

# Jeremiah 29:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

## Analysis

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**For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long**—Shemaiah quotes Jeremiah's letter accurately (29:5-7, 28), proving the message reached Babylon and was understood. The Hebrew אֶרְכָּהּ הִיא (orkhah hi, 'it is long') captures both duration and the emotional weight: this exile won't end quickly. Shemaiah cites **build ye houses... plant gardens** (בָּנוּ בָּתִּים... נִטְעוּ גִּנּוֹת) as evidence of defeatism requiring suppression.

But what Shemaiah sees as resignation, God intends as realistic faith—accepting current circumstances while trusting future deliverance. Jeremiah's counsel wasn't despair but wisdom: don't waste decades in bitter resistance to God's disciplinary providence. This balance between accepting present hardship and maintaining future hope defines mature spirituality, resisting both presumption ('God must deliver now!') and despair ('God has abandoned us forever').

## Historical Context

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The '70 years' prophecy (29:10) meant accepting Babylonian rule for two generations. False prophets promised return within 2 years (28:3), making Jeremiah's realism seem like treason. His advice to settle in Babylon was politically and psychologically difficult, yet spiritually necessary.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. When does accepting current difficulties become wise faith rather than passive resignation to evil?
2. How do you maintain hope for future restoration while faithfully engaging present reality, even when that reality involves discipline?
3. What does Shemaiah's outrage at Jeremiah's counsel reveal about preferring comfortable lies to difficult truths?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	עַל	כֵּן	שָׁלַח	אֵלַיִנוּ	בְּבָבֶל	לֵאמֹר
H3588	H5921	H3651	<b>For therefore he sent</b>	H413	<b>unto us in Babylon</b>	<b>saying</b>
			H7971		H894	H559
אָרְכָּה	בְּנֵי יָדָא	בָּתִּים	וְשָׁבוּ	וְנָטְעוּ	בָּתִּים	גַּן
<b>captivity is long</b>	<b>This</b>	<b>build</b>	<b>ye houses</b>	<b>and dwell</b>	<b>in them and plant</b>	<b>gardens</b>
H752	H1931	H1129	H1004	H3427	H5193	H1593
וְאָכְלוּ	אֶת	פְּרִיָהּ:				
<b>and eat</b>	H853	<b>the fruit</b>				
H398		H6529				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 29:5** (Parallel theme): Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them;