

Plan to Prosper You

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

David Yeh, 14 Jan 2018

At the beginning of each year we plan what we will do for the coming year. We might have plans to go somewhere for holiday, plan to start a business or plan to save money to buy what you like.

Some of the plans are to help you get out of the terrible times you are facing. This problem could be relationship problems with your spouse, children, relatives or at work.

But sometime what we plan might not come out the way we plan. Some time your plan comes out to be a bad result.

1. Unexpected hardship is part of His loving plan (Jeremiah 29v1)

People of Israel was exile from Jerusalem, 2kings 24&25 their home to a far distance land of Babylon because of their sin. Some were taken as slave some were relocated to Babylon because of their ability. Their houses were torn they were broken from their family; some even might have been killed during the war.

Their country was totally ruined. All the treasures of the palace and the temple were taken, (24:13; 25:13). Temple was the Israel's life and their pride, they were specially chosen nation, a nation to be blessed by God. They think they were better than the other nations. They have what other nations did not, they have GOD the creator of the whole universe.

But what happened to their life? Not just that they lost God, they even lost their home, even their freedom. They become slaves of foreign nation, a place that they look down on, the place the custom is different to them.

No doubt people are so discouraged; they would never think this day would come. Just a little sin, think

"it does not matter, the Lord will tolerate with me."

"I don't want to forgive that person because he deserves it."

"I have right to have this kind of anger toward that person. I don't want to make right with that person. I will not put down that bad feeling, that wall."

Although I know what you want me to do but I don't want to listen to you. I can't do what you are telling me to do now. You say to God, "You go your ways, I go my ways."

I will get what I want, go where I want.

Bang!! Than one day comes the judgment. Don't think that all the judgment will be at the last day so you still have time to repent. Never know how long God will tolerate with our rebellions, God will deal with it because he is our loving father and we are his son, he will discipline us to make us right.

So because God needs to deal with their life the people were taken away from their land. After the people of Israel were taken to captivity, the Lord sent a message through the prophet Jeremiah.

2. Trust His Plan even though it is different to our plan (Jeremiah 29:4-7)

The Lord told the people of Israel to settle down there. How could that be? This is not right, the Lord should be saying we will be delivered from the enemy soon, by next year, may be the year after, but 70 years. You should be giving us plan to escape form Babylon but instead you told us to get married and make here our home? You should show us how to fight against Babylon, but instead you told us to pray for peace for this city? (29:7)

How often when we are in trouble we think God should take us out of the trouble quickly.

We say to God, "Lord we should be doing this and that, we should be going to this place but why have you told us to wait?

Lord you should deal with the person that hurt me? But you say I should bless the person?

V7 God has told the Israel to pray for the peace of the land they are in, pray for their enemy, those who have taken them to captivity as slaves. Even praying for the benefit of their enemy is for their own benefit.

In the same way God tells us to bless the place we are in, the place we are working, the family we are in, even if they treat us like our enemy. So that our environment will be blessed and we might be blessed.

What a great power God has given us, able to bless this land and the people, able to bless the place we are at and the people in there.

God has a good a plan for us this year and our life. Even it may seems like a disaster or not what we think, can we accepted with humble heart? Admit that "Lord, we

don't understand your ways, our knowledge and wisdom is limited, but by faith we accept your plan because you are a good God, what you do is always good."

3. His good plan will come true when we do what he says (Jeremiah 24:10-14)

Note that **v10** it says after 70 years, so there is the cost of sin that we must pay, but continue in disaster is definitely not God's plan. Continual delay of his salvation is not God's plan. He will not allow you to suffer one day more than necessary. In his time, he will bring about his promise. He will come to you, he will come to our problem and bring us out of our problem.

E.g. When my son Jonathan was little around 3 to 8 years old and when he did something wrong he would get his punishment by standing up straight for 10 min to 30 min depending on the wrongs he did, when his time is complete then he can leave that place. My purpose is not for him to train his leg or to entertain myself watching him in pain but for discipline purpose.

As Hebrews 12 says, father will discipline his son; otherwise he is not a son.

I didn't enjoy the time he was standing but wish that the time would be completed, I would keep on looking at my watch, to see when the time would be completed, so that I can let him go and once again our relationship could be restored. When the time is up, I would let him go free and he would hug me and I would hug him, to restore that relationship. Note that it is he that wants to be hugged, because he wants the assurance that he is still being loved.

But some time when we discipline our children they would not want to come close to us and we get a little bit hurt.

Or you told your friends something about what they should do or or not do because you love them and the people reacted negative toward you, and you get hurt.

We too react that way to God. When we are disciplined we starts to get away from God.

The very discipline that is to bring us closer to him has brought us further away from him.

God needs to take the people of Israel away from that land and reorganize their life. The land has become so terrible that it needs to be re-fertilized. So that they can restart their life again.

We often misunderstood his plan, his way.

You might be in a difficult time right now, and that is not because of your sin, have faith in God, don't just try to run away from the trouble but see what God wants to use that environment for our benefit. Because he has the plan to Prosper you; your personality will prosper, your spiritual life will prosper.

You might be in the path of uncertainty, a dark future ahead of you. His plan is to prosper you.

E.g. 25 years ago when I left NZ to Taiwan, my birth place. I was fearful because it was first time I left home to a far distance place where I have a vague memory and could not communicate well, I was told I would never able to endure the environment because of the temperature, the pollution and dirty concrete jungle. The morning I left my home, I read this verse in my daily devotion....,

Isaiah 55:8-9

⁸ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, " declares the LORD. ⁹ "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

He comforted me and gave me courage to face the unknown future. I know he take me away from heavenly like place to a difficult place is for good, for his good plan. God has a good plan for you.

You might be going for a hard time, but it is good for you, when time is full he will deliver you. Trust the good God of all creation and let him take care of you.

You might not be in difficult time right now, but when you face it this year we need to remember this.

Jeremiah 29:11

¹¹ 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.

Whatever you will face this year it is for your good. You must remember this verse, stored deep in your heart. This will give you strength to face all the difficulties and trials, and keep going. In fact this will change the way you face your difficulties, trials, and the unexpected, because it is going to be your benefit.