

# The Treasure of the Unread Letter

Text: Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV)

## **Introduction: The Envelope You Cannot See**

There are seasons in every life when the world seems to have no plot. You wake up, and yesterday's confusion is still today's ceiling. You pray, but the answer feels like a letter that was mailed to the wrong address. You look at your circumstances—a dead-end job, a broken relationship, a body that won't heal, a dream that has turned to dust—and you whisper, "Does God know where I am?" I have good news for you this morning. The letter is not lost. It was written before you were born. The envelope has your name on it. And even though you cannot read it yet, the one who sealed it has never forgotten what He wrote. Our key verse is one of the most beloved promises in all of Scripture. The Lord says through the prophet Jeremiah:

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jeremiah 29:11, KJV)

Notice: God does not say, "I am figuring out a plan." He says, "I know the thoughts I think toward you." The plan already exists. It is not a sketch; it is a finished blueprint. God is not improvising. He is not reacting to your mistakes. Before you ever felt lost, He had already written the letter. But Jeremiah 29:11 was not given to people sitting in comfortable homes. It was given to exiles. God's people had been ripped from Jerusalem and dragged to Babylon. They were weeping by the rivers. Their temple was in ruins. Everything they trusted was gone. And into that darkness, God said: I know the thoughts I think toward you.

So today, I want to show you three or four cases from the Bible where someone lived inside the unread letter—where circumstances screamed "chaos," but God had already written "peace." And I want to convince you that your Babylon is not the end of the story.

## **1: Joseph – The Prison That Was Actually a Palace Preparation**

Let us go to the book of Genesis. Joseph was the favorite son of his father Jacob. His brothers hated him. They threw him into a pit, sold him into slavery, and told their father a wild beast had devoured him. Joseph ended up in Egypt, a foreign land, far from everything he knew.

But it gets worse. He served faithfully in Potiphar's house, only to be falsely accused by Potiphar's wife. And what was his reward? Prison. A dungeon. For years. The Bible says: "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison." (Genesis 39:20, KJV). Now, if you had asked Joseph in that cell, "Do you think God has a plan?" he might have wept. The promise was given to his great-grandfather Abraham, to his grandfather Isaac, to his father Jacob. Joseph had dreams from God about greatness. But now? He was forgotten. The butler forgot him for two full years (Genesis 41:1). Yet listen to what Joseph said to his brothers years later, when the famine came and they bowed before him, not knowing who he was: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Genesis 50:20, KJV)

Do you see it? The letter was already written. God's thought toward Joseph was "peace" (not evil) and "an expected end" (a future with hope). The prison was not a detour; it was the delivery room. The pit led to the palace. The false accusation led to the throne. Because the plan was not made in the crisis; it was made before Joseph ever took a breath. Your prison cell is not a surprise to God. He wrote the letter when you were still a dream in His mind.

## **Case 2: Ruth – The Widow Who Could Not See the Family Tree**

Now consider Ruth. She was a Moabite, a foreigner. Her husband died. Her mother-in-law Naomi was bitter and broken. They returned to Bethlehem with nothing. Ruth was a gleaner—she followed behind the harvesters to pick up leftover grain. That was poverty. That was shame. In the law of Moses, we read: "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest." (Leviticus 19:9, KJV). That law was written centuries before Ruth was born. It was a provision for the poor, the stranger, the widow. Ruth did not know it, but God had already placed a safety net in the Torah. And not only that—He had placed a man named Boaz in that same field. Boaz was a kinsman-redeemer. And from their union came a child named Obed, who was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, from whose lineage came Jesus Christ.

Ruth could not read that letter. She only knew grief and hunger. But God knew the thoughts He thought toward her: thoughts of peace, not of evil, to give her an expected end. That “expected end” was the Messiah. Beloved, you may be standing in a field of loss today. You cannot see the harvest. You cannot see the family tree that will stretch from your pain to a throne. But the letter is already written. God’s plan for your life is not a reaction to your widowhood; it is an ancient covenant that makes your widowhood the very doorway to royalty.

### **Case 3: Paul – The Thorn That Was Actually a Gift in Disguise**

Now let us go to the New Testament. The apostle Paul was perhaps the greatest missionary in church history. He planted churches, wrote half the New Testament, and saw the dead raised. But listen to what he wrote: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.” (2 Corinthians 12:7, KJV). Paul prayed three times for God to remove this thorn. And God said no. But notice the letter God had already written. The “thought” toward Paul was not “comfort” but “character.” The thorn was not a punishment; it was a preservation. God’s peace came not through removal but through sufficient grace. “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9, KJV)

Paul could not read the letter while the thorn was stinging. But later he understood: the weakness was the wiring for divine power. Your unanswered prayer may be the very thing that keeps you humble, keeps you praying, keeps you dependent. The letter says “peace,” but peace sometimes comes wrapped in sandpaper.

### **Case 4: Esther – The Orphan Who Became a Queen for a Crisis**

Finally, consider Esther. She was an orphan, raised by her cousin Mordecai. She was a Jewish girl in a Persian empire that would later seek her people’s destruction. She became queen by a strange turn of events—a beauty contest, a deposed queen, a king’s whim.

But then the evil Haman plotted to annihilate all the Jews. Mordecai sent word to Esther: you must go before the king, uninvited, risking your life. And then he said these famous words: “And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14, KJV)

Do you see the letter? Esther thought she was just a survivor, a girl who got lucky. But God had written a different story. He had placed her in the palace before the crisis ever existed. The “expected end” was the salvation of an entire people. And the letter was sealed before Haman ever drew a breath. Your position, your pain, your peculiar circumstances—none of them are accidents. You are not a random collection of molecules spinning through chaos. You are a letter from God, written in invisible ink, and the crisis of your life is the heat that makes the words appear.

### **Conclusion: Stop Panicking Over the Unopened Envelope**

So what do we do while we cannot read the letter? The exiles in Babylon were tempted to despair. They thought God had abandoned them. But Jeremiah gave them a command: build houses, plant gardens, get married, seek the peace of the city (Jeremiah 29:4-7). In other words, live faithfully in the unread letter. You do not need to see the ending to trust the Author. The same God who wrote Joseph’s rise out of a prison, Ruth’s lineage out of a field, Paul’s strength out of a thorn, and Esther’s courage out of an orphanage—that same God has written your story. “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

The letter is not missing. It is not delayed. It is not lost in the mail. It is sitting in the Father’s hand, and He is waiting for the perfect moment to hand it to you. Until then, trust the sender. Go about your day with hope. Because the treasure of the unread letter is this: you are already loved toward an ending you cannot yet imagine.

Amen.