

# What Does It Mean?

Contra Costa Gospel Church  
Adult Sunday School

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Jeremiah 29:11

[NIV] *“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.”*

[NAS] *“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.”*

[NKJ] *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,” says the Lord, “thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

[ESV] *“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

[NLT] *“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”*

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## **Small groups:**

- 1) What is your experience with this passage? Are you familiar with it? Where might you have encountered it?
- 2) Why do you think this verse is so beloved by Christians? What is the sentiment of this verse that makes it so appealing?
- 3) What situation might a Christian find himself/herself in where these words would be especially comforting?

## **All together:**

- 4) In order to understand this verse more clearly according to the author’s intended meaning, we need to familiarize ourselves with the immediate context of this verse. Read Jeremiah 29:1-14.
- 5) In 29:1, we find that Jeremiah writes to the “surviving elders among the exiles.” Who are these elders and exiles?

- 6) Why does Jeremiah encourage the people in v. 5 to “build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce”? What is characteristic of this exilic period that Jeremiah is trying to emphasize? (Hint: In chapter 28, Hananiah the prophet is trying to emphasize the exact opposite thing; see 28:2-4)
  
- 7) The Lord indicates to the exiles that the duration of their captivity will not be short. What then is the essence of the promise in 29:11? Specifically, what is the “hope” and “future” God’s promises them?
  
- 8) Why do you think Hananiah’s message was more preferable to the Israelites than Jeremiah’s message? How does this relate to us as well when we find ourselves in similar circumstances?
  
- 9) There is one word in 29:11 which, to me, is the key to having a proper understanding of the entire verse. That word is “you.” What is the meaning of this word? To whom does it refer? And how might people be misunderstanding this word when misinterpreting this verse?
  
- 10) From a proper understanding of this verse, what can we conclude about the character of the Lord?