

“But now this is what the Lord says: “Do not weep any longer, for I will reward you,” says the Lord. “Your children will come back to you from the distant land of the enemy. There is hope for your future,” says the Lord. “Your children will come again to their own land.” Jeremiah 31:16-17 NLT

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Rachel weeps uncontrollably and God gives comfort in this passage. He says “your children will come home, back to you from the distant land of the enemy.” What parent, when their children choose poorly and wander off, isn’t heartbroken? It’s a hard load to carry when your child isn’t successful OR they are successful without the relationship with God that you raised them with. I see it on parents faces when I ask about their children. This promise that God makes to Israel is a little different, they were “carried” off as slaves, not of their own choosing. Does this give them hope? I would think so. In these verses it does make me sad and wonder about our own generation of children who have decided that God is not in the church or that God was just a childhood phase. And, they’re gone. I pray that God gives us, believers, another chance to see our own (and many other fatherless) kids come back to him, back to gathering as the community of faith. It will look very different and I’m okay with that, but to see hundreds of thousands come home... oh, I pray it’s true.

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Dad,

You reached out to me when I really did not know you. I knew you as “church” or through some stories, but I did not know you. It gives me hope that you will do that again in this generation who have been through far worse than me. I was the outlier in the sixties. Now this generation from 2000 is almost completely disconnected from family and faith. We spent the last forty years trying to figure out how to make churches grow and look cool to keep them full, while these children around us went searching for their own truth, and acceptance and love. Please call them home, dear God.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root