

Jeremiah

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- [0 : 00] As the Lord may be pleased to help me, I shall hope to look a little at a scripture you will find in the prophecy of Jeremiah chapter 29 verse 11.
- The prophecy of Jeremiah chapter 29 verse 11. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord.
- Thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end. This scripture was initially a part of a letter.
- Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives and so on.
- What a letter. How very different to so many we put down. Right.
- [1 : 28] It differs greatly in this sense that its author was divine. We might say with reverence that he dictated this letter for it commences.
- Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. We may well seek to open our ears to that which he has to say when we find these words are brought to our notice.
- It's a privilege on the Lord's part of the Lord's part of the Lord. A great condescension to speak at any time to any poor sinner.
- And such as have been favored at any time to hear his voice have cause for gratitude, humility, and wonderment that God should so condescend to their low estate.
- But without seeking to go any further into the trend of the chapter, let us as helped look at the words themselves.
- [2 : 57] For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord. It is obvious in the first place that in their origin they could only be known to him.
- Our human minds have not been able and never will be able to penetrate unassisted into the thoughts of Almighty God.
- That is certain. But he has ever proved himself to be a God of mercy and compassion and tenderness toward poor sinners.
- And so, in the order of his own will and for his own purposes, he has seen fit to make revelation of his will and his thoughts.
- His thoughts are revealed by revelation in the Scriptures of truth. And by these means, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, we may come in some humble measure into some knowledge of his thoughts toward us.
- [4 : 27] The revelation is, of course, by the means of the Spirit of God. The Apostle Peter, in writing of the Scriptures, and in mentioning that they had not followed cunningly devised fables, concludes his chapter in this way, that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
- Therefore, he was the source of the revelation of the mind and will, otherwise the thoughts of God.

And that, from all eternity past, it is evident from that which transpires, that a covenant was arranged in eternity past, by which there should be choice made, selection made, of a certain number of the human race which should be formed upon the earth, who should be so dealt with, that they should be prepared for eternal bliss by receiving absolute salvation through a surety, a redeemer.

This was the thought of God in its highest form. His works in creation we sing the praise of in various of our hymns.

But there is one which mentions briefly that one strange work exceeds them all. That work is the wonder of redeeming love, the wonder of salvation, that this should have been in the thought of God toward those who were disobedient to him and constant offenders toward him.

[6 : 35] It was not in us indeed, nor of us at any time. I hope we believe what we sing, when we sing.

What was there in us that could merit esteem or give the Creator delight? It was even so, Father, we ever must sing.

It was because it seemed good in thy sight. It was according to thy mind and will and thy thoughts toward an election of grace.

I know the thoughts that I think toward you. Discrimination is necessary here.

There are those who would tell us that this is inclusive, international, and fully general. The Word of God does not support this view.

[7 : 35] It clearly states that there are those who are described as the righteous and there are those who are described as the wicked and it is not possible for those two to intermingle, neither is it possible for the one to receive the benefits of the other and through mercy and grace it is not possible for those who are saved by grace to fall into the condemnation of the other.

The sovereignty of God is made known here. But, shall not the judge of all the earth do right? What is man that he should reply against God?

The very solemn doctrine is the doctrine of the sovereignty of God but it is one which we, if we may claim as we hope to be the children of God, must fall under.

And there will be that day come when all other will have to see that his sovereign will was manifest in their case and will be performed equally toward them.

But in this case, I believe, I want to speak very reverently, and according to the word of God, I believe we are permitted to say that the thoughts that the Lord thinks toward his children are definitely those of a father with such love toward them as we cannot begin to comprehend.

[9 : 17] We see in daily life and in among our human acquaintances many evidences of love of one kind and another, of the sacrifices that some parents are prepared to make on behalf of and through the love of their children, but these are but feeble illustrations of that wondrous love which the father hath revealed and made manifest in the gift of his dear son as the ransom.

The word says, I have found a ransom, but the ransom was divine, pure, holy, the son of God himself.

He must come in accordance with the thoughts of God to provide a sacrifice. Now, for a moment or two, if helped, I would like to go through very briefly the thoughts of God as they are made manifest in the worship he instituted.

There was a purpose in all this and while it is not observed today because of a new covenant, the New Testament, we must never lose sight of the fact that the dispensation and the Levitical form of worship were God's appointment, a revelation of his thoughts and his will toward his people.

Clearly, they contained illustration, type, figure of what was mainly, if I might use such a word in connection with God, mainly in his thought.

[11 : 11] This one great sacrifice continually portrayed and brought to view that which was necessary for the salvation of the whole election of grace.

It was further shown that though the Lord had appointed this, salvation did not and could not depend upon their observance of it, though he required it.

There is a mystery to some extent in the worship of God. There is a way in which he is honored without there being any real evidence of a work of grace.

but he has determined that there shall be throughout the generations of the world those who acknowledge him, those who walk outwardly in his provisions even though they may have no intimate or inward knowledge of the way of salvation.

And it is to be believed that there were both in those dispensations. some who observed because commanded. And we believe that there were those whose minds the spirit instructed and whose eyes were opened by the same spirit to see beyond the sign to the substance and who worshipped in faith.

[12 : 50] Otherwise, how could David, for instance, have penned the wonderful and prophetic psalms that he did if he was only acquainted with a natural understanding of the worship of the tabernacle?

God the spirit revealed marvelous things to him. And how, let me ask you, could Job give declaration to this profound truth except the same spirit who we hope works now worked in him then?

I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth. I say the spirit has revealed the truths as they are in the actual plan of salvation throughout the history of the church and has led people to see that there must be one to come.

That was as they worshipped, who worshipped God in spirit and truth before the birth of the Lord Jesus. they worshipped him in that form and by that way he that shall come.

How favored is our lot? We today look back upon that wonderful day and are able to say that our hope of eternal life is fixed certainly and surely upon him who has come, who has fulfilled his father's will, who has walked in the path in strict accordance to the thoughts which God thought toward his people to provide a ransom for them, to free them from sin.

[14 : 38] It may be said then in relation to his national people whom he again saw fit should go into bondage for reasons and purposes of his own into which I find it impossible to penetrate.

The thoughts of God and his dealings are too high for us. Why he should have permitted Israel to go first for sustenance and then to enter into bondage is a matter we shall have to leave as being beyond their knowledge.

But God has determined, you see, that the people of God, whether national or spiritual, shall be to his praise.

And so it was to show forth his glory that they were there, first in wreaking his vengeance upon the oppressor and then in showing his power and mercy in deliverance.

His thoughts were revealed in this. He said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people in Egypt where with the Egyptians oppressed them.

[15 : 53] I have heard their cry and I am come down to deliver them. That was his thought then toward his people. Deliverance.

I want that thought to remain in our minds. If the Lord will help us because it is a thought which concerns his thoughts in relation to the whole church of God, in relation to each individual member of that, and in relation to their final triumph at the end of this world.

The thoughts that I think towards you. Now just for a moment if the Lord will help, quite apart from all this generality of things and in matters being very general thus far, the Lord does frequently use this kind of word which appears to be so comprehensive in an individual way to assure some child of his that his thoughts toward them are, as air text declares, such a recipient of such a word, will I feel sure, feel established and strengthened, join the psalmist perhaps with a new song in their mouth for a while.

Wouldn't you, this afternoon, if the Lord should condescend to say to you personally, I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil.

You would rejoice, I believe, who fear God and regard it as another token for good, an answer to the question which often pervades the mind, am I his or am I not?

[18 : 01] it is well when these matters are weighed carefully, presumption is a dreadful sin, it springs from confidence which is not well grounded and a hope which needs careful looking into as to what it is built upon, but there is one word in the word of God which often forms an important part of the children of God's prayer, it is this, that the Spirit of God may witness with their spirit that they are the children of God, then they can readily believe and hopefully expect that the thoughts of God toward them will be those of peace well when the work of grace begins in the heart of any child of

God whom he has appointed to salvation a deliverance is wrought as the first revelation in their case of thoughts of peace toward them they do not it may be for a long time in joy peace but strangely through the conflict which they then become the subjects of their feet are in the way which leads to peace for their feet are then directed in that way which leads to the Savior and he I love this title is the Prince of Peace yes the Prince of Peace it seems to me in my simple way that it describes the Lord Jesus as one having royal authority and yet being so approachable so peaceful in whom we may trust implicitly and I believe as time goes on with some of us our affections are drawn more toward the

Lord Jesus in realizing that he is at all times so approachable we get into such a condition some of us at various times under temptation and through the infirmities of unbelief which is still in our nature that was not the Lord Jesus full of compassion and his ear ever open to the cries of his children despair would be our portion and distress more often air conditioned than it is but he has said this and it is a word to which I cling and would advise you my dear friends young and old to seek a part and lot in he has said come unto me come unto me if you really look at that carefully you will see that the thoughts of God are revealed there in providing for us not only a sacrifice but one who can also combine with the sacrifice the office of high priest and how he can absolve in a way which is not possible with any human priest higher otherwise happily we do not believe in the necessity of an intermediate priest and certainly do not believe in their power to forgive sin or to absolve it but we do have this great privilege and it was in the thoughts of God to provide this for us one whom we may approach whom we may confess to may lay their hearts absolutely bear before and plead his mercy and prove the truth of his wonderful word all that the father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me

I will in no wise cast out so the thoughts of God toward the newly born child of God are thoughts of deliverance from the bondage of sin and Satan and to instruct toward an interest in the salvation wrought out by his dear son but it's toward you it is not in my power to apply these two words and yet they were the two words which seemed the sweetest to me as I meditated a little upon this truth oh it's of no use my dear friends to have a merely theoretical knowledge of salvation and when you need it most there's no support there there must be that which is wrought in and upon the heart it must be a matter of individual reception of the truth and the work of the spirit commenced and continued in the heart of the child of God if one is to feel anything of interest in the word of

God and the provisions of salvation and therefore it is the thoughts that I think towards you which I wish to emphasize this afternoon I believe it could be true of you as a cause of truth I believe it is what a mercy I do ask you now for a moment or two to consider the privilege and honor of being in this condition that the God of heaven the almighty the creator of all things should have special thoughts of peace and love toward this community you'd be sorry I believe if you felt it was otherwise but you may rejoice in the fact that it is so he does look upon the various little hills of Zion with delight his mercy visits every house that pay their night and morning vows but makes a more delightful stay where churches meet to praise and pray and so I repeat he has thoughts of peace toward you because you gather here to worship him and to hear his voice and to sing his praises and to call upon his name further than that I am not able to go you see the matter after that becomes individual and we have this truth and it's not possible for us to enlarge upon it or detract from it the Lord knoweth them that are his and it's only his knowledge that's infallible but he knows where every one of them are even the smallest and the weakest and the most unworthy who knows them all and loves them all and toward them his thoughts are those of peace and not of evil for he has provided one who has delivered from the bondage of sin paid the tremendous debt they owed and they are now set free the deliverance extends to this there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ

[26 : 37] Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit complete deliverance from the wrath to come thoughts of peace indeed I tried this morning and there seems no need to go over that ground again except to briefly remind ourselves I tried to remind ourselves then of two separate ways in which we enter into peace in this world taste of peace and indeed find it very sweet to our taste in committing ourselves and all our concerns absolutely into his gracious hands peace peace who will value this who will marvel at it spirit taught souls I believe who realize what they deserve in some measure if the

Lord has ever shown you where you would be without his grace where you would be without his pardoning mercy where you would have been without the provision of a savior you will value the love and the thoughts that were toward you for good and you will see to whom you are indebted for peace in any measure meanwhile as you and I know quite a lot of our experience in this world consists of conflict and this is scriptural it wouldn't be the case but for the fact that we are a company of two armies have received another principle within and therefore there is the conflict and the struggle between the two as the apostle clearly shows us in the seventh to the Romans unless we have some measure of knowledge of this we shall never really appreciate being brought into deliverance from it and the inflow of peace which accompanies that deliverance and so it is troubled souls heavily tempted souls those who know much of conflict turmoil storm and opposition who will the more highly value that peace which flows from the

Lord Jesus Christ and the saving belief in his pardoning mercy but it is as I have so often had to bring forth not possible to convince the human mind of any of these truths by any reason whatever it's beyond reason you must be a true believer and you must by faith receive and believe that which you cannot possibly understand our case would be hopeless indeed if our salvation depended upon our understanding the scriptures we understand I believe but very little of them but sufficient to keep us hoping on praying on for inclusion among his people and here it has flashed into my mind that you asked for a portion with them when you sung the hymn

I just wonder how many of your heart's desires went up with that word I've often used it myself unthinkingly but there have been one or two occasions I believe when I really meant it the words have been a prayer with thy children I would sit and not like an alien robe clothe my soul and make it fit with humility and love we sing some precious truths sometimes we do well to meditate upon them and to see how far they really represent our real feelings to give you an expected end the margin renders this an end and expectation the end when you transfer your attention to the proverbs where there is a word for surely there is an end and thine expectation shall not be cut off the margin there interprets end reward there is a reward and an expectation let us seek to look for this for a moment or two then for as

I sat in the vestry I suddenly realized how useless our religion would be if we had no hope beyond the grave of what use would religion be if it ceased when our lives on earth cease our religion is a blessed one I believe it's a spirit given one I believe it was first formulated in the thoughts of God because there is given to his children hope beyond the grave and a gracious expectation of a life to come through mercy some of his children bask in the privileges of his favor here they enjoy the sweetness of the streams but they cannot be satisfied therewith because it sharpens their appetite it enables them to hope that there is laid up for them a far richer reward we do believe do we not that there is a rest that remain for the people of

[32 : 47] God and we sometimes read that we should labor to enter into that rest but in the final we come back to the words of our text to give you I'd like to dwell there a moment the gifts of God are sure without repentance which means to say they will not be discontinued they will not be cut off from the recipients they will still go on through his mercy as they have done till now till the last believer is safely brought to the end of the work of grace and prepared for glory to give you how we realize as our perceptions are enlightened and the spirit shines more into our hearts how we realize that we are throughout the whole matter of salvation recipients largely suppliants and also recipients everything we have is by gift even to the son of god and this expected end is referred to on numerous occasions in the scriptures of truth for the formulation and establishment of their hope in it and to encourage us still to hold on against temptation to disbelieve it

I may have said here before a word in the word the Sadducees say there is no resurrection there are a lot of Sadducees still about today I have said this if you examine yourself very carefully you'll find there's one inside ever ready to believe this insinuation of Satan that there's nothing to come to us after this life do you realize my dear friends young and older that Satan has succeeded in lulling a great mass of the human race into this belief it's his work a delusion of Satan but oh how faithful it is can he but persuade anybody that there's nothing to come to them after life why they can do what they like and that's just congenial to our nature isn't it it's sort of giving license to do just what you wish if there's no recompense later either kind good or bad and that is what the devil has striven to do through the ages and at the present time alas it looks as if he's being very successful there are many with whom I come in contact who say oh you need to worry there's nothing coming to us after death ah but if that's their sad case we should be where the apostle said in that wonderful chapter relating to the resurrection if in this life only we have hope in

Christ we are all men most miserable but he didn't stop there and I don't want to stop there in my ministry he said but now is Christ risen I'm going to appeal to you who pray why do you pray and how many answers have you had my friends and how could you have had answers to prayer which you will put up in the name of Jesus if there is none and if Jesus lives his resurrection and hope that you and I will presently be resurrected too did he not say and what a word it is because I live ye shall live also is this your expectation and your hope the word which says this it's been very useful in many cases to the children of God in things providential and spiritual too my soul wait thou only upon

God for my expectation is from him and I would say this in that connection what a wonderful mercy and favor to have a gracious expectation of life after death I mean eternal life of course and here again we read in the word of God by the mouth of the Lord Jesus when upon earth I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand cleave to these truths my friends the time may yet come when they may be sorely opposed bitterly assailed we live in short in dangerous days not necessarily physical danger only but spiritual danger as well there are many deluding spirits about and they are in fulfillment of the word of God deceivers shall wax worse and worse men shall wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived that's the scripture and we are living very evidently in those last times and I say we are living in times of danger when the very basis of our beliefs are threatened but we also read in the epistle to the

Hebrews of things which cannot be shaken and it is to those things I hope our minds will be directed and be kept firmly fixed upon because they are things which concern our eternal salvation things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ to give you an expected end an end in expectation well the apostle Peter he had a word on this and for accuracy I want to read it blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fatheth not away reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God you will see at the close of this service and as we come to the end of our text that the whole of salvation still revolves if I might use such a word around the eternal thoughts of

[39 : 55] God his thoughts represent his intentions his thoughts represent his purposes toward his people his thoughts represent his pleasure even in the creation of the world we read in one place that they are for his pleasure they are and were created in the first place and certainly that is the case in the condition of the children of God because it is in the mind and thought of God that they shall forever sing his praises world without end now a question comes in as it so often will it's a very simple question oh say will you be there it's a question isn't it shall you and I stand among them in that day don't forget the words you sung with thy children

I would sit that means and be with them in heaven I take it you desire that too your religion if it's to be profitable must extend beyond the grave your hope must be that of eternal life and an expectation which God gives will lead you to hope on against all that opposes to reach that desired end I have one other word relating to the end which will confirm that there is an end or expectation and it's also in the epistle of Peter receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls to give you an expected end is the word this afternoon while I've rambled round the message nothing that I have said is anything like so important as the message itself so if you forget everything that I've said do take the message home with you as it is the word of God for I know the thoughts that I think toward you saith the

Lord thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end the Lord pardon all that has been amiss Amen