

*CALLED
TO*

ACT

FOLLOWING JESUS IN TODAY'S CULTURE

*CULTURE FOLLOWING
JESUS IN
TODAY'S*

As followers of Jesus in today's culture, we
assume we have the options to:

- Pretend
- Ignore
- Hope

Instead, the Savior Called us to ACT

Followers of Jesus are Called to ACT as...

- Subjects of the King (Leviticus 19)
- Fishers of Men (Matthew 4)
- Makers of Disciples (Matthew 28)
- Citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3)
- Ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5)

Last week...

Persons Under Authority

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

Romans 13:1-2

Established... τάσσω [*tasso*] Greek verb meaning “to station, to place in a certain order, to arrange, to assign a place, to appoint”

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. 1 Peter 2:13-15

What is happening in America today?

Religious Persecution

or

Bad Policies

What is happening in America today?

Bad policies enacted by incompetent leaders

How should followers of Jesus react?

- Say: “That is a foolish plan”
- Say: “That won’t work”
- Say: “That has never worked”

How should followers of Jesus NOT react?

- By incorrectly claiming biblical permission to disobey
- By arrogantly and selfishly choosing to disobey
- By motivating others to disobey

Are there exceptions? You should disobey a governmental directive:

- If your government instructs you to murder someone (Exodus 1:15-21).
- If your government instructs you to engage in false worship (Daniel 3).
- If your government instructs you not to pray (Daniel 6).
- If your government instructs you to stop sharing the gospel (Acts 4:17-20; 5:27-29; 5:40-42).
- If a governmental leader instructs you to do something contrary to what God has already instructed in His Word, you not only have permission, but you have an obligation to disobey.
- Unless we have biblically-derived reasons for doing something contrary to what the government has ordered, we should seek to faithfully carry out whatever has been directed, even when doing so makes us uncomfortable or appears unreasonable.

The greatest spiritual problem in America today is NOT government mandate but apathetic followers of Jesus

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. Hebrews 10:23-25

This week...

Devoted to Prayer

1 Timothy 2

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Who?

Paul makes no distinction between those rulers that are just and those that are not. He sees it as a Christian duty to pray for those whose actions affect every citizen. – New Bible Commentary

Why?

“so that we [followers of Jesus] may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” – New Bible Commentary

This [prayer for leaders] is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:3-4

Paul urged prayer for leaders while Christians suffered for their faith

With Nero's growing resentment toward Christians—which came to full bloom after the fire in Rome in July, 64 AD—and the general disintegration of the Roman Empire due to Nero's profligacy, Christians began to suffer persecution from the Roman authorities. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all [see Mark 10:45], the testimony given at the proper time [see Galatians 4:4]. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. 1 Timothy 2:5-7

Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Ehad

"Hear, O Israel: the LORD is our God, the LORD is One."

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

Therefore I want the men in every place to pray,
lifting up holy hands, without wrath and
dissension [διαλογισμός *dialogismos*... questioning about what is true].

1 Timothy 2:8

1. Lifting up of holy hands suggests a believing approach, true holiness being attainable only through the righteousness of Christ.
2. True prayer cannot exist side by side with anger (wrath).
3. Prayer and disputing do not go together. Our attitude to others does affect our approach to God.

Jeremiah 29

Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. (This was after King Jeconiah and the queen mother [Nehushta], the court officials, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem.) Jeremiah 29:1-2

*King Jeconiah יְכֹנָיָהּ also known as Jehoiachin יְהוֹיָכִין

*Notice that a sophisticated mail system existed 2,600 years ago

How did the exile happen?

In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim [father of Jeconiah/Jehoiachin] king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the vessels of the house of God; and he brought them to the land of Shinar [modern day Iraq], to the house of his god, and he brought the vessels into the treasury of his god. Daniel 1:1-2

HISTORY LESSON

Jeconiah reigned three months and ten days, beginning December 9, 598 BC. He succeeded Jehoiakim as king of Judah after raiders invaded Jerusalem and killed his father. The king of Babylon was behind this effort, as a response to Jehoiakim's revolt, starting sometime after 601 BC. Three months and ten days after Jeconiah became king, the armies of Nebuchadnezzar II seized Jerusalem. The intention was to take high class captives and assimilate them into Babylonian society. On March 15/16, 597 BC, Jeconiah, his entire household and 3,000 Jews were exiled to Babylon.

After Jeconiah was deposed as king, Jeconiah's uncle, Zedekiah, was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar to rule Judah. Zedekiah was the son of Josiah. Jeconiah would later be regarded as the first of the exilarchs. Ezekiel refers to Jeconiah as king and dates certain events by the years he was in exile.

According to 2 Kings 25:27–30, Jeconiah was released from prison "in the 37th year of the exile", in the year that Amel-Marduk came to the throne, and given a prestigious position at court. Jeconiah's release in Babylon brings to a close the Books of Kings. Babylonian records show that Amel-Marduk began his reign in October 562 BC. According to 2 Kings 25:27, Jeconiah was released from prison "on the 27th day of the twelfth month": this indicates the first year of captivity to be 598/597 BC.

Kings of Israel (North)

Kings of Judah (South)

Jeroboam I: Led secession of Israel

Rehoboam: Son of Solomon; first king

Nadab: Son of Jeroboam I

Abijah (Abijam; Abia): Son of Rehoboam

Baasha: Overthrew Nadab

Asa: Probably son of Abijah

Elah: Son of Baasha

Jehoshaphat: Son of Asa

Zimri: Overthrew Elah

Jehoram (Joram): Son of Jehoshaphat; husband of Athaliah

Omri: Overthrew Zimri

Ahaziah: Son of Jehoram and Athaliah

Ahab: Son of Omri; husband of Jezebel

Athaliah: Daughter of King Ahab of Israel and Jezebel; wife of Jehoram; only queen to rule over Judah

Ahaziah: Son of Ahab

Joash (Jehoash): Son of Ahaziah

Jehoram (Joram): Son of Ahab

Amaziah: Son of Joash

Jehu: Overthrew Jehoram

Uzziah (Azariah): Son of Amaziah

Jehoahaz (Joahaz): Son of Jehu

Jotham: Regent, later King; son of Uzziah

Jehoash (Joash): Son of Jehoahaz

Ahaz: Son of Jotham

Jeroboam II: Son of Jehoash

Hezekiah: Son of Ahaz; husband of Hephzi-Bah

Zechariah: Son of Jeroboam II

Manasseh: Son of Hezekiah and Hephzi-Bah

Shallum: Overthrew Zechariah

Amon: Son of Manasseh

Menahem: Overthrew Shallum

Josiah (Josias): Son of Amon

Pekahiah: Son of Menahem

Jehoahaz (Joahaz): Son of Josiah

Pekah: Overthrew Pekahiah

Jehoiakim: Son of Josiah

Hoshea: Overthrew Pekah; kingdom overthrown by Assyrians under Sargon II

Jehoiachin: Son of Jehoiakim



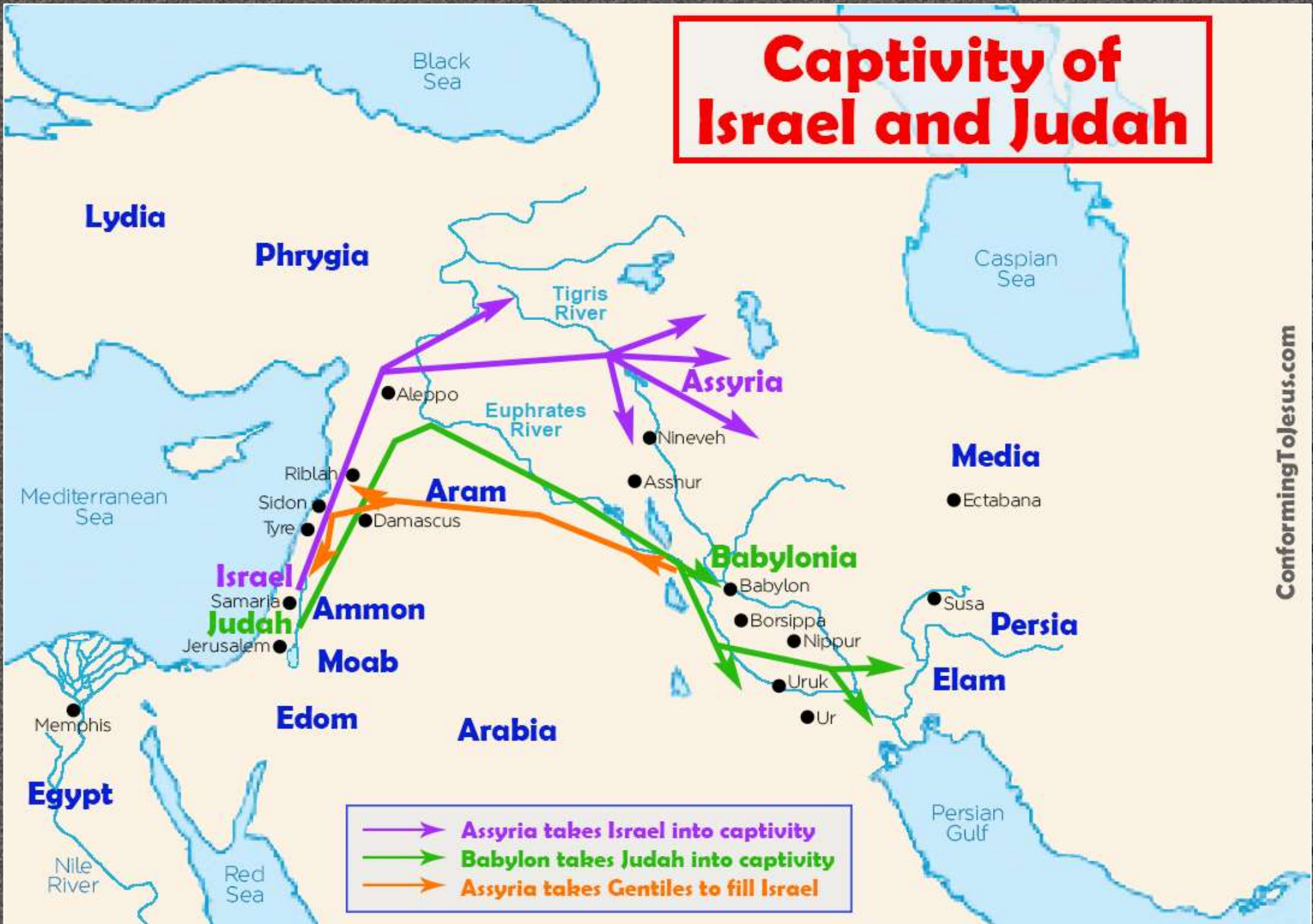
Zedekiah: Son of Josiah; kingdom overthrown by Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar

Good

Bad

Mixture of good & bad

Captivity of Israel and Judah





The Flight of the Prisoners

by
James
Tissot

HISTORY LESSON

Prophet Jeremiah cursed King Jeconiah that none of his descendants would ever sit on the throne of Israel: “Thus says the Lord, ‘Write this man down childless, a man who will not prosper in his days; for no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.’ ” Jeremiah 22:30

Jeconiah was the son of Jehoiakim and Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. He had seven children: Shealtiel, Malkiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama and Nedabiah. (see 1 Chronicles 3:17–18). Jeconiah is mentioned in 1 Chronicles as the father of Pedaiah, who in turn was the father of Zerubbabel. A list of his descendants is given in 1 Chronicles 3:17–24. In listing the genealogy of Jesus Christ, Matthew 1:11 records Jeconiah as an ancestor of Joseph, the husband of Mary.

The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent to Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, saying...

Jeremiah 29:3

Who were the recipients? (see Jeremiah 29:1)

Jeremiah the prophet sent a letter from Jerusalem to “the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon” (i.e. God-fearing people facing a national crisis)

What did God tell His people when they were living in a godless land that they did not recognize?

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon, ‘Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce.’” Jeremiah 29:4-5

*The people of God are where they are because of God’s divine will.

*Instead of hoping for Babylon’s quick demise they were encouraged to seek its peace and prosperity. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

Don't Stop Living

“Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.’ For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams which they dream. For they prophesy falsely to you in My name; I have not sent them,’ declares the Lord.” Jeremiah 29:6-9

DON'T GIVE UP

“For thus says the Lord, ‘When seventy years have been completed for Babylon [see Jeremiah 25:11], I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place [Jerusalem].’” Jeremiah 29:10

*Our sovereign God sees and knows the future even when we don't

*Lots of spiritual growth can happen during exile

“ ‘ For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare [שְׁלוֹם shalom] and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope [תִּקְוָה tikvah].’” Jeremiah 29:11

Q: Did the Lord give this promise to the winners/
victors/champions/powerful?

A: This promise was given to the exiles/
defeated/downtrodden/persecuted.

“ ‘ For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’” Jeremiah 29:11

Q: When do you need to know that God has a plan?

A: When the world seems chaotic and uncertain.

Q: When do you need to know that God will provide for you?

A: When the world faces an economic crisis.

Q: When do you need to know that God knows the future?

A: When the world can't even properly predict tomorrow.

Q: When do you need hope?

A: When the world seems hopeless.

“ ‘ Then [when you are in exile and feel lost and hopeless] you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’” Jeremiah 29:12-14

What is happening in America today?

**Bad Policies which are not
yet, but can lead to,
Religious Persecution**

Are God's people now in exile in America?

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Amy Coney Barrett was trustee at private school with anti-LGBTQ policies

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Are God's people now in exile in America?

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NYC synagogues, churches file with Supreme Court to lift limit on worship

In October, Gov. Cuomo said that large gatherings of ultra-Orthodox Jews have been responsible for outbreaks in parts of the state, and then threatened to shut down religious institutions.

By JERUSALEM POST STAFF | NOVEMBER 22, 2020 12:24



Are God's people now in exile in America?



Beto O'Rourke on religious institutions losing tax-exempt status for opposing same-sex marriage: "There can be no reward, no benefit, no tax break for anyone ... that denies the full human rights and the full civil rights of every single one of us" #EqualityTownHall



9:35 PM · Oct 10, 2019



The Dallas Morning News

NEWS > POLITICS

Cabinet watch: Which Texans might end up working in Joe Biden's administration?

This article has comments enabled.

Top Texas Democrats remain hopeful that some of their own will get prime positions in President-elect Joe Biden's White House or Cabinet

Human Rights Campaign Demands for New Administration

The Human Rights Campaign has recently issued a document directed at the incoming administration entitled *Blueprint for Positive Change 2020*. The *Blueprint* demands that President-elect Biden adopt a legislative agenda and enact specific executive orders that are in line with the LGBTQ movement—a movement that Biden pledged to champion.

In the Department of State, the *Blueprint* urges the department to, “include a non-binary gender marker and modernize existing requirements for updating gender markers on United States’ passports.”

The *Blueprint* states, “Language regarding accreditation of religious institutions of higher education in the Higher Education Opportunity Act could be interpreted to require accrediting bodies to accredit religious institutions that discriminate or do not meet science-based curricula standards. The Department of Education should issue a regulation clarifying that this provision, which requires accreditation agencies to ‘respect the stated mission’ of religious institutions, does not require the accreditation of religious institutions that do not meet neutral accreditation standards including nondiscrimination policies and scientific curriculum requirements.”

Are God's people now in exile in America?

THE WEEK

The coming end of Christian America



Bonnie Kristian

October 20, 2019

America is still a "Christian nation," if the term simply means a majority of the population will claim the label when a pollster calls. But, as a new [Pew Research report](#) unsparingly explains, the decline of Christianity in the United States "continues at a rapid pace." A bare 65 percent of Americans now say they're Christians, down from 78 percent as recently as 2007. The deconverted are mostly moving away from religion altogether, and the ranks of the religiously unaffiliated — the "nones" — have swelled from 16 to 26 percent over the same period. If this rate of change continues, the U.S. will be majority non-Christian by about 2035, with the nones representing well over one third of the population.

How do God's people respond when they are in exile?

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah [chapters 25 and 29] the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. Daniel 9:1-3

How do God's people respond when they are in exile?

“And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked. O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us.” Daniel 9:15-16

How do God's people respond when they are in exile?

“So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” Daniel 9:17-19

**If we are in spiritual
exile today, what
scriptures should we
pray for America?**

What scriptures should we pray for America?

- “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Matthew 6:9-10
- “For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” Isaiah 60:2-3
- Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance. Psalm 33:12
- Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people. Proverbs 14:34
- The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. Proverbs 9:10
- Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

What scriptures should we pray for America?

- Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32
- Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4
- Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Corinthians 1:10
- “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” Daniel 9:19
- “and [if] My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

Nations Need Leaders

Leaders Are People

People Need God

Leaders Need God

Let's Pray!

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