3***

**1.** *Elasah* was sent by Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar.

 **2.** God usually has someone deliver the message. Never get caught up with the

 messenger boy.

 **3. It’s all about the message from God!**

  ***D. The Cause 4***

**1.** *Thus saith the Lord…*Jeremiah’s words are God’s words.

 **2.** God has spoken. This is called revelation. His revelation is Absolute Truth.

 **3.** *I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon.* You are where you

 are because God put you there! They suffered. They lost everything. They

 relocated. God used an evil kingdom builder to get Judah where He wanted them.

1. *I have a plan for you…v. 11* We are dealing with no accidents. I have been given an assignment to be carried out here in the city of man!

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**II. THE PLAN IN THE HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT 29:5-7**

What should God’s people do when their zip code is in the middle of Satan’s precinct? You

 would expect God to say *“Run!” “Get out at the first opportunity.”*

**God was going to build His city in the middle of Satan’s city!** Listen, God focuses on

 possibilities. Nebuchadnezzar didn’t take them to Babylon, **God sent them there!** They

 were not captives, they were missionaries! Redemption takes place: the city of God smack

 in the middle of the city of man!!!

 ***A. Where Would They Shine? 5,6***

**1. Your Community 5a** *“Build yourselves houses, and dwell in them”*

\*Establish your presence in the community.

 \*This wasn’t going to be a short stay. God wants you to be a witness in your

 community. You live where you live by design and for a reason.

**2. Your Commerce 5** *“Plant gardens and eat the fruit of them”*

\*This was an agricultural community. This was their business.

 \*Be the worker God wants. Someone signs your check, but you work for Him.

 Put down roots. Identify with those around you.

**3. Your Home and Family 6**

 **\***They were to marry Jewish girls and have children. Then they were to start the

 cycle again.

 \*Your home and family is being watched. Teach your children that they are on

 assignment. The Principles of the City of God must be carried out in your home.

 This will be done through the Word, prayer, and support of the family. It begins

 with mom and dad loving God supremely, and being controlled by His Spirit. Then

 mom and dad need to stay in love.

 ***B. Why Would They Shine? 7***

**1. Peace** *Shalom…*Babylon knew nothing of peace!

 **2. Propagation** *Seek the peace of the city to which I have caused you to be carried*

 *captive.*

 *\**The above in vss. 5, 6 were to be used as guidelines. They were in Babylon by

 design and for a purpose.

 \*So are we…*Seek its peace.* In its sin the whole city is at war with God. The only

 lasting peace is found in Christ’s work on the cross. The good news is the debt of

 sin has been paid. You can have peace with God. The war is over!!

 God can give you peace. It is the peace of God. That *peace* is the basis of nearly

 everything we do in the city. **The world knows nothing of peace!**

 **3. Pray…***for the prosperity and peace*

\*Pray for our leaders. Pray for those things that concern the lost.

 \*29:7 is the only verse in the Old Testament where they are told to pray for their

 enemies. *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. (Mt. 5:44)*

 *\**Pray for the hurtful people in your life.

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**III. THE PROBLEMS IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT 29:8-9; 24-32**

What is your authority? Who do you listen to?

 ***A. Listening To the Wrong Voice 8,9***

**1.** It’s easy to adjust your life from the wrong information.

 **2.** They were dreaming. v. 8b *It’s out of their own heads,* it is not, *Thus saith the Lord.*

**3.** It can sound soooo good. You need a standard to spot a phony.

***B. Unwilling To Obey 24,25***

**1.** It is possible to allow unbiblical advice to continue. Shemaiah was so angry that

 he attacked Jeremiah by way of correspondence. vss 24ff.

 **2.** He mailed a letter in his own name, not God’s, back to Jerusalem.

 ***C. Fought God’s Message 26-28***

**1.** He understood the message…he just didn’t like it!

 **2.** He was sure Jeremiah was mad. v. 26 Jeremiah, you are out of your mind!!

 ***D. When We Fight God’s Message We Fight With God. We’ll always lose. 29-31***

Zephaniah showed Jeremiah the letter.

 ***E. “He causes you to trust a lie” 31b***

**1.** There is a price to pay when we reject God’s word. v. 32

**2.** What Shemaiah failed to understand was God’s loving plan for that city.

 **3. Love those in the City…don’t leave! See from God’s perspective. See the**

 **world through His eyes.**

**Shine as lights in a very dark place!**

***His Heart For The City Must Become Our Heart!!!***