

WHAT IS OUR HOPE?

“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

As our Camp Hope verse, we all know this, quote this, and draw hope from this scripture... but I think we should look at the passage a little more carefully at this uncertain time in our world because I believe we can draw even more hope from this Bible verse if we lean in more closely.

Jeremiah was a prophet in the Old Testament...and quite honestly...not a popular one. He wasn't the guy telling people what they wanted to hear. There were lots of prophets going around preaching good news and a hopeful message...but they were NOT telling the truth about what God was doing. Jeremiah was the lone truth-teller in a group of false prophets...and that didn't make him the most popular guy on the block.

The Babylonians had carried God's people off into exile...which meant they were in a very unfamiliar, unsettling situation. They weren't in their homes, with their friends, doing their same jobs...it was all scary and uncomfortable and NOT the plan. We can relate, can't we?

But hear these words from Jeremiah 29:4- “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile...”

Do you see who sent them into exile? The Lord. He did it. Everyone thought the Babylonians had carried them away but the Sovereign God of the universe was the one that had orchestrated these events. “I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted” (Job 42:2). God is in control...He truly is. He sits on His throne and nothing can derail His plans. Even during the pandemic we are experiencing right now, God is just as in control as He has always been.

And what does God tell these people to do in the midst of this very scary and unsettling situation??? “Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.” In other words...live fully in the circumstances where you find yourself. You might not like where you are, but thrive where I've placed you.

But HOW we might ask? How do I do this in March 2020 when the world seems to be collapsing all around me? When I don't know how I will provide for my family? When I don't know if I will have a job in a month?

"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile and pray to the LORD on its behalf..." Jeremiah 29:7.

How does this apply today? How can you "seek the welfare of the 'city'?"

Where does God have you today? How can you love God and serve others in the place that God has put you today? Are you stuck in your house? Are you out of work or working from home? Are your kids doing online school? Wherever you are, seek the welfare of those around you and PRAY. Pray for your neighbor, your employer, your children, our government officials.

"For in its welfare you will find your welfare." Jeremiah 29:7.

And our Camp Hope verse reminds us that God sees beyond our current unsettling situation. Our Sovereign Lord sees ahead into the future. We can have hope in His unchanging, always-loving character. He is sovereign, He is good, He is full of mercy. Nothing is too hard for Him. We can trust Him because He was willing to send His Son to redeem us from the curse of sin.

Only a gracious, merciful, holy and loving God would do that. If He has saved us from our desperate sin-sick souls, He can certainly help us in a time of fear and disease.

We are praying for you here at Kidz2Leaders! Please reach out to us so we can know how to specifically pray for you and support you. Email: info@kidz2leaders.org

