

# scattered

LIVING AS A COMMUNITY OF HOPE AT A TIME OF DISPERSAL

HOLY TRINITY  
JESMOND



11.00am **Sundays** in May **2020**

## **SMALL GROUP NOTES: Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May – Week 2 ‘Scattered with a purpose’**

Read together Jeremiah 29.1-14

**What do these verses mean to you?** Many of us are very familiar with the latter part of this reading and may well associate it with a particular time in our lives. Spend a few moments sharing together what these verses mean to you and what memories they are linked to.

Jeremiah writes to a people who are exiled – taken from all they were used to in Jerusalem, and scattered across Babylonia. His letter is both realistic and hopeful. In her sermon on Sunday, Emily suggested that Jeremiah’s letter to them wouldn’t have been what they expected.

**What do you think they might have expected Jeremiah to say?**

**What do you find surprising or unexpected in what he says?**

### **1. ‘Settle down in the place you are in’ (Jeremiah 29.4-6)**

Jeremiah was concerned that God’s people acknowledged the reality of their situation and that it wasn’t all going to be over quickly (see v10). He offers a lot of practical advice to help them find ways to live well in their circumstances. Have a quick look at verses 4-6 again.

**What practical advice would you give to friends/family/neighbours to live well in our current circumstances?**

**What have you learnt during lockdown that you would want to pass onto others?**

**How does your faith help you to live well? Where is it hard to live well?**

### **2. ‘Increase not decrease.’ (Jeremiah 29.6)**

In their place of adversity, Jeremiah reminds God’s people to increase – that their time in Babylon should be a time of growth and expectation of more.

**In what ways do you think we as a country are ‘growing at this time?’**

**What about the church?**

(Emily suggests an increase in generosity, appreciation of God’s creation, unity, community and an extended ‘reach’ to many through our online broadcasts).

**In what ways are we in danger of ‘decreasing’?**

**In this time, how might God be calling us to increase further?**

**How do you feel about that?**

### **3. ‘Seek the peace and prosperity of the city’. (Jeremiah 29.7)**

The Bible is full of commands to pray for God's blessing on others, but here the instruction is directed towards the Babylonians – their captors. They are called to pray and seek blessing (prosperity and peace) in the place they find themselves for those they live with. Think about those around you, those in our city and nation –

**what difference would it make if we prayed for peace and prosperity for those around us?**

Notice the link in verse 7 between the prosperity of the city and the prosperity of God's people.

**What do we mean by 'peace and prosperity?'**

Today we find ourselves scattered – it's a totally different context, **but in what ways can you relate to this story?**

**Read the passage slowly together again** and allow God to highlight perhaps just one word or phrase from the passage.

**Share with each other and pray together.**