

Telltale verses ... instructions given to those being exiled to Babylon ...

- **God's sovereign, providential will:** He would use the Chaldeans (Babylonians) to enforce his punishment on Israel. The people were to settle in, multiply, seek the prosperity of the foreign cities where they would be exiled and pray for the good of these cities.
—(Jeremiah 29:4–7 ESV) Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.
- **God warns the people via Jeremiah:** The people were not to listen to the nationalistic lies of the prophets. These false preachers were weaving a patriotic fairy tale that played to the God and country theme of Israel.
—(Jeremiah 29:8–9 ESV) For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, 9 for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the LORD.
- **God did have a plan for restoration:** But it was his plan and his timetable, not theirs. This verse affirmed God's plan for the nation of Israel, not the patriotic lies or the wishful thinking of the masses.
—(Jeremiah 29:10–11 ESV) For thus says the LORD: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. See Jeremiah 29:12-14 for more.

Telltale verses ... Instructions given for those staying in the land ...

- As we saw some were to be exiled. That was God's plan for them.
—(Jeremiah 38:2 ESV) Thus says the LORD: He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live. He shall have his life as a prize of war, and live.
- **But there were also those who were instructed to stay in the land.** They wanted to run to Egypt, but God said no. They contended with God through Jeremiah, and Jeremiah even agreed to bring their "prayer" before God (See Jeremiah 42 & 43), but the answer was the same. Stay in the land, and God would bless them. Do not rebel and run to Egypt. For a more complete backdrop read Jeremiah 39-43.
- **God's plan:** The king of Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar) had appointed Gedaliah to be governor of the land.
—(Jeremiah 40:7 ESV) When all the captains of the forces in the open country and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land and had committed to him men, women, and children, those of the poorest of the land who had not been taken into exile to Babylon.
- **God's plan:** Gedaliah repeated God's instruction and promised blessing to the people if they would obey God and stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon.
—(Jeremiah 40:9 ESV) Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, swore to them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you."
- **The "patriots" killed Gedaliah:** Gedaliah was consequently killed by the rebel-terrorist Ishmael for complying with the will of God—his submission to the king of Babylon.
—(Jeremiah 41:2 NASB95) Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him arose and struck down Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, with the sword and put to death the one whom the king of Babylon had appointed over the land.
- **Jeremiah reiterates God's command/promise to the people of Israel. They were to stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon.**
—(Jeremiah 42:11–12 ESV) Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid. Do not fear him, declares the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand. 12 I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you and let you remain in your own land.