



Devotional Study Guide Journal

January 2nd

The Good Plans God Has for You

Jeremiah 29:11 AMP

“For I know the plans and thoughts that I have for you,” says the Lord, “plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.”

Though this passage is often adopted by New Covenant believers, it was actually spoken by God to the Children of Israel whom He had caused to be taken captive due to their rebellion against Him. He warned them this would happen if they disobeyed the law they agreed to keep.

He told them to build houses and raise families in captivity because it would be 70 years before they were free again. So, those good plans God had for them were going to take a lifetime.

We see here the mercy of God toward His people in telling them about His ultimate plans for them, but also that there were harsh punishments for not keeping His law.

May we who believe in Jesus be thankful that we are not under the Old Covenant Law nor its curses because Jesus took away the curse of the law on the cross.

Galatians 3:13-14

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”),¹⁴ that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Oh, glory, glory, hallelujah! New Covenant believers receive God’s promises by faith and not by keeping the law. This causes us to want to please Him completely and in no way displease our Father. Look at it this way:

***We aren't right before God because we live uprightly.
We live uprightly because we ARE right with God.***

One day, we discovered a passage that we are sure we must have read repeatedly, but it never stood out to us.

Hebrews 8:6

But now He (Jesus) has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established on **better promises**.

Now that is amazing! Not only has Jesus set us free from the curses of the law, but He has given us a covenant that is better and established it on better promises.

Have you read the blessings of the law lately? If you haven't, take a moment to do so (Deut. 28:1-14). They are amazing promises covering every area of someone's life. But the blessings of the New Covenant are better, and they do not have conditions or curses attached.

So, now when we read Jeremiah 29:11, we can do so with this thought in mind. If God would make this promise to a rebellious people who were unfaithful to Him to eventually bless them again, how much more will His plans toward us be better and not delayed. We have obeyed Him by putting our faith in His Son. That is all that is required to be a partaker of this Covenant. Let's read it again and wonder how His promise to us will be better.

"For I know the plans and thoughts that I have for you," says the Lord, "plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

God's plans for us are good. He gives us peace now. That word peace, shalom, includes aspects such as these: safety, well, happy, friendly, health, prosperity, peace, favor, friend, rest, wellness. God's plans for us are all of these. He made this promise to those who'd ill-treated Him, and He will do so much more for us.

God has no plans for disaster to come upon us, not now or in the future. This word in Hebrew includes these aspects: bad, evil, adversity, affliction, calamity, displeasure, distress, grief, harm, heavy, hurt, ill, misery, sadness, sorrow, trouble, wicked, wretchedness, and wrong. *It is safe to say that the word peace and disaster/evil are the complete opposite.*

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All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory, but we are now freely justified by His grace. He bore our curse on that cross. He took away our sins. He made us holy and righteous and blameless in His sight. He is not punishing us when we fall short because Jesus took our punishment when he suffered and died to pay the penalty for our sin.

So yes, God's plans toward us are good, but even better than this oft-quoted verse. We may rejoice because we have hope of an even better future than what they were promised because our future is now.

Read again the blessings of the Law. How might our blessings be better than these?

Deuteronomy 28:3-13

³ *"Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.*

⁴ *"Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks.*

⁵ *"Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

⁶ *"Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.*

⁷ *"The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.*

⁸ *“The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

⁹ *“The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. (Remember that under the New Covenant, there are no conditions to His blessings. He freely gives us all things.)*

¹⁰ *Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you.*

¹¹ *And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.*

¹² *The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.*

¹³ *And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them. **(Remember, the New Covenant blessings are better and not tied to obeying the Ten Commandments. Our blessings are freely given by grace through faith.)***

