

God Promises That If We Seek Him We Will Find Him

Opener: When have you decided to go after something that took real determination? What was it?

Scripture: This is 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. . . .¹⁰This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹For 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. ¹²Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I 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.” Jer. 29:10-14

“Solomon my son, know the God of your father [have personal knowledge of Him, be acquainted with, and understand Him; appreciate, heed, and cherish Him] and serve Him with a blameless heart and a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and minds, and understands every intent and inclination of the thoughts. If you seek Him [inquiring for and of Him and requiring Him as your first and vital necessity] He will let you find Him; but if you turn away from Him, He will reject you forever. I Chronicles 28:9 (AMP)

Discussion Questions: Jeremiah was a prophet during very turbulent times. In 604 BC, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took Israel’s brightest and best (including Daniel) into exile. Babylon returned in 597 BC to take more people into exile, and again in 586 when they destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. Jeremiah wrote this letter to those taken into exile in 597 BC.

1. Believers often quote Jeremiah 29:11: “For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” How can we apply a promise God made to His people at a specific time and place to believers in every age and situation, or can we? How can it be misused or misapplied? Examples?
2. God says that if the Israelites pray and seek Him with all their heart, they will find Him. Have you ever done anything with all your heart? What does the Bible mean by “heart”? Jer. 29:12-13; I Chron. 28:9
3. You can’t seek something by accident. Seeking is intentional. Practically speaking, how would someone intentionally seek God with all their heart? Why would anyone even want to seek God? Jer. 29:12-13; I Chronicles 28:9
4. Can you seek God without reading the Bible? Why or why not?
5. What’s the difference between knowing about God and knowing God? What’s the difference between seeking God’s guidance or will and seeking His presence? Can you have one without the other?
6. What keeps us from seeking God? Have you ever tried to seek Him but felt like you couldn’t find Him?

Wrap Up: As true crime aficionados know, finding someone who is missing can be a real challenge. You start where they were last seen, consider where they’re likely to go, check surveillance videos, try to access their phone, and talk to whatever witnesses are available. Seeking God is both simpler and more complicated than that. First of all, He’s not missing, but He may be missing in our life—we’re having trouble hearing His voice, sensing His presence, or knowing His will.

So what do we do? We find Him by accepting Jesus as our Savior, by reading His word (the Bible really is God’s voice on paper), by making certain our hearts are open to Him, which means we get rid of whatever sin is hardening our hearts so we can hear Him. Finding God isn’t about sleuthing, it’s about trusting and tuning into His Spirit. Try it.