



THE EXILIC EXPERIENCE PART 3

“IN A STRANGE PLACE!”



IN A STRANGE PLACE

- In our study of the exile – or the Babylonian Captivity we have explored
 - The preceding events of the exile
 - The transition of leaders and leadership types
 - The rise and fall of the United Kingdom
 - The sinful and rebellious nature of the Israelites
 - The prophetic voices of judgement and repentance
 - The invasion and destruction of both the Northern and Southern kingdoms

IN A STRANGE PLACE

2 Chronicles 36:20

Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia



IN A STRANGE PLACE

History tells us that although the Jews suffered greatly and faced powerful cultural pressures in a foreign land - some were able to maintain their national spirit and religious identity

Elders supervised the Jewish communities and Ezekiel was one of several prophets who kept alive the hope of one day returning home.

This was possibly also the period when synagogues were first established for the Jews observed the Sabbath and religious holidays

They also practiced circumcision and substituted prayers for former ritual sacrifices in the Temple.

Yet there were still many challenges the people faced



IN A STRANGE PLACE

Psalms 137:1, 4

By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down
and wept when we remembered Zion. Upon
the willows in the midst of it we hung our
harps, For there our captors demanded of us
songs and our tormentor's mirth – saying sing
us one of the songs of Zion.



IN A STRANGE PLACE

Psalms 137:1, 4

But the people refrained:

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?

They were deeply saddened by their plight and felt a great longing for their former home.

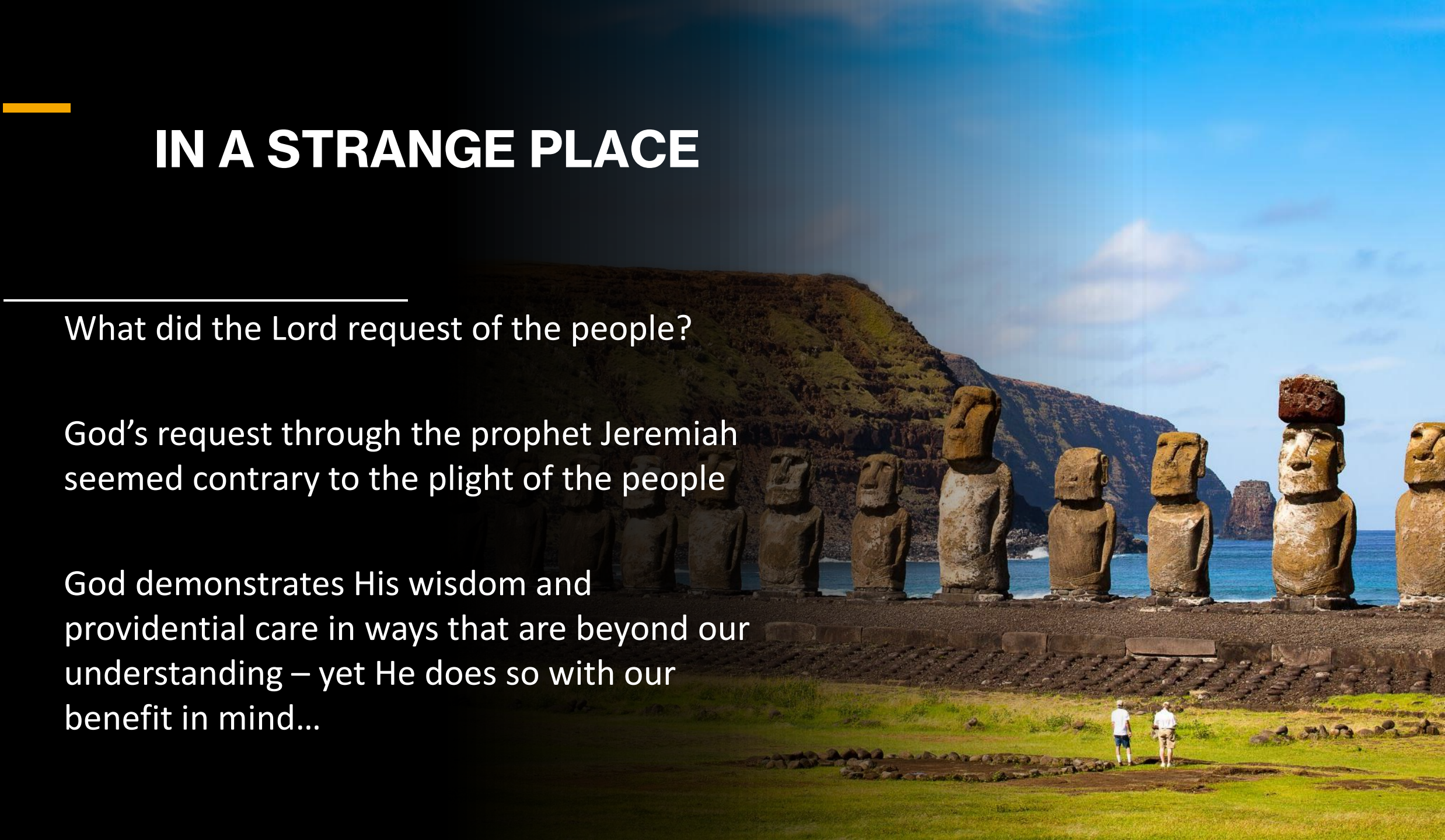


IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

God's request through the prophet Jeremiah seemed contrary to the plight of the people

God demonstrates His wisdom and providential care in ways that are beyond our understanding – yet He does so with our benefit in mind...



IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

4: Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all who were carried away captive, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon:



IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

5: Build houses and dwell *in them*; plant gardens and eat their fruit.

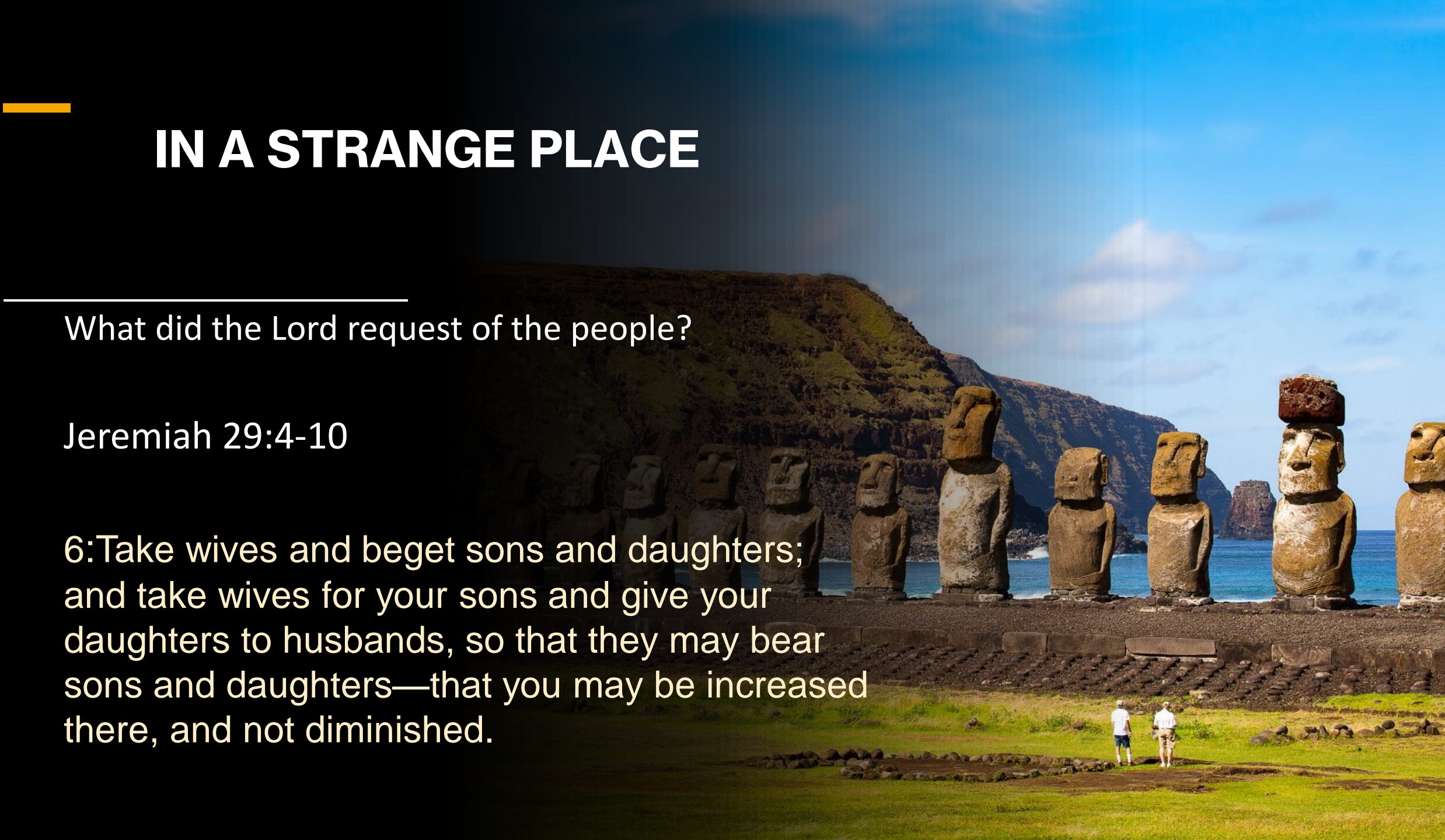


IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

6: Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters—that you may be increased there, and not diminished.



IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

7: And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace, you will have peace.



IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

8:For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are in your midst deceive you, nor listen to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed.



IN A STRANGE PLACE

What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

9: For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them, says the LORD.



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What did the Lord request of the people?

Jeremiah 29:4-10

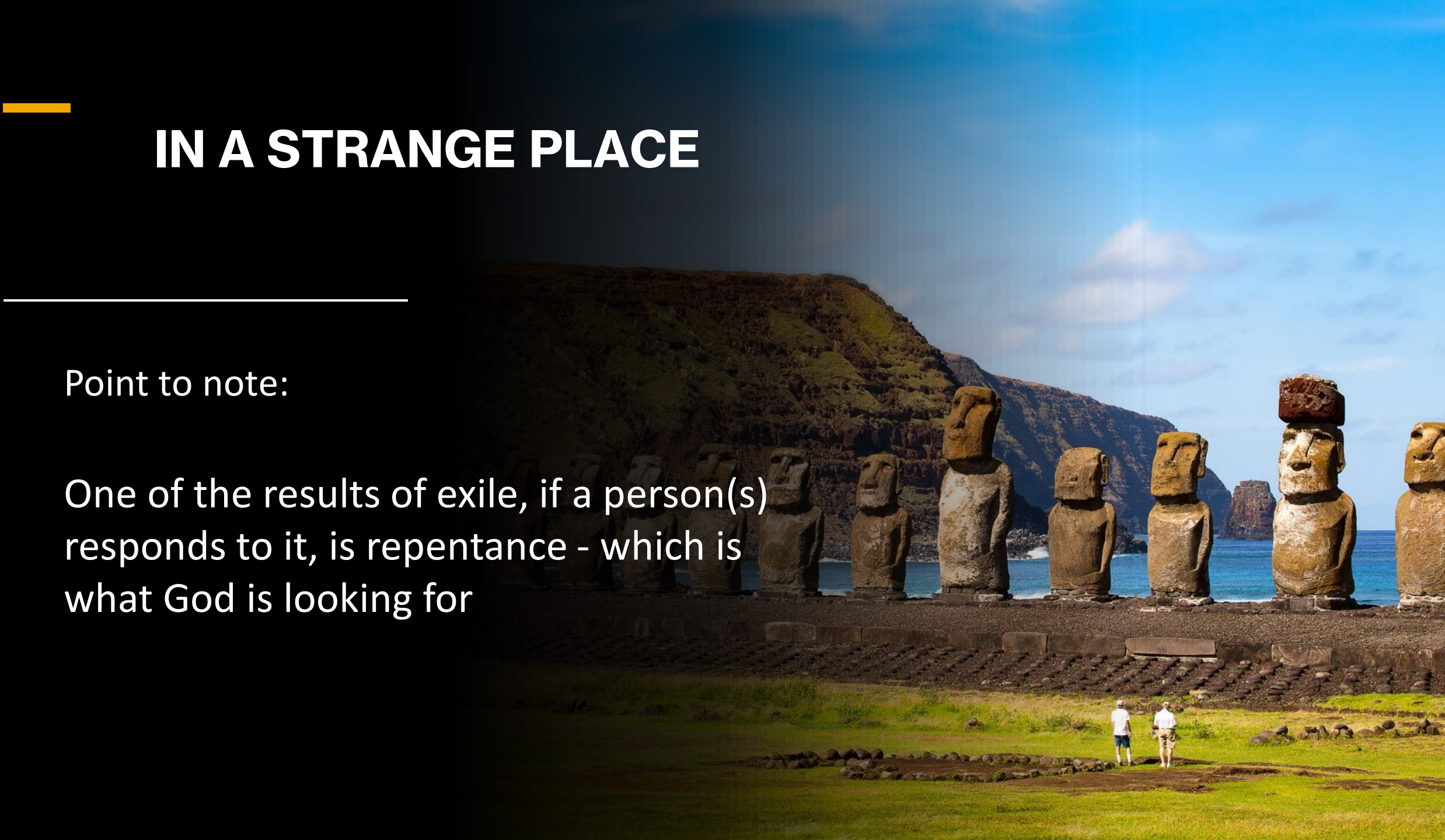
10: For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you and cause you to return to this place.



IN A STRANGE PLACE

Point to note:

One of the results of exile, if a person(s) responds to it, is repentance - which is what God is looking for



IN A STRANGE PLACE

Point to note:

God has us in mind – He has not forgotten us in our calamities, hardships or trouble – even this pandemic!

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”



IN A STRANGE PLACE

No matter what place you find yourself in today – know that God will be with you no matter your circumstance or situation.

He is our hope and our future!

