

### Issue 11...God's Powerful Promise of Hope...

I hope and pray this is not true about you, but the sad fact is most people don't have any idea what they want out of life. So they just take what life gives them and feel they have to be satisfied with the hand that they have been dealt. They don't know their purpose so they fixate on things like wealth, power, jobs, health and exercise. They falsely believe that some extraordinary achievement will satisfy the longing in their heart. Once a miserable man wrote in a suicide note; "I'm worth ten million dollars, but I am so poor in spirit that I cannot live any longer." You may ask with ten million dollars what could that be missing from that man's life? The answer is hope my friend. Hope is something that money can't buy. It's only found in one place. Look at what Jeremiah the prophet had to say about God's plans for us. "For I know the plans that I have you declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not calamity to give you a future and a hope." Jer. 29:11

Now in the case of Jeremiah's day God had some good news and bad news for them. First the bad news you are going to be taken captive and be slaves in a foreign land for 70 years. Now the good news after 70 years I'm going to free you and bring you back to your homeland to serve me. Even in the midst of bad news God can't help but to give hope. Even though 70 years is a long time God couldn't help but to encourage them with a message of hope. Now let's look at some interesting facts about hope.

**1—Hope is grounded in God's power....**Have you ever stopped to think about that fact that God knows everything that is going to happen in our life from start to finish. And since He is the author of history maybe it would be OK to put our trust in him. Especially since we are a part of his grand plan. Remember what Jeremiah said about us. And since he knows the future we can trust that he has designed a personal agenda just for us. I don't know about you but just knowing this strengthens my faith in him and the stronger my faith is the greater my hope is.

**2—Hope is strengthened by God's great plan...**So many times in our lives when something terrible happens we are tempted to say; "why God- what possible good can come out of this?" When this happens friend take comfort in knowing that even though the Lord punished his people with Babylonian captivity he never left them and we can rest in the fact that knowing that he never leaves us as well, even in our deepest problems. Just rest in the fact that you know that God has a plan and it will prosper you in the end. Just let it work out and in hindsight you'll be able to say; Now I know why God allowed that to happen at that time.

**3—Hope is energized through God's faithfulness....** Have you ever stopped and thought about how faithful God is in your life? So many times God has come through for me. I remember one time when Susie and I were struggling financially because of a couple of rentals that we had with no tenants in them. Tenants had moved out and I couldn't rent them. The rental was almost 2 hours away and very difficult to keep rented.

So I sat on the couch and prayed; Lord would you please sell that apartment for me. I call this drawing from our treasures in heaven. To make a long story short within 30 days God sold that apartment for me and we paid off over ten thousand dollars worth of debt with the profit from the sell. Yes friends God is faithful. As for the Israelites God was faithful to them even though they weren't faithful to him. Even though God had taken care of them for hundreds of years and even though they had walked away from God's ways, even in Babylonian captivity God had promised to take care of them and give them hope and future.

Corrie Ten Boom a prisoner in the Nazi concentration camp once said; "never be afraid to trust and unknown future to a known God."

Friends as Christians we don't have to act as though we have no hope. Grab unto hope in God and hang on.

Even when things go bad in this life hang on and know that you serve and God who knows the future and has everything under control.

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