

THE LORD'S PERFECT PLANNING

Please read Jeremiah 29 verses 1-14.

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” (v11 ESV)

These words form part of a letter written by Jeremiah to God's people, when exiled in Babylon.

In this letter he encourages his readers to persevere in spite of their captivity – they were to set up home, increase their families, and enjoy the good of the land. They were even exhorted to seek the welfare of their captors and, in so doing, would secure their own welfare – but they were to be careful to disregard false prophets,

Jeremiah assured them that, in God's good time and planning, they would be released.

It is against this background that I wish to draw up a few pointers on the Lord's planning for us and our work in the CSCU in these days.

The Lord likewise has a perfect plan for each of our lives and also our Union.

He even planned the very day and hour in which each of us came out of the captivity of sin and placed our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. I did not know it myself at the time, but now I can look back on it with great joy and gladness.

All of us are unique in one way or another and therefore His plans for us must of necessity be different for each of us, but similar for the function of our Union.

Notice please that these plans are for our welfare and hope – so that in itself should provide an incentive to pray and seek the Lord with all our hearts as our reading says.

However, since as Christians we are travelling in the opposite direction of the world and against the pressures of our age, the Lord's plans for us might at times lead us along the path of trial and adversity – as it did with the exiles, but that is to make us strong and courageous. God at times gives us enough blessing to keep us rejoicing but He also couples these with periods of trial to keep us dependent (Eccl 7:14). A well-known hymn puts it like this “With God things don't just happen, everything by Him is planned”. So be glad even when the going is rough – we will come out gloriously at the end.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the Lord would delight to see our CSCU grow and prosper, using each of us as His instruments. However, in order to achieve this objective, we must act and pray in accordance with His plans and not lag behind – but equally important not to forge ahead and beyond His directing.

Let me illustrate. Just suppose you were driving along a country road at more than a comfortable speed. You could ever so easily miss an important turn leading to your destination and instead you end up many miles out of your way.

Someone has said “If the devil cannot hold you back he will push you on” – so it is a matter of keeping in step with our Master – who, after all, is our leader and we are His followers.

Our reading makes it clear – only after announcing the plans for welfare and hope – that we can come to Him. So we must seek and find His plans. Then we can call upon Him with all our hearts. He will be found of us – and soon we will also realise our hope which is in Him alone – the Word made flesh. So let Jesus have His way. and our hope and welfare will be for ever secure,

“Let The Lord have His way
In your life, every day
There’s no peace, there’s no joy
Till The Lord has His way
Place your life in His hands
Rest secure in His plans
Let the Lord, let the Lord have His way”