

God's Precious Thoughts for His People

by Erlo Stegen

Erlo Stegen emphasizes that God's thoughts towards His people are filled with peace and hope, urging believers to align their lives with His will.

Scripture: Psalm 91:1-2, Isaiah 55:9, Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 8:28, Romans 8:31, Ephesians 2:13-14, Philippians 4:7, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "God's Promises", "Trust in God's Plans"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes God's precious thoughts for His people, as expressed in Jeremiah 29:11, highlighting that even in dire circumstances, such as the Israelites' 70 years in Babylon, God has plans for peace and hope. He contrasts the truth of God's promises with the false prophets who spread despair, urging believers to trust in God's higher thoughts and plans. Stegen reminds us that God's love is unwavering, and even if we forget Him, He never forgets us, as demonstrated by the imprint of our lives on His hands. He calls for a complete surrender to God, encouraging Christians to live in the light of His good plans and to stand firm in faith despite challenges. Ultimately, Stegen reassures that with God, there is always a bright future ahead, filled with peace and purpose.

Transcript

Summary of sermon by Erlo Stegen, 13 Apr 2014

Jeremiah 29:11 says "For I know the thoughts I have towards you," says the Lord, " thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

God spoke these words when the people were in Babylon. It was a wonderful promise. What was so astonishing is that God spoke these words when the people were still in Babylon. They had been there for 70 years. He spoke these words in a time that was unpleasant and they were in dire distress. There were also prophets of lies. You will find there are only a few that speak the truth. This is true in every age. Broad is the way and many are they who are found there but only a few that take the narrow way. The false prophets say there is no hope, only destruction. We must ask ourselves if we are of the camp of the prophets who speak lies and talk only doom and gloom. Very few Christians and preachers speak the truth. Some say there is no hope for you but then God spoke to Jeremiah and said, " I have a wonderful future for you." God has plans for everyone here and thoughts of good and not of evil. A Christian cannot be a pessimist i.e. dung where nothing grows. A pessimist is no good. You cannot be a pessimist if you have God. If you have God you are on the winning side always. You can't be a loser if you are with God

but the question is, are you with God or are you with satan in your deeds and thoughts.

God says I know the thoughts I have for you. He alone knows what your future holds. But these false people claim to know what is best. How marvelous is it that God has plans for our future. Even if you forget God completely, He doesn't forget you. Remember that God's thoughts are the ones that matter. Throw your thoughts into the pit toilet. That's why every Christian must want to do God's will. Is 55:9 God says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." We might have plans for our future that are just nonsense like maybe marriage or business. We might have our thoughts but God's thoughts are far higher than ours. This is a mystery that we can't fully fathom. You need to be fully surrendered to God. If you are not, then you are a hypocrite. How awesome isn't it that God who is so high above us has thoughts about us. We are just busy with our idiotic thoughts and not with God's thoughts. We cannot fully fathom the thoughts that He has. You only see a tiny fraction of a star and we also only see a tiny fraction of God. Didn't He have thoughts towards us when He sent His son to us. Even before creation He had thoughts and plans for you. These thoughts are so deep that we cannot fathom their meaning. What we should grasp is that God has precious thoughts towards you. How precious you are to Him.

Isn't it a disgrace if you don't speak and walk as He wants. He knows even the hairs on your head. If He is busy with you, shouldn't you be busy with Him? In Isaiah God says can a woman forget her nursing child and not have pity on it? Yes she might, but not God. Your picture is always before Him. Her thoughts surround that child. Even if she is busy she will still be thinking of that child. That is something we men can't fathom.

When we had twins, I slept. I said to my wife what a lovely night that we could sleep through. She smiled because the children had kept her awake all night but I as a man had had a lovely sleep. Can a mother forget her suckling child? Even if she could, God says he cannot forget you. This verse was a problem to me as a child. If we went somewhere, my mother would stay to look after the baby. So I thought a mother cannot forget her child. But today there are mothers that forget their babies. There are those parents that go for an abortion to kill their child. A preacher once said, "When my mother gave birth to me, she threw me into a pit toilet." A stranger saw it and rescued the child and he became an exceptional preacher of the gospel. God says even if a mother forgets her child, He will never forget you. In the Hebrew language it means that He has chiseled you into His hands like you chisel into a tomb stone. You cannot wash it away because it is imprinted into the granite. When Jesus hung at Golgotha, you were imprinted on His hands. When he was nailed through his feet and side, you were imprinted in and it can never be removed. How precious should He be to you. Your life should be 100% for Him, not 99.9%. Even if you are a little child, to forget Him means eternal punishment.

A while ago, I met a fiery Communist. The amazing thing is that God revealed Himself to him and the communist got saved. He said, "You cannot compare communism or Buddha to God. There is nothing like it on earth. Communism was everything to me. But now there is nothing like the Lord Jesus Christ. Stand where you are. Don't be shaken. Reverend Stegen stand where you are. Stay exactly where you are. Even if all forsake you, stay faithful to the Lord." If he can do that, then you should also be alive spiritually. He said, "Communism isn't dead, it is sick". But don't let your Christianity be sick. In difficult circumstances, let the Lord's people stand firm.

You woman who speak a lot, don't speak tommy rot because you will have to give account for every word you have spoken. That's why you shouldn't need to have someone prodding you to be a proper Christian.

Live for the Lord because of His good plans for your life. How good it would be if every person could have a revelation of God's love for us. Each one should say, " I love him because He first loved me." (1John 4:19)

What are His plans? He has peace for you. Bible translations differ. Evil in German is translated as thoughts of suffering. In Genesis the tree is the tree of good and evil. So evil is what happened to Adam and Eve. Something happened to them that was not good and passed even into their bodies. God doesn't have thoughts to attack you, instead He has good thoughts towards you. He says all things work together for our good. We are people who are the most privileged. Other religions don't have such a privilege where God turns everything into good for those that love Him (Rom 8:28). Some people would do us harm if they could. What a privilege that we have the Lord. Spiritually, physically - God turns it into good. God turns it into a blessing. There couldn't be more evil than what happened on the cross but God turned it into a great blessing. God can turn something into a great blessing. God's people are people of peace. They have an amazing peace in their hearts (Philippians 4:7); their sins are forgiven (Eph 2:13-14). God says He knows the thoughts He has towards you. He doesn't have harmful thoughts towards you.

You have heard about the Israelites. They were in a very sad condition in Babylon. But the prophet said He has sparkling, good thoughts towards us. We have a bright future. We must not be pessimistic. The false prophets said you have a dark future but if God is for us, who can be against us (Rom 8:31)? It is as if we are under the wings of an eagle (Ps 91:1-2). That doesn't mean you won't have difficulties but it will be glorious. It will be a future that is good. Is that not an amazing life? If we do not embrace this, we are the worst fools. So with Him there is nothing to fear. All is bright and glorious. For God who created heaven and earth is with us. He alone will allow His thoughts to come to pass in your life. If this is in vain to you, you deserve hell and you belong to that place.

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