

Seek the welfare of the university

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Jeremiah 29: 1-7

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 ...

This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and settle down, plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters ... Increase in numbers there: do not decrease. 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.

Living in Exile

- * Context – the Exile in Babylon
- * Instructions to the exiles:
 - prepare for a long stay
 - continue family life
 - seek the peace and prosperity of the city
 - pray to the Lord for the city

Astonishing instructions

- * The OT 'take' on Babylon
- * Babylon at the time of the Exile
- * What was Yahweh up to?
- * Parallel theme in 1 Peter

Seeking the welfare of the modern university

- * The modern university as a secular institution
- * James D Hunter (2010), To change the world
- * ‘Constructive engagement’

Genesis 2: 19-20a

Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them: and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

Constructive engagement in secular disciplines

- * 'Naming the animals'
- * The role of research in the modern university
- * Does truth matter?

Truth and error

- * The doctrine of creation
- * Biblical concepts of truth, knowledge and wisdom
- * The problem of error
 - error and human sin
 - error and human finiteness
- * Responding to the prevalence of error