

Resist? Participate? Or Repent?

A TearingDownIdols.com Article



Christians cling to a variety of solutions in response to the antichrist kingdoms of the world, but which is the Biblical – and thus, effective – approach?

But as for you, do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers or your sorcerers who speak to you, saying, ‘You will not serve the king of Babylon.’ For they prophesy a lie to you in order to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out and you will perish. But the nation which will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let remain on its land,” declares the LORD, “and they will till it and dwell in it.” — Jeremiah 27:9-11 (NASB)

The prophet Jeremiah was in a tight spot. Not only was Babylon about to come down on the city of Jerusalem and besiege it, but God was telling him Babylon would capture the city and carry away all its inhabitants into captivity. Further, he had to tell his fellow Judahites to submit to the captivity until God brought the prophesied 70 years to an end – although his compatriots accused him of being a Babylonian agent.

He butted heads with Hananiah, the false prophet, and got himself thrown into a septic tank. He wasn’t exactly preaching a popular message.

Integral to this message was why Judah was going into captivity:

And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, saying, “Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever; and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the

work of your hands, and I will do you no harm. Yet you have not listened to Me,” declares the LORD, “in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.”

Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, “Because you have not obeyed My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,” declares the LORD, “and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them and make them a horror and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.” — Jeremiah 25:4-9 (NASB)

Babylonian captivity was God’s punishment for Judah’s sin against Him, most specifically, idolatry.

And until the 70 years were up, Judah was expected to take their captivity without complaint. They were not to fight it. They were not to try to escape it. It was God’s decree against them.

In much the same way that a father expects his child to take his punishment, God expected Judah to do the same. Those who submitted would live. Those who resisted would die. Just as, in the case of the father and child, the child’s punishment will only intensify if he tries to fight his father.

In Jeremiah 29 the prophet writes a letter to the captives, urging them to build houses, plant gardens, and marry and give in marriage during their captivity, as well as to seek the welfare of Babylon while they were there – in other words,

to be peaceful model citizens with a hope for the future. Because, he goes on to say, the seventy years of captivity will end, and the people will be allowed to return to their land.

It is important to take note of the points here:

1. Judah was intended to accept their Babylonian captivity as divine decree.
2. Judah was supposed to be model citizens while in Babylon.
3. Judah was to hold to the promise of return out of captivity, in God's own time.

In the course of my interaction with various Christians who understand that we are in a Babylonish environment, I've encountered two groups of people. On the one hand, the Hananiahs who would urge me to fight Babylonian captivity with everything I have, and on the other, those who would have me participate in all thing Babylonian – when in Babylon, do as the Babylonians do.

The first group – the resisters – remind me of Hananiah, Zedekiah, et al. They're the ones who insist it's our Christian duty to fight Babylon in every possible arena. They're the ones who take the IRS to court, who get rid of their social security numbers, who shun drivers licenses, etc. And just like the Hananiahs and Zedekiahs, life has not turned out well for any of them. They've landed in prison and accomplished nothing thereby. Their families have suffered. They live in constant fear, looking over their shoulders, and in misery, unable to live in comfort. Some have lost everything. Many have endured divorce and estrangement from their children. And for what? Babylon ticks on without a hitch, while these folks, who like to see themselves as martyrs for some noble cause, end up being the definition of a dumpster fire.

The second group – the participators – enthusiastically dive headlong into the political nonsense and cling to their Constitutions and presidential candidates. These are the ones who tell me I'm misleading people by telling them not to get caught up in the voting sham. They're the

ones who say we should support the Trumps and Boeberts and Kavanaughs, and accuse folks like me of “fighting Babylon”, because after all, they say, God uses kings for His purpose. They hail the Donald as a liberating “Cyrus”, despite the fact that there is zero evidence of him filling that role.

These two extremes – the resisters and the participators – both lean heavily on the arm of man to save. In the case of the resisters, their own devices and machinations in their personal battles against the “establishment”, and in the case of the participators, the scumbags and liars in political office.

Both mentalities are humanistic.

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego found themselves in captivity, they served to the best of their ability. But when Nebuchadnezzar demanded that they bow to the image of gold or die (**Daniel 3**), they stood tall. They understood that idolatry was the sin that got them into trouble in the first place, and they would not continue that sin. They would not bow, no matter how the king threatened and cajoled.

Likewise, Daniel, in the same captivity, served Nebuchadnezzar well. He interpreted his dreams and, when appointed to various positions within the kingdom, served with loyalty and integrity. When the kingdom changed hands to the Medes and Persians, he served just as faithfully under Darius. But when the decree went out that none were to pray to any other than the king himself, Daniel continued praying to the One True God, and remained staunch and unapologetic when facing the lions' den.

In both examples, none were able to bring a negative report about these Hebrew men to the Babylonian authorities. None could bring an accusation of rebellion or insurrection. Why? Because Daniel and his friends understood that, not only could nothing they did end the captivity before God's time, but to rebel against their captors would be to rebel against God Himself. No doubt they had all heard the admonitions delivered through Jeremiah, and took them to heart.

However, the moment they were required to engage in an activity – and one could even call it a political activity – that required them to commit

idolatry, they refused. That was one line they could not and would not cross.

Today, in Western society, we find ourselves under Babylonian bonds. We labor under its banking system, taxes, and industrial environment. We find ourselves tagged at birth for servitude under it through its social security system, and from cradle to grave find the fruit of our labors taken from us in one form or another, whether through taxation, fees, or inflation.

Certainly a bad situation. But if we understand why we ended up in this condition, it makes sense.

God has a habit of giving His rebellious people exactly what they demand – and then turning it into the instrument of their punishment. The quail in **Numbers 11**, for example, and the human king in **I Samuel 8**.

Over the course of the past two or three centuries, we have demanded rule “of, by, and for the people” in various forms, and we’ve gotten them. And look at where we are today. As the philosopher Aristotle once observed, “Republics decline into democracies and democracies degenerate into despotisms.” That is exactly what has happened to us, though for some reason few among us have figured that out. The “boiled frog” principle must be in play in this case. Either way, we got our humanistic “rule by the will of the people”, and now we groan under a burden of tyranny.

So what is the solution to this dilemma?

Daniel and his friends understood the words of Jeremiah. They understood that the sin of idolatry had gotten them into the Babylonian mess. They also understood that resisting Babylon was futile, and that their captivity would end when God said it would end.

Thus, it only made sense that, if they wanted to see the day when Judah was set free, they must not participate in the sin that placed Judah in captivity in the first place, no matter what.

And so when the band played, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego refused to bow.

When the decree went forth that none should pray to any other than Darius, Daniel flung open his window and prayed facing Jerusalem.

They were good, loyal, faithful citizens, but they would not betray their God. They would not continue the sin that had landed them in Babylon in the first place.

Not even the threat of horrible death would dissuade them.

Today, the form of idolatry that has placed us in our current dilemma is humanism. The idea that man can rule himself through his own will, that public opinion is the ultimate source of authority and power, that man can choose his own rulers and guide his own footsteps – this is the idolatry that has placed us where we are today.

I agree with the resisters that the taxes, social security numbers, and myriad licenses and fees are tyrannical and oppressive. I agree with the participators that the people currently in government are not looking out for our best interests. But the only way to get out from under that burden is to recognize what got us here in the first place – *our reliance on self*.

Reliance on our own savvy in the courtroom and wriggling out from under taxes and social security numbers will not deliver us.

Reliance on our blasphemous votes and our favorite political pundits will not deliver us.

They only perpetuate the problem.

To refuse to participate in America’s idolatrous practices is, in fact, much easier than it was in Babylon, thank God. We aren’t facing lions’ dens or flaming furnaces as a consequence for our stance. At least, not yet.

So the only thing stopping us today is *our own stubborn will*.

We can and should still refuse to participate in humanist practices, or else continue laboring under a curse.

Jeremiah 17 lays out the sin of Judah “with an iron stylus”, and describes it as idolatry. In the midst of this description, it says (verse 5),

***Thus says the LORD,
“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind
And makes flesh his strength,
And whose heart turns away from the LORD.
For he will be like a bush in the desert
And will not see when prosperity comes,
But will live in stony wastes in the wilderness,***

A land of salt without inhabitant.”
— **Jeremiah 17:5-6 (NASB)**

This, folks, is a description of humanist thought, and its consequences.

***“Has a nation changed gods
When they were not gods?
But My people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.
Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate,” declares the LORD.
“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns
That can hold no water.”***
— **Jeremiah 2:11-13 (NASB)**

How can a Christian rationally insist that continuing to hew broken cisterns will somehow deliver us from our plight? And yet the resistor hews cisterns of broken homes and paranoia, and the participator hews cisterns of treacherous politicians and failed promises every single election cycle.

God will deliver us, but only when we recognize our sin of idolatrous humanism and abandon it. Until then, we perpetuate our captivity.

Why should God ease or remove our burden when we haven't had the wherewithal to acknowledge and repent of what placed us under it in the first place?

“As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.” – **Daniel 9:13 (NASB)**

The window of opportunity for us to repent of our rebellion is not going to be open forever. It never stays open forever. If that window closes while we're still trying to liberate ourselves by our own means, even after all the things we've endured and the warnings we've heard, we'll go down with our idols.

***A man who hardens his neck after much reproof
Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.***
— **Proverbs 29:1 (NASB)**

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