

Message: 2025-11-29

Hope and a Future

With Thanksgiving this week, you would think my message would be all about gratitude. I have spoken about it before, and I will definitely speak about it again. Our lives should be rooted in an attitude of thankfulness to Adonai for all He is, all He has done, and all He will do. Ashreinu, how happy and how fortunate we are.

Ashreinu.

אָשְׁרֵינוּ מָה טֹב חָלַקָּנוּ
וּמָה נָעִים גָּזְלָנוּ
וּמָה יְפָה יָרְשָׁתָנוּ

How blessed are we!

How good is our portion!

How pleasant is our destiny!

How beautiful is our inheritance!

This attitude of Thanksgiving regardless of our circumstance is not dissimilar to what we read in the proclamation of Thanksgiving made during the civil war by Abraham Lincoln. He invited all citizens to:

...to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the

wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

President Abraham Lincoln, October 3, 1863

I've included in the notes some articles about Abraham Lincoln that are really interesting. Did you know Ulysses S. Grant issued a decree expelling all Jews from the areas he controlled, just like they were starting to do throughout Europe? It was en vogue to be an anti-Semite even in that time.

Today, much like in the days of Abraham Lincoln, even in the midst of trouble times and civil unrest on a global scale, we should focus our hearts on the blessings Adonai has given us today and will give us in the future.

That is the focus of my message today.

Hope and a Future

My message today is titled 'Hope and a Future'. Thinking about the future brings to my mind the 80's classic, 'The Future's So Bright'.

Things are alright. I'm getting good grades. The future's so bright, I gotta wear shades.

While that song is hardly scripture, it does offer an encouraging and optimistic view of the future. 12 year old Jeremy was also doing alright, getting good grades, wearing shades.

Our core scripture today is from the book of Yirmeyahu.

For I know what plans I have in mind for you,' says ADONAI,' plans for well-being, not for bad things; so that you can have hope and a future.
Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 29:11 (CJB)

אחרית ותקווה

Future and hope.

I love this verse. As a person who has endured my fair share of both good and bad times, this verse has been a comfort and encouragement.

Usually this verse used to offer comfort to people who are going through hard times or to encourage people who are struggling with their situation in life or are at a time of transition; people scared about what the future holds. I don't really have an issue with that application because these ARE words of comfort and encouragement.

It's much easier to digest when you are going through troubled times than verses like.

In this world you will have trouble.

John 16:33 (NIV)

Or

Everyone will hate you because of me...

Matthew 10:22 (CJB)

In context, both of those verses also offer comfort to us in times of trial, but this verse from Yirmeyahu is one that I keep close to my heart.

In context, this passage is even more powerful to me because Yirmeyahu was telling Israel of God's promise to bring back and restore their children. Their hope and their future is the children.

I believe the children are the future... (if we want to continue the 80s theme).

These words in Yirmeyahu were not originally directed towards an individual in their own unique predicaments. These words were directed to the people of Israel who were facing Babylonian conquest and exile. The destruction of the temple. Unprecedented loss of life and absolute social collapse. They were facing these catastrophic times because they had turned their backs on God and on His ways.

Adonai tells them they will be conquered and taken away and Babylon

will rule over them for a couple generations, but, after that Adonai offers these words of encouragement.

'For I know what plans I have in mind for you,' says ADONAI, 'plans for well-being, not for bad things; so that you can have hope and a future.

'When you call to me and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you seek me, you will find me, provided you seek for me wholeheartedly; and I will let you find me,' says ADONAI.

'Then I will reverse your exile. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have driven you,' says ADONAI, 'and bring you back to the place from which I exiled you.'

Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 29:11–14 (CJB)

What About Yirmeyahu?

Yirmeyahu, Jeremiah, is the name of the prophet who wrote down these words from Adonai. Yirmeyahu is a Hebrew name meaning "the Lord exalts" or "God will uplift." It sounds great, right? However, being made an example of is seldom a fun thing. Yirmeyahu was chosen by God before birth to proclaim His message to Y'hudah beginning during the reign of King Josiah, Yoshi-yahu, and continuing through the reigns of 4 other kings. Adonai gave them a lot of opportunities to repent. He is truly slow to anger.

Burdened by Y'hudah's sin and the coming judgment, Yirmeyahu preached repentance, but his warnings were ignored. He was often threatened and mistreated. God's call brought Yirmeyahu great loneliness and suffering. He was forbidden to marry or have children. This spared him personal loss during Babylon's invasion, but it intensified his isolation. Despite rejection and hardship, Yirmeyahu remained faithful, bearing the burden of obedience alone.

His grief over his people's rebellion and destruction led to deep sorrow, earning him his title, *the weeping prophet*.

*I will weep secretly because of your pride;
my eyes will weep bitterly, streaming with tears,*

because Adonai's flock is carried away captive.

Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 13:17 (CJB)

Yirmeyahu's compassion reflected God's own heart. Like Yeshua, who later wept over Yerushalayim, Yirmeyahu mourned for those deceived by sin. His tears symbolized divine sorrow over human rebellion.

As He drew near and saw Jerusalem, He wept over her, saying, "If only you had recognized this day the things that lead to shalom!"

Lukas [Luke]19:41–42 (TLV)

I sometimes wish I had been named after a more successful prophet and not "the weeping prophet". Someone like Shmu'el (Samuel). The prophet Shmu'el had some epic times. However, the success of a prophet, truthfully, has nothing to do with the prophet and everything to do with the times in which he is called and most of all *the people*.

The basic qualities of a prophet listed in the first chapter of Yirmeyahu are to not be afraid, go where God tells you, stand up, and speak the truth.

That's the job of a prophet. Proclaim God's truth. That's really it. It tends to be portrayed popularly as somehow predicting the future, but that is not really how Biblical prophecy functions. The prophet is reminding people what God has said. The people are not walking in God's ways, and God allows them to be punished so that they will return.

Israel is chosen by God to be an example of God's faithfulness in redemption. That is one of the core functions of Israel.

Oftentimes God gives the prophet insight into how this process is going to happen in their specific situation. Sometimes he gives the prophet specific admonitions for the people and far reaching promises for restoration. Sometimes he allows the prophet to see far into the future to the completion of God's redemptive plan, how this will all turn out in the end, the words of the prophet still echoing today.

However, the good news of the prophet is always essentially the same. Repent. Walk in God's ways. The kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

Yirmeyahu's called Israel to repent but they refused and Adonai allowed them to be conquered and taken away to Babylon. The First Temple, the temple built by Solomon, was destroyed. The kingdom of Israel completely ruined, and it was all because the leaders and the people refused to repent and walk in God's ways.

Yet Yirmeyahu's message did not end in despair. God promised that Israel's suffering would not last forever. He said, *"Restrain your voice from weeping... there is hope for your descendants"* (Jeremiah 31:16–17). Even in judgment, God offered mercy and restoration.

If Israel would call on and pray to Adonai, He will listen. If they would seek Him with their whole hearts, they will find Him. *Then*, Adonai will restore the people of Israel and gather them back from exile. He will bring back His children. They will no longer be without hope or a future.

After 70 years of exile in Babylon, the people of Israel were allowed to return to the land. It was miraculous, but they still had a lot to do. They didn't just return to a land completely and miraculously rebuilt by God. They had to work *hard* to rebuild the temple, rebuild Jerusalem and its walls, rebuild the land. They had enemies constantly trying to destroy them. It took a long time for people to return.

This was the pattern with each of the exiles.

This also parallels what Israel has gone through since 1948 after the last exile by Rome was complete. Israel has started to return. Israel will be restored completely, but that is only just getting started. Remember, God has good plans, and if it's not good, then He's not finished yet. That is why Israel is referred to as the first flowering of God's redemption. It's the start of the process. It is difficult and dangerous, but it is not without hope and a future.

The national anthem is Hatikvah, the hope, for goodness sake.

Yirmeyahu's faithful tears remind us that God's ultimate plan replaces mourning with eternal comfort and hope. Scripture assures that sorrow will be replaced with joy.

*Sing praise to ADONAI, you faithful of his;
and give thanks on recalling his holiness.*

*For his anger is momentary,
but his favor lasts a lifetime.*

*Tears may linger for the night,
but with dawn come cries of joy.*

Tehillim [Psalms] 30:5–6 (CJB)

Is Yirmeyahu's Prophecy Complete?

One way in which we are living in the future that Adonai promised to Israel through Yirmeyahu is in regards to the Brit Khadashah. This hope and future Yirmeyahu speaks of us is where we get the promise of the New Covenant, the Brit Khadashah.

"Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

"For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says Adonai: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, 'Know Adonai'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more."

Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 31:30–33 (CJB)

Has this prophecy been fully realized? No. Adonai was telling Israel about their destiny once they are fully restored, and it is not fully restored.

Have we been living in the gradual revelation of the Brit Khadashah?
Yes.

Yeshua initiated the new covenant in His life and death and resurrection, but his plans and purposes are not finished yet. We are His talmidim who should walk in His ways, endeavoring to spread the good news of Yeshua. You might say **we** are living in the first flowering of the new covenant. The days are coming, but we can walk in the Brit Khadashah with Yeshua today.

What About Our Hope and Future?

If this scripture was directed toward the people of Israel and refers to their eventual redemption and return to the land, what does this mean for us?

What if we are worried about our future? Do we have a future? Do we have reason to hope?

Of course we do. God has good plans for us too. Plans for our well being. We should not be worried. Yeshua teaches us how we should try to handle our worries in the book of Matityahu.

"So I say to you, do not worry about your life—what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?

"Look at the birds of the air. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your Father in heaven feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. Now if in this way God clothes the grass—which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow—will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For the pagans eagerly pursue all these things; yet your Father in heaven knows that you need all these. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its

own."

Matityahu [Matthew] 6:25–34 (TLV)

This does not mean that we should be lazy and irresponsible. This does not mean we should just sit around waiting for Hashem to miraculously fix everything for us. On the contrary, like the people of Israel returning after exile, we have to be willing to work *hard* regardless of our circumstances. We should do everything as if we are doing it for the Adonai.

What this means is that we are not supposed to worry. Our emunah must be in Adonai alone. We also must call to Adonai and pray, and we must seek Him wholeheartedly. We need to prioritize living for Him over living for ourselves. If we call and pray to Adonai, he will listen. If we seek Him with our whole hearts, we will find Him.

David Melekh said it this way.

*My soul, wait in silence for God alone,
because my hope comes from him.*

*He alone is my rock and salvation,
my stronghold; I won't be moved.*

*My safety and honor rest on God.
My strong rock and refuge are in God.*

*Trust in him, people, at all times;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.*

Tehillim [Psalm] 62:6–9 (CJB)

Yeshua Meshikhenu puts it this way:

Keep asking, and it will be given to you; keep seeking, and you will find; keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who keeps asking receives; he who keeps seeking finds; and to him who keeps knocking, the door will be opened...

...So if you, even though you are bad, know how to give your children gifts that are good, how much more will your Father in heaven keep giving good things to those who keep asking him!

Matityahu [Matthew] 7:7-8, 11 (CJB)

Ha Tikvah

Our hope for the future depends on our emunah.

I talked about this in my message a couple weeks ago as well. The lesson of the lives of Avraham and Sarah is emunah. We look back on their lives, and we see lives that were not perfect, not without trouble and sorrow, not without failure and setback. But we see lives that are defined by their faith in the One who made the promises because they knew that Adonai was faithful.

Let us hold fast the unwavering confession of hope, for He who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:23 (TLV)

Most of the exiled people of Israel at the time of Yirmeyahu also did not see Adonai's promise to them fulfilled, but their faith was in the One who made the promise. Adonai is faithful.

As sons and daughters of Abraham, we too must be people who walk in faith. We also may not live to see all of God's promises fulfilled in our lives, but we cannot lose hope. He who promised is faithful.

Conclusion

For I know what plans I have in mind for you,' says ADONAI,' plans for well-being, not for bad things; so that you can have hope and a future.

Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 29:11 (CJB)

This scripture of God's promise for "a hope and a future" was originally given to Israel during their Babylonian exile. Far from a personal inspirational quote, it was a national assurance that God would restore Israel after judgment if they sought Him wholeheartedly. The life of Yirmeyahu—the weeping prophet—illustrates God's sorrow over sin and

His enduring mercy. Though Israel faced destruction and exile, God promised return, rebuilding, and ultimately the New Covenant.

Today, we share in this hope by trusting God's faithfulness, seeking His kingdom first, and refusing to be consumed by worry. Like Israel after exile, we must work diligently while relying on God's provision.

Our hope rests on emunah—faith in the One who keeps His promises. The future That Adonai has planned for His people is grounded in His character: faithful, restorative, and filled with ultimate joy beyond present trials.

This is the message to you this morning. Hold on tightly to your hope and faith in Adonai because He is faithful to His word. Your future is secure, so get to work.

Resources

- The Complete Jewish Bible
- Tree of Life Version
- Lexham Hebrew Bible
- Hebrew New Testament
- Abraham Lincoln Thanksgiving Proclamation: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/primary-sources/abraham-lincolns-proclamation-thanksgiving>
- Abraham Lincoln and the Jews: <https://aish.com/abraham-lincoln-and-the-jews-10-fascinating-facts/>
- Abraham Lincoln: The First Jewish President?: <https://jewishjournal.com/uncategorized/214544/abraham-lincoln-the-first-jewish-president/>
- Was Abraham Lincoln Jewish?: <https://www.mayimachronim.com/was-abraham-lincoln-jewish/>
- General Order 11: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Order_No._11_\(1862\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Order_No._11_(1862))