



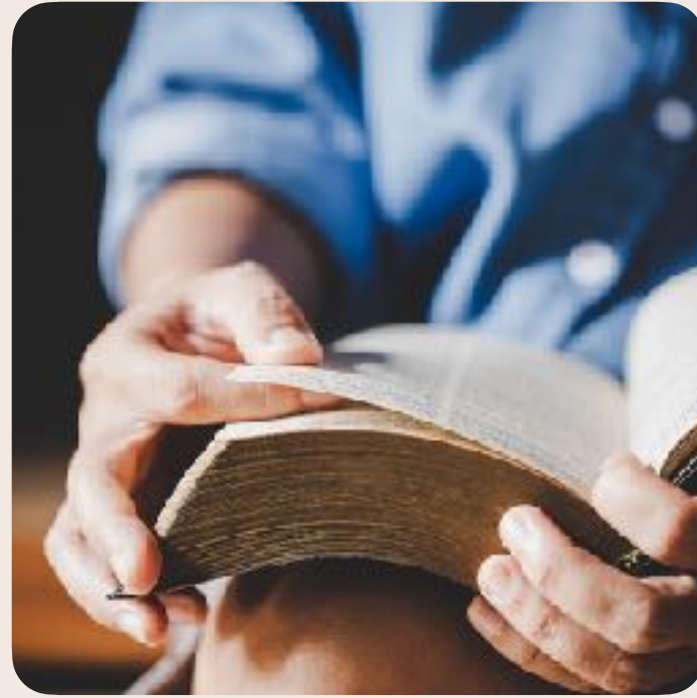
Pursuing Kingdom Excellence

What to seek when times are hard

Jeremiah 29:1—14

Finding out where we must
look when we go through
uncertain and difficult times.





Jeremiah 29:1

“**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.”



Exile: God's people forcibly taken to Babylon

Violently deported,
hundreds of miles from
home, foreign country/
customs/language.

Discuss



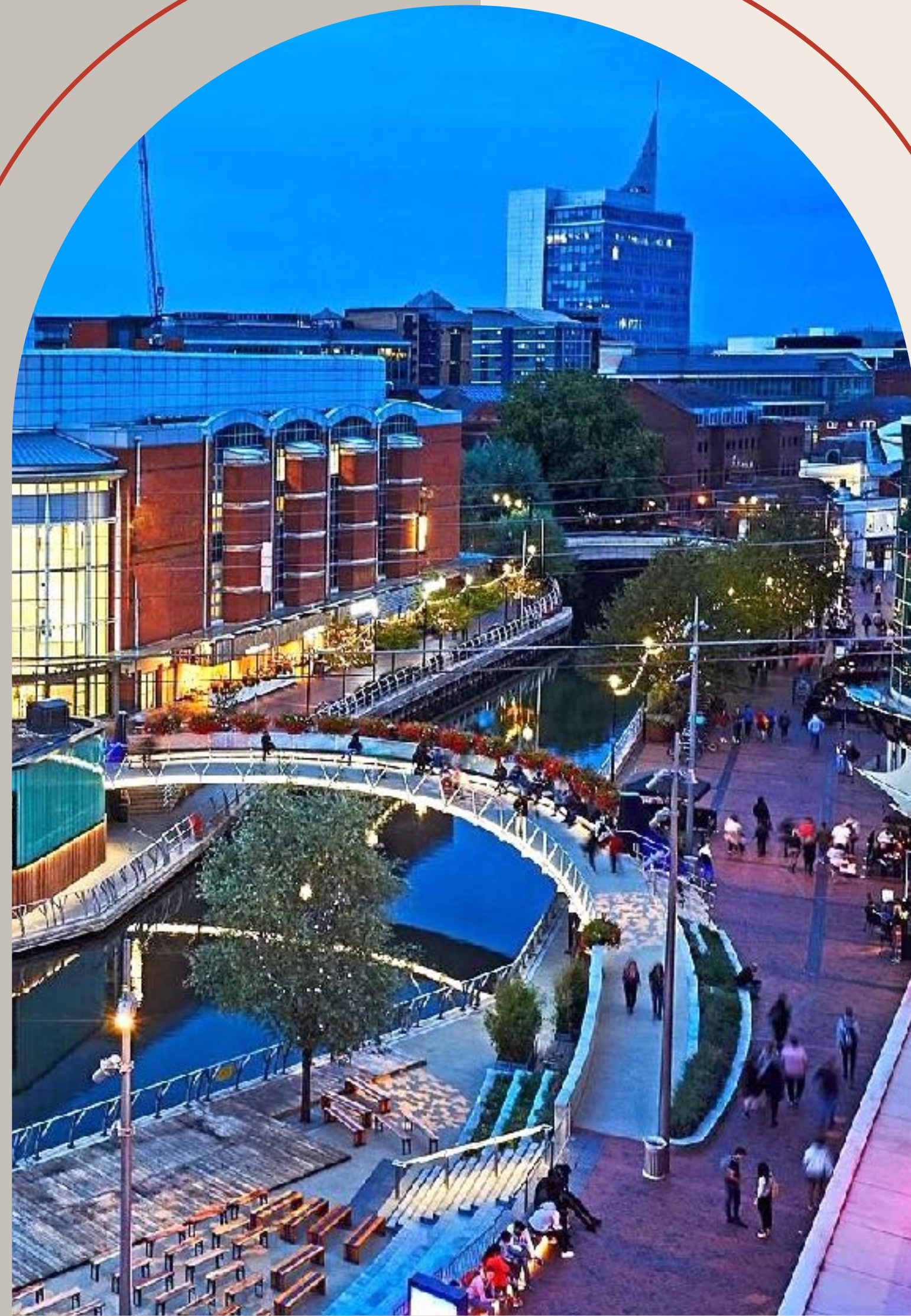
Who carried God's
people into exile?
Look at Jeremiah
29: v1 and v4, 7

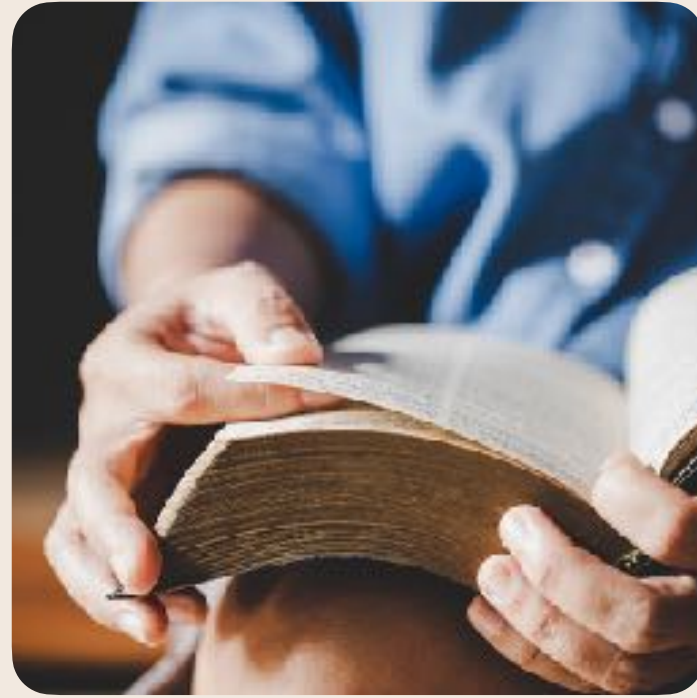
How exile applies to us [1]

***Our society is
like Babylon***

**“11 ...as foreigners
and exiles, abstain
from sinful desires...”**

1 Peter 2:11





Jeremiah 29:4–7

“**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 ... Increase in number ... **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.”



“[This] message ... could turn refugees, mourners and victims into resident missionary visionaries.

The challenge is, which of those descriptions would fit the way we live as Christians in the unbelieving world that surrounds us today?



Christopher J. H. Wright

How exile applies to us [2]

***When we are
where we don't
want to be***



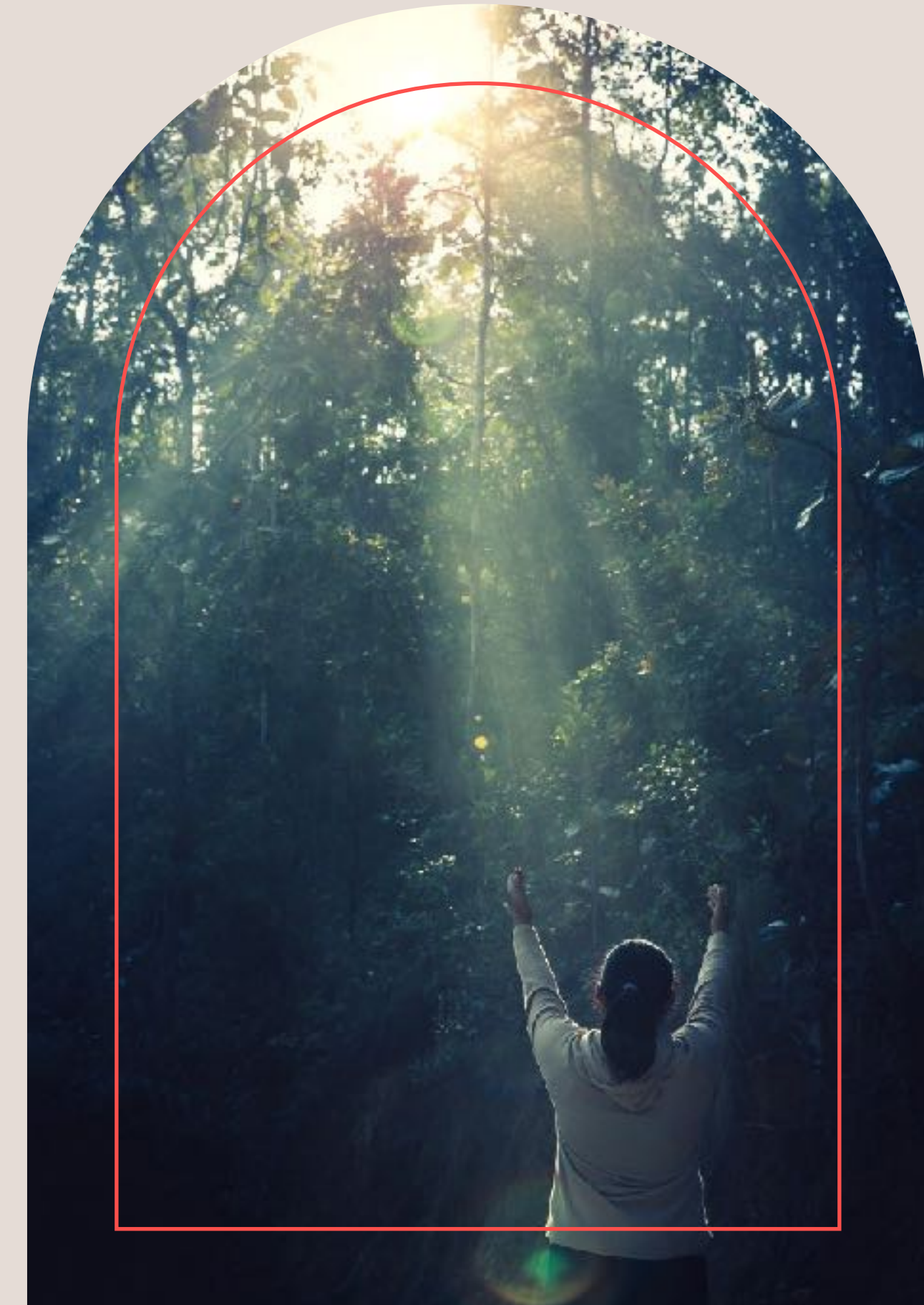
1b “to the surviving elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets and all the other people Nebuchadnezzar had carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.”

Jeremiah 29:1b

“**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.’”

Jeremiah 29:11

Hope in exile: God’s Plans



1. Good plans



God's plans are for our good, so live by faith: the suffering will produce good.

“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.’”

Jeremiah 29:11

2. Relational Plans



Seek Him in
suffering and in
times of exile

“**12** Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. **13** You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. **14a** I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord”
Jeremiah 29:12—14a

Reflection and Blessing

3. *Eternal Plans*



God's plans are for our ultimate good, so live by faith: Christ's suffering produces for us eternal good.

“14 I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.’” **Jeremiah 29:14**