

GRACIOUS RESISTANCE

“Pursuit of the Kingdom”

Bottom Line - Living life with God positions us to be for the world

Main Scripture - Daniel 5

TENSIONS

If it is true that we are living in Babylon (a kingdom that is contrary to life with God), then how do we live life with God as exiles?

Daniel suffered, foregoing pleasure and desirable food, in order to honor God.

Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar filled themselves with the blessings of the world (power, influence, wealth, food).

We tend to live more like Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and less like Daniel.

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

- Nebuchadnezzar’s kingdom has come to an end and his grandson, Belshazzar, has taken over.
- Belshazzar throws a party, defiling the vessels of the temple from Jerusalem.
- A hand appears writing a message on the wall of the palace and Belshazzar is afraid.
- Daniel is remembered for his wisdom and spirit and retrieved to interpret the message and does so.
- He is offered money and power but they are not enticing to him.

Daniel 5:7b-8

...“Whoever can read this writing and tell me its interpretation shall be clothed in purple, have a chain of gold around his neck, and rank third in the kingdom.” Then all the king’s wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king the interpretation.

Daniel 5:11-12

There is a man in your kingdom who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods.[a] In the days of your father he was found to have enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and diviners,[b] 12 because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Beltshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will reveal the interpretation.”

Because Daniel did life with God, he had wisdom that others did not have.

Because Daniel did life with God, he was positioned to help the world.

Because Daniel did life with God, the blessings of Babylon were not enticing.

Daniel 5:17

17 Then Daniel answered the king, “You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means.

Daniel 5:22-23

22 "But you, Belshazzar, his son, [d] have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. 23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

Like Belshazzar, we often use the things of God to pursue the blessings of the world.

The Gospel does not promise us ease of life. Instead we are invited to suffer.

WRITING ON THE WALL

Mene - The kingdoms of the world are finite

Tekel - The kingdoms of the world never measure up

Peres - The kingdoms of the world bring division

When we taste and see the Kingdom of God, the things of Babylon are no longer enticing.

When we accept that we are living as exiles, we do not live as victims.

We resist Babylon graciously and benefit those around us.

We use the gifts God gives us to further the Kingdom of God.