

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

January 4, 2009

Hope for the future

by David King

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11).

"There is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall come back to their own border" (Jer. 31:17).

The Jews to whom these assurances were written had little reason to hope. They were captives in a foreign land, a rag-tag band of survivors from a nation that had fallen under the control of a marauding super-power. In those days, when a small nation was gobbled up by an empire, it simply disappeared from history. They were doomed to die in obscurity, and all their national dreams would die with them. They were utterly powerless to change their circumstances.

But God had a different plan. Their captivity was not a death sentence, but a disciplinary "time out." As a nation, they and their forefathers had forgotten God and His law. They would spend decades in this foreign land, chastened but not forgotten. Their captivity would be an opportunity to reflect on their mistakes and reform their thinking. In time, God would bring their descendants back to their homeland, where they would rebuild the nation and once again nurture a national destiny.

But all that was in the future, a future they could not see in their current despair. To these captives, there was no good outcome to their plight. It was Jeremiah's job to reassure them of God's promise, to keep alive a little spark of hope in the midst of the darkness.

Today, God's people belong to a kingdom that is not of this world. Whatever country we happen to live in, our destiny is not tied to the political winds of fortune that define the rise and fall of nations. Nevertheless, we live in this world, and our lives are touched by the same hardships, crises, and disasters that everyone else experiences. These problems may be widespread catastrophes shared by whole populations (wars, economic collapses, epidemics), or personal tragedies that single us out as individuals (sicknesses, failed relationships, financial setbacks). Whatever the source, when those storms hit, it's easy to get discouraged and despair of what lies ahead.

When those days come, we need to cling to God's promise: "There is hope in your future." Whatever the specific details, bad times are eventually always followed by good times. Experiences that cause us pain usually end up being sources of personal growth and strengthening. The future almost always turns out to be better than we feared, even though we may have to go through some dark days to get there.

To be sure, some of us may not live to see those better days. But for the child of God, that fate is not a failure of God's promise, but the ultimate fulfillment of it. What better future could we hope for, than to spend eternity in a beautiful place where there is no more death, no more sorrow, crying, or pain (Rev. 21:4)?

Whatever our current circumstances, we have every reason to look forward to the future with optimism and joy.