



God's Plans for You

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV).

People respond differently to a new year. Some say—like the line in a song—"It's just another day." For some it's a time of reflection on the events of the old year and a time of hope for the new. Some still are brave enough to make resolutions.

I wonder what God's plans are for this new year. In the Scripture for today—which is addressed to God's people—God says His plans are for prosperity, hope and a good future.

This passage is contained in a letter the prophet Jeremiah wrote to the Israeli captives in Babylon. The people who received this letter were distressed and depressed. They were in a desperate time in their lives and in the history of Israel. God gave them instructions for the time they were to be in captivity and words of hope for their future. There were also some negative prophetic words for those who had "not heeded" [who had not listened to and obeyed] God's words (v. 19) as well as for the prophets "who prophesy a lie to you in My name" (v. 21).

In other passages God gave more details regarding His plans for His captive people, but in today's verse, He spoke reassuringly of His intentions for their future. It is likely they were in such difficulty they were questioning whether they even had any future and were probably questioning God's care for them. Though we do not know specifically what a new year holds, God wants us to know His plans and His thoughts toward us are good. He wants to give us His best.

Especially in times of distress God wants us to know He has not forgotten or overlooked us. He is very aware of the situation. He may not tell us every detail of our future, but in essence He says, "Trust Me. My plans for you are good." Sometimes circumstances may appear so desperate, we have difficulty believing in a good future—but we must and we can. If we watch the news and see the world, our nation and our communities in turmoil, it may be difficult to believe God has plans for prosperity, hope and a good future. Scripture does say perilous times will exist at the end of the age, but God has not changed. He still is good, and nothing is impossible with God.

For God's people, God is in the middle of every trial we face. In the middle of every difficult situation that may arise, God is with us. If we are among those who heed [listen to and obey] God's Word, we can receive and believe the message of hope—**we have a good future.**

God wants us to know He wants—and is quite able—to bless His people regardless of what is going on around them. Didn't God anoint David while he was surrounded by enemies? David wrote in Psalm 23: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over" (vv. 4-5 NKJ).

That table David spoke of was one of rejoicing and honor. Right now I'm thinking of the table Samuel prepared for David when he came to David's home to anoint him king over Israel. That honor did not come from people; it came from God. His brothers were not happy about David's honor, but David was. He was anointed with oil, given the seat of honor and had joy ("my cup runs over"). I believe David had an inner table of rejoicing he was able to turn to whenever he encountered tough times, opposition, rejection and pain in his life. This table was prepared by God and is available to all God's children. In the middle of trouble or difficulties, we need only to turn to Him to find it.

God is a great God. He can do anything. He is able to give each of us that inner table of joy and rejoicing if we believe His plans for our future are filled with hope, prosperity and goodness. David said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Psalm 23:6 NKJV). This is not only a word David spoke over himself, but it also is the Word of God. We can speak it for ourselves. It is part of God's plan for you. Speak it; believe it!

As the times we live in get darker, we must remember darkness is not the total picture. Hear what Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 60:1-3 RSV: "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

We do not live in denial about the darkness of our time; however, God tells us to "arise, shine." We have the Light of the world within us—Jesus—and Isaiah 60 tells us God will shine even more brightly upon us and His glory will be seen upon us.

Satan also makes plans. Let me close with a passage to illustrate God's response to Satan's

plans. We read in Psalm 2:2-6 RSV: "The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together [make plans], against the lord and his anointed He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 'I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.'"

God's plans are for good, and they will prevail. His son, King Jesus, rules. Let us believe God and not the enemy of our souls and our lives. With God your future is bright.

"Arise, shine." SH

GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY

Teaching Letter 25

"God's Plan for You"

Sonjia Hunt Ministries

www.sonjahuntministries.com

PO Box 21 Cleveland, TN 37364-0021