

GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU

I know the **plans** that I have for you, declares the LORD. They are plans for peace and not disaster, plans to give you **a future filled with hope**. (Jeremiah 29:11; GWN)

Jonah, a story about a man who **almost missed the God's plan for a future filled with hope**

Jonah immediately went to Nineveh as the LORD told him. Nineveh was a very large city. It took three days to walk through it. Jonah entered the city and ... he said, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed." **The people of Nineveh believed God**. ... God saw what they did. He saw that they turned from their wicked ways. So **God reconsidered his threat to destroy them, and he didn't do it**. (Jonah 3:3-10; GWN)

The LORD spoke his word to Jonah, son of Amittai. He said, "Leave at once for the important city, Nineveh. Announce to the people that I can no longer overlook the wicked things they have done." **Jonah immediately tried to run away from the LORD by going to Tarshish**. He went to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid for the trip and went on board. **He wanted to go to Tarshish to get away from the LORD**. (Jonah 1:1-3; GWN)

Jonah was very upset about this, and he became angry. So he prayed to the LORD, "LORD, isn't this what I said would happen when I was still in my own country? **That's why I tried to run to Tarshish in the first place. I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, patient, and always ready to forgive and to reconsider your threats of destruction**. So now, LORD, take my life. I'd rather be dead than alive." ... Then God asked Jonah, "What right do you have to be angry ...?" Jonah answered, "I have every right to be angry-so angry that I want to die." The LORD replied, "... Shouldn't I feel sorry for this important city, Nineveh? It has more than 120,000 people in it as well as many animals. These people couldn't tell their right hand from their left." (Jonah 4:1-11; GWN)

1. **DISOBEDIENCE**

But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice. (1 Samuel 15:22; NIV)

EXCUSES

Moses, also almost missed it: (Exodus 3:1 – 4:24; GWN)

The LORD said, "I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt, and I have heard them crying out because of the slave drivers. I know how much they're suffering. ... Now, go! I am sending you to Pharaoh so that you can bring my people Israel out of Egypt." **But Moses said to God**, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the people of Israel out of Egypt?" ... "Suppose I go to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God

of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' What should I tell them?" (Exodus 3:7-12; GWN)

"They will never believe me or listen to me!" ... "Please, Lord, I'm not a good speaker. ... 'Please, Lord, send someone else.'" Then the LORD became angry with Moses ... Along the way they stopped for the night. The LORD met Moses and tried to kill him. (Exodus 4:1-24; GWN)

2. Little to no **FAITH**

Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son." (Genesis 18:14; NIV)

'Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! **Nothing is too difficult for You**, (Jeremiah 32:17; NASV)

3. **SELF-centered**

The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens *me* morning by morning; He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord GOD has opened my ear; and I was not disobedient nor did I turn back. I gave my back to those who strike *me*, and my cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover my face from humiliation and spitting. For the Lord GOD helps me, therefore, I am not disgraced; therefore, I have set my face like flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed. He who vindicates me is near; who will contend with me? (Isaiah 50:4-8; NASV)

4. Filled with **ANGER**

People with understanding control their anger; a hot temper shows great foolishness. (Proverbs 14:29; NLT)
He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city. (Proverbs 16:32; NASV)
Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go. (Proverbs 22:24; NKJV)

Don't sin by letting anger control you. Don't even let the sun go down while you are still angry. Anger gives the devil a foothold *in your life*. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

[Get] knowledge, and wisdom for your soul—get [them] and **your future's secured, your hope is on solid rock**. No matter how many times you trip [God-loyal people] up, *they* don't stay down long; soon they're up on their feet, while the wicked end up flat on their faces. Don't laugh when your enemy falls; don't crow over his collapse. GOD might see, and become very provoked, and then take pity on his plight. Don't bother your head with braggarts or wish you could succeed like the wicked. **Those people have no future at all; they're headed down a dead-end street**. (Proverbs 24:14-20; Message)