

# Jeremiah 29:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

## Analysis

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This verse contains one of Scripture's most counter-intuitive commands: seek the shalom (שָׁלוֹם, peace/welfare/prosperity) of Babylon, the very empire that destroyed Jerusalem and enslaved God's people. Not merely tolerate it, not just survive in it—actively seek its welfare. Pray for it. Work for its flourishing. Why? 'For in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.' The welfare of God's people was bound up with the welfare of the city where God had placed them.

This establishes a theology of cultural engagement that Jesus would later radicalize in commanding His disciples to love enemies and pray for persecutors (Matthew 5:44). Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, Esther in Persia—all exemplify this principle of seeking their host nation's welfare while maintaining covenant faithfulness. They did not withdraw into isolated communities or foment rebellion; they contributed their gifts and wisdom to the surrounding culture while remaining distinctly God's people.

For the church, this means Christians should be the best citizens—working for justice, contributing to the common good, serving our neighbors, praying for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2). We do not merely critique culture from a distance; we engage it redemptively, seeking the flourishing of our cities even when they are hostile to Christian values. Our ultimate citizenship is heaven, but our present responsibility is faithful presence where God has placed us.

## Historical Context

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This command was fulfilled by faithful Jews like Daniel, who served Babylon's kings with wisdom and integrity (Daniel 6:3), and later by figures like Nehemiah, who served the Persian king faithfully (Nehemiah 2:1-5). Early Christians followed this pattern—contributing to society, caring for the sick (even pagans) during plagues, showing hospitality, working honestly—so that even their critics acknowledged their good works (1 Peter 2:12).

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How should Christians today 'seek the peace of the city' where God has placed us, even when the culture is hostile to biblical values?
2. What is the difference between seeking our city's welfare and compromising our Christian convictions?
3. In what practical ways can we pray for and work toward the flourishing of our community while maintaining our distinct identity as God's people?

## Interlinear Text

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וְדַרְשׁוּ	אֶת	שְׁלוֹמִים	הָעִיר	אֲשֶׁר	
And seek	H853	for it for in the peace	of the city	H834	
H1875		H7965	H5892		
	הִגַּלְתִּי		שְׁמָה	אֶתְכֶם	
	whither I have caused you to be carried away captives		H853	H8033	
	H1540				
וְהִתְפַּלֵּל	בְּעַד	אֶל	יְהוָה	כִּי	שְׁלוֹמִים
and pray	H1157	H413	unto the LORD	H3588	for it for in the peace
H6419			H3068		H7965
לְךָ		שְׁלוֹמִים			
H0		for it for in the peace			
		H7965			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezra 6:10** (Prayer): That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

**Daniel 4:27** (Parallel theme): Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

**Ezra 7:23** (Parallel theme): Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

**Daniel 4:19** (References Lord): Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

**Romans 13:1** (Parallel theme): Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.  
For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

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