



TIME OF GRACE

Grace notes

guides for personal Bible study

Pray for the Country

Jeremiah 29:1-10: ¹“This is the text of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ² (This was after King Jehoiachin and the queen mother, the court officials and the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the skilled workers and the artisans had gone into exile from Jerusalem.) ³ He entrusted the letter to Elasah son of Shaphan and to Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. It said: ⁴ This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ ‘Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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.’ ⁸ Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: ‘Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. ⁹ They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them,’ declares the LORD. ¹⁰ This is what the LORD says: ‘When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.’”

Points to Ponder

1. Why would God want his people to make homes for themselves in their exiled country?
2. What types of citizens did God expect the Israelites to be in this foreign land? How does he feel about us today whether we like our country or not?

3. In what ways has God used history to further the spread of the gospel message?
4. Itemize the reasons why you are grateful to live in the country that you do and thank God for them.
5. Each time there is an election season in our country, what can we remember about our powerful God in relation to how a particular election turns out?

At Jeremiah's time, Israel was disintegrating and many of its people were living in exile. Yet God told the people that he would bless them wherever they were, and he told them to pray for the country they were living in. He expects the same of us today. We can pray for our country and ask for God's blessings of security, fertility, prosperity, wisdom of our leaders, etc. God can and will use history to carry out his will and the spread of the gospel message.

What else does God say?

Psalm 33:12: Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he chose for his inheritance.

Daniel 2:21: He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.