

# The Good Plans of God

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## I. “‘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’” (Jeremiah 29:10-11).

- A. This promise was written to a people who had lost everything, and it was their own fault. But God’s good plans endured anyway (Romans 8:28,31-39).
- B. Wise advice for people in adversity and exile
  - 1. Don’t waste time despairing. You can prosper right where you are. “Increase in number there; do not decrease” (Jeremiah 29:4-6).
  - 2. Pray for the people responsible for your adversity (Jeremiah 29:7).
  - 3. Call on God with all your heart, praying for the promises of Scripture and praying over prophetic words that you receive.

## II. The purposes for our exile (trouble) are often for the benefit of others. God is more passionate than we think for the lost world around us. Don’t lose your testimony.

- A. Because of Israel’s deportation to Babylon, God revealed Himself to the most powerful leaders of the world.
  - 1. Example of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to Nebuchadnezzar
    - a. Daniel interprets the King’s dream (Daniel 2:46-49)
    - b. Daniel’s friends in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:28-30)
  - 2. Example of Daniel in the Lion’s Den (Daniel 6:1-12, 19-28)
  - 3. Cyrus’ decision to send the Jews home (Daniel 9:1-3, 17-19)
  - 4. Who are you meant to influence? Don’t waste your sorrows!
- B. Reaching out to those around us is not a luxury; it is a necessity!
  - 1. We are the Salt and Light Company. Without us the world becomes tasteless and dark (Matthew 5:13-16).
  - 2. The attack of darkness and the counter-attack of God
    - a. Example of Rome by 400 A.D.
    - b. Example of the barbarians, 400 - 800 A.D.
    - c. The Vikings, 800-1200 A.D. - The conquerors were conquered by the faith of their captives.

## III. Invisible investments in God that make a difference

- A. Daniel’s prayer three times a day for 70 years—a commitment to watching and praying
- B. The commitment of Daniel and his friends to serve God first, even unto death
- C. The prophetic anointing—revelation and wisdom that interpret dreams and solve difficult problems
- D. Haggai 1:1-11; 2:15-19—Honoring God with our wealth