

And if God gives a promise, it's going to be fulfilled. It may be deferred; it may take a long time. And I said if you're one of those people who receive this message and you're 40 years old and you read that you're going to go back in 70 years time, you think, well I'm going to be 110 by then, and it's likely that I'm going to be dead. So, it's not going to apply to me but it may apply to my children and my children's children. So, I can have children and have a community here so that we can build up our community and so that they can go back in the fullness of time. And it's an encouragement also to look to the future, and to look to God and to believe that God is going to fulfil His word.

Because God does fulfil His word. But you have to be patient, and you have to accept that it may not come exactly at the time you wanted to come. And you have to keep the faith in the time when you're waiting. And the hope for Israel is tied up with this promise. It's also interesting that it also says 'pray for the welfare or the people where you are sent'. Now they don't want to be in Babylon. They don't actually like Babylon. It's not a good place to be. It's an idolatrous place, it's full of all sorts of pagan and wrong practices. But it says 'while you're there, pray for its welfare'. And again, I think that has a message to us.

We don't like the present world as it is. Do you like the way the world is run? But we are actually asked to pray for its welfare, and to seek to do good to it. So, no matter how much we disagree with what's going on in the world today, our responsibility as Christian believers in this modern Babylon is to work for its welfare, and to pray for what is good within it. We see that when you look at the stories of Daniel, that they were to keep themselves from the bad practices of Babylon, from the idolatry, from all the things which were evil in Babylon, but they were also to pray for its welfare, and to pray for good. And that, I think is a good pattern for us as believers in the Messiah.

We too live in this modern Babylon. We are to keep ourselves from the bad practices, the demonic things all around us, the occult, immorality, all these things which we see in our society. But we're also to pray for the welfare, and to work for the welfare of our society. To work for good in our society, not for evil, and to be constructive and helpful citizens of our society. So, there is a sort of dual message, if you like, in that there is a hope for the future also for us. That, at one time, we will be delivered from this Babylon, we will be taken to be with the Lord, and the Lord will set up His kingdom, and His way will be fulfilled.

In the meantime, we should keep the faith, and, as it says in this passage, **I know the thoughts that I have towards you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil. To give you a future and a hope. And for us there is always a future and a hope**, there is a God who cares for us, who thinks good thoughts towards us. And He wants us also to seek Him and to find Him: **You will seek me and, when you search for me with all your heart, I will be found by you says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity**. So, there's a message to the Jews in Babylon. There's also a message to us in our modern Babylon: to seek the Lord with all our heart, to seek Him and to find Him. To pray to Him, and to know that He will listen to us and He will ultimately gather us to be with Himself, and give us a future and a hope.

Build ye houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens and eat the fruit of them. Jeremiah 29.5

Hebrews 11

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a good report. ³ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. ⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh. ⁵ By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, "and was not found because God had translated him." For before his translation he had this testimony: that he pleased God. ⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please Him. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. ⁷ By faith Noah, being warned by God of things not yet seen, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should later receive for an inheritance, **obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.** ⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ¹¹ Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past the age, **because she judged Him faithful who had promised.** ¹² Therefore there sprang even from one, and him as good as dead, as many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. ¹³ **These all died in faith, not having received the promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded by them and embraced them**, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they are seeking a fatherland.

James 5.7

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Luke 8.15

But that on the good ground are they that, in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it and bring forth fruit with patience.

Romans 15.4

For whatsoever things were written in times past, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.