



**‘Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.’**

(Jer.29:12 NIV)

When is then? This verse does not start at the beginning of what God is saying but part-way through. Something will happen that will cause the people to seek the Lord and effect the promise that the Lord will listen.

Have you ever wondered if the Lord was listening to you? Has the Lord felt far away and unreachable?

When the Lord makes his speech to the people (through Jeremiah) it is at a time when they felt abandoned and alone. The Babylonians had invaded and conquered them. Many Israelites, especially the working people, leaders and those in education were taken exiled from their homes to Babylon.

Why did this happen? Because they had first abandoned God, reasoning they could live their lives perfectly well without him. However, God still gives the people comfort and his speech starts with,

‘This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon’ (verse 4 NIV).

Why the big title? To remind the people the God is all-mighty. He has still got their best interests at heart. He still desires relationship with his people - not separation. He promises that there will come a time where the people naturally want to come to Him and rely on Him again. He will show His Kingdom and authority to them by bringing them back.

The problem was that his people had abandoned him and so the Lord had to create a way where they could freely and willingly come back to Him. He never left, though his close protection of them was partially withdrawn for a time.

How is your relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit today?

The Lord still desires close relationship with His people today. After the time of Jeremiah he showed this by sending his Son, Jesus into the world to create the way for a willing return to Him and he promised that His Spirit would come and remain with all his people. This was promised in a long speech about restoration that the Lord spoke through Jeremiah (see Jer.31:33-34).

The Lord does not want a casual relationship where either party's investment in the relationship varies according to feelings or circumstances but a close and loving relationship where his people know him in body, mind and soul. This is His desire and so His invite to you today is to come and know Him better. Ask Him to ‘write’ his ways into your heart and mind and give him first place in how you determine to behave and in the decisions you make.

Hear his promise again, “Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.” (Jer.29:11 NIV)