

Let Us Illustrate Solomon's Words of Wisdom
(Proverbs 13:12)

Introduction:

1. Shortly after Solomon became king of Israel, God said to him, "*Ask what I shall give thee*" (2 Chronicles 1:7).
2. Solomon responded by asking God for "*wisdom and knowledge*" so he would be able to judge his people (2 Chronicles 1:10).
3. According to 2 Chronicles 1:11-12, God granted Solomon's request.
4. Fortunately, Solomon wrote down much of the wisdom that God gave to him in the Proverbs.
5. In Proverbs 13:12 Solomon touched on 2 important points.
 - a. First, anguish is experienced while we wait for our hope to become a reality.
 - b. Second, great joy is experienced when hope finally becomes a reality.
6. In our lesson we are studying several Old Testament Scriptures that illustrate these words of wisdom.

Discussion:

- I. WE FIRST NEED TO SHOW HOW THE ISRAELITES FOUND THEMSELVES IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION (2 Chronicles 36:14-21)
 - A. We learn from vs.14-16 that the Israelites sinned and rejected the prophets that God sent to them.
 - B. The writer continued in vs.17-19 by showing how God used the Babylonians to punish His people.
 - C. According to vs.20-21, survivors were taken to Babylon where they would be in captivity 70 years as Jeremiah had prophesied (Jeremiah 25:8-11).
 - D. Because of their sins the Israelites found themselves in a difficult situation; however, they had the hope of returning to Israel after 70 years.
- II. WE NEED TO SHOW HOW THE HEARTS OF THE ISRAELITES WERE SICK WHILE THEY WAITED FOR THEIR HOPE TO BECOME A REALITY (Psalm 137)
 - A. Memories of their home caused the Israelites to weep (vs.1).
 - B. Furthermore, they were not able to sing (vs.2, 4).
 - C. To make matters worse, the Babylonians mocked them (vs.3).
 - D. Even though they remembered Jerusalem and had the hope of returning to their home, their hearts were sick while they waited for the 70 years to pass.
 - E. Finally, the 70-year period of waiting came to an end.
- III. WE NEED TO SHOW HOW THE JOY THAT THE ISRAELITES EXPERIENCED WHEN THEY RETURNED TO ZION CAN BE COMPARED TO A TREE OF LIFE (Psalm 126)
 - A. God caused the 70-year captivity to come to an end.
 - B. The Israelites:
 1. were like those who dream
 2. laughed
 3. were able to sing
 4. expressed confidence that God would continue to bless them.
 - C. This Psalm is designated as "A Song of Degrees."

Conclusion:

1. We have illustrated the words of wisdom Solomon wrote in Proverbs 13:12.
2. Looking forward to the joy that will be experienced when hope becomes a reality will help us while we wait (Romans 8:18-25).
3. Let us conclude with the words of Solomon's father in Psalm 40:1-5.