MISSION OUT OF EXILE 1

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Category: Mission

This is the first of a series of posts inspired by Jeremiah Chapter 29.

> *4Â This is what theÂ LordÂ of Heavenâ€™s Armies, the God of Israel, says to all the captives he has exiled to Babylon from Jerusalem:Â 5Â â€œBuild homes, and plan to stay. Plant gardens, and eat the food they produce.Â 6Â Marry and have children. Then find spouses for them so that you may have many grandchildren. Multiply! Do not dwindle away!Â 7Â And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to theÂ LordÂ for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.â€*

When the Jews went into exile, they lost all of the trappings of their religion and former power. The Temple, the sacrificial system and all of those props were lost. The only thing they had to hold on to was the fact that God called them 'his people'.

I believe that a similar thing is happening to the Church in the UK. We are losing the power and influence that we once had. The tacit alliance between the Church and the state which once supported missionary activity has by and large been dismantled, but despite this, the Kingdom of God has not suffered in the slightest.

One of the most important advances in missionary thought and practice over the last few years has been the recapturing of the concept of the Mission of God. Mission is God's work and he will ensure its success. We had convinced ourselves that mission was our responsibility, that God somehow could not reach the nations without *our* help. I don't know how many missionary talks I've heard which ended in the guilt trip of 'God needs you'. What sort of pathetic God *needs* a bloke like me.

Thankfully, as the things which propped up our self-reliance are being knocked away, we are regaining a sense that mission is God's work and that he invites us to join him. He doesn't sit helplessly on the sidelines waiting for us to get on with it. He will accomplish his mission whether we get involved or not.