*****REFLECTIONS***

*April 24, 2016*

**The LORD foils the plans of the nations;**

**he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.**

**But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever,**

**the purposes of his heart through all generations.**

*Psalm 33:10-11*

**Best-Laid Plans**

It was in no one’s plan for the baby to arrive so early in her mother’s pregnancy. But it’s not like anyone had control either. Plans for today will almost certainly need at least some small alteration. Plans we have for the tomorrows ahead will change for sure. So, Steinbeck’s adapted quote, “The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry,” is errant only in the suggested frequency of their modification.

Plans are about affecting change from what is into something needed or desired. God encourages plans because plans motivate action. Without action, mankind would be in pursuit of nothing—beings without purpose. With no plans, we would be in a constant state of reaction for survival with no motivation to make anything different or better. Yet our plans, no matter the envisioned benefit, are always fragile. God has his own plans.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you…" declares the LORD,"* (Jeremiah 29:11-12.) God has his plans for us, but he does not encourage us to sit back with plans to do nothing in the meantime.

God instructed Adam and Eve, *"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."* (Genesis 1:28) Action required. And through James he said, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only.”* (James 1:22 NKJV) Action required.

Plans envision change. Something in the world will be different if the plans are followed. But our plans don’t always fit with God’s. Still, you and I are part of his plans. Indeed, we are most often the instruments of them. That’s a reason he made us.

It wasn’t in our plans for Olivia Michele, our newest family member, to arrive into this world prematurely. But if we pause to think about it, indeed she didn’t arrive early at all. She entered this world right on time. At this writing she is almost four weeks old, growing, and receiving extraordinary love and care from her parents. Today there are plans for many tomorrows yet to come; yet we know, “The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” But we also know the best-laid plans are God’s plans.

And we are and will be blessed by them.

*You are the light of the world,*

Richard **+**

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