

Study Questions
Plans to Prosper?
Historical Context of the Babylonian Captivity
April 25, 2010

1) 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 hope and a future."*

- a. In what situations have you heard Jeremiah 29:11 used?
- b. What does the English definition of prosper imply?
- c. What is the difference between our word prosper and the Hebrew word Shalom?
- d. Based on reading this verse on its own, not knowing its context, what do you think is the message that Jeremiah is trying to convey?

2) Luke 24:27 *Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He (Christ) explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*

- a. What does "all the Scriptures" consist of?
- b. What are some examples you know of where we see Christ portrayed in the Old Testament?
- c. What is the importance of this verse for us?

3) *2 Chronicles 36:14-16 Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful following all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem. ¹⁵The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; ¹⁶but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy.*

- a. Why, according to this passage, was Israel exiled?
- b. What action did God take? What does this show us concerning His character?

4) *Jeremiah 25:2-12, 14 ²which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, "...these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened." ⁴And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, ⁵saying, 'Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD*

has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever; ⁶and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm.' ⁷"Yet you have not listened to Me," declares the LORD, "in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm. ⁸"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words, ⁹behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' declares the LORD, 'and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. ¹⁰Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation. ¹⁴(For many nations and great kings will make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds and according to the work of their hands.)'"

- a. Who are we dealing with in this passage? What nation is the center of our study?

- b. How long did Jeremiah prophesy before it came to fruition?
- c. What was the message Jeremiah proclaimed from God to the people of Israel?
- d. What was the people's response?
- e. What is God's response to the people's disobedience and their attitude toward their disobedience?
- f. Who does He say He is going to send to destroy the land and take His people captive?
- g. How long will they be in exile under Babylon?
- h. What will happen to Babylon at the end of the 70 years?

5) *Jeremiah 24:1-10 After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the officials of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths from Jerusalem and had brought them to Babylon, the LORD showed me: behold, two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD! ²One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, and the other basket had very bad figs which could not be eaten due to rottenness. ³Then the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" And I said, "Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad figs, very bad, which cannot be eaten due to rottenness." ⁴Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁵"Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Like these good figs, so I*

will regard as good the captives of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans. ⁶For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land; and I will build them up and not overthrow them, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. ⁷I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart. ⁸But like the bad figs which cannot be eaten due to rottenness--indeed, thus says the LORD--so I will abandon Zedekiah king of Judah and his officials, and the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land and the ones who dwell in the land of Egypt. ⁹I will make them a terror and an evil for all the kingdoms of the earth, as a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse in all places where I will scatter them. ¹⁰I will send the sword, the famine and the pestilence upon them until they are destroyed from the land which I gave to them and their forefathers."

- a. What are the two baskets of figs?
 - b. What will happen to the good figs and when is this fulfilled?
 - c. What happens to the bad figs and when is this fulfilled?
- 6) Using our prophetic telescope, how does the context of Jeremiah 29:11 help us learn more concerning the days of Jeremiah and the 70 years of Exile? (The closest part of the telescope to your eye)