

# Gathering

## HOPE

*April Foster, Others Trade for Hope, Director*

**H**ow would you react if someone wrote you a letter that said: “*I plan to bless you with resources beyond your imagination and to give you a bright future?*” I think I would wonder whether it was some kind of hoax. I might be very suspicious and question how they would accomplish these promises.

But that is exactly what the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the exiles in Babylon – specifically the elders and Jewish community who had been forced to leave Jerusalem and were taken into captivity by the Babylonians. They were refugees, people in a strange land. They were far away from the homes that they knew, and the temple where they worshipped. They were living in extremely difficult circumstances and any hope for the future would have seemed like wishful thinking.

God speaks directly to them in the midst of their difficult situation. He says in 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.*” He says, ‘*I know you*’ and ‘*I have plans for you and those plans are good.*’

The Israelites were in captivity for 70 years. Some of them hearing this message from Jeremiah would never see the hope or future that is promised in this verse.

As Christians today, we can also face many challenges and difficult situations. Jeremiah’s words are not a promise to immediately rescue us from hardship or suffering, but rather a promise that God has a plan for our lives and regardless of our current situation, He can work through it to prosper us and give us a hope.

After reading the scripture, consider these questions:

- When you are facing difficult circumstances, do you find it hard to believe that God has good plans for you? Share why this is hard.
- Share an experience where you have seen God’s good plans for you come to pass.
- What are some practical ways you can encourage and give hope to someone who is finding it hard to believe that God has good plans for them?
- Think of someone you can bring a message of Hope to this week and share this verse from Jeremiah with them.

*Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.*

**Jeremiah 29:11**

# Gathering

## HOPE

When you are facing difficult circumstances, do you find it hard to believe that **God** has good plans for you? Share why this is hard.

# Gathering

## HOPE

Share an experience where you have seen **God's** good plans for you come to pass.

# Gathering

## HOPE

What are some practical ways you can encourage and give **hope** to someone who is finding it hard to believe that **God** has good plans for them?

# Gathering

## HOPE

Think of someone you can bring a message of **hope** to this week and share this verse from Jeremiah with them.



Gathering JESUS

“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 29:11



Gathering JESUS

“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 29:11



**SLOWLY READ 1 PETER 1:3-12 AND READ IT AGAIN.**

- What was your understanding about HOPE before you read this passage?
  - What does it mean that God has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
- 

Living hope does not mean thinking positively. It means having confidence that we have our living God who keeps his promise – salvation. Living hope is only from the risen Christ and it can never perish or fade. By faith we are chosen to receive new birth in Christ and eternal inheritance. Be assured of this truth and share the Word with others.



**SLOWLY READ 1 PETER 1:3-12 AND READ IT AGAIN.**

- What was your understanding about HOPE before you read this passage?
  - What does it mean that God has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ?
- 

Living hope does not mean thinking positively. It means having confidence that we have our living God who keeps his promise – salvation. Living hope is only from the risen Christ and it can never perish or fade. By faith we are chosen to receive new birth in Christ and eternal inheritance. Be assured of this truth and share the Word with others.

