

Deconstructing Babel Joseph Herrin (09-19-08)



Genesis 11:4

And they said, "*Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.*"

Revelation 18:4-5

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "*Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.*"

When Judah and Jerusalem were taken captive to Babylon, many of the false teachings and world principles of this corrupt empire entered into the minds of God's people. In the opening chapter of the book of Daniel we read of the cream of Jewish society being brought into service to the world ruler. They were immediately placed in an indoctrination program to take away their distinctiveness as Yahweh's people (a distinctiveness that had already diminished severely for most, resulting in the judgment of captivity). The youths were taught Babylonian customs, instructed in all the learning of Babylon, and fed a Babylonian diet.

We read of only four youths among this multitude that resisted this

indoctrination process. These were Daniel, and his three friends Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael. These four refused to defile themselves with the king's meats. They understood that they were a covenant people belonging to Yahweh, and they had to please Yahweh even at the jeopardy of their own lives.

Daniel 1:3-8

And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

We see that this indoctrination process into the world system of Babylon even included giving these young men new names, altering their identity. Daniel is a Hebrew name meaning "judge of God." According to Barnes' Notes, Belteshazzar means "Bel's Prince," Bel being a form of the name of the pagan god Baal.

The name Belteshazzar is compounded of two words, and means according to Gesenius, "Bel's prince;" that is, he whom Bel favors. "Bel" was the principal divinity worshiped at Babylon, and this name would, therefore, be likely to impress the youthful Daniel with the idea that he was a favorite of this divinity, and to attract him to his service. It was a flattering distinction that he was one of the favorites of the principal god worshiped in Babylon, and this was not improbably designed to turn his attention from the God whose name had been incorporated in his own.

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Note the subtlety and cunning of Satan, and the world leaders he works

through. Daniel experienced all the seduction of a fallen world system to get him to abandon his distinctiveness as Yahweh's own possession, and to embrace a worldly identity. Flattery and the promise of worldly success were the tools employed, and these tools worked effectively upon most of God's people. Daniel was distinguished among all his kinsmen as possessing a different spirit. He would not be corrupted by the king's meat. He would remain a stranger in a strange land, choosing identification with Yahweh over identification with a corrupt empire that exuded a worldly glory.

The king's meat stands as a parable to Christians today. Doctrines are compared to meat in the New Testament, and in type Daniel and his three friends represent those in the church who will not defile themselves with the false, cunning, and alluring doctrines of this world system. Yet, it is as true today as it was then, only a remnant of God's people will shun the corrupting influence of the kingdom of darkness. Only a small number will refuse to feed upon doctrines of demons. Only a remnant will choose not to immerse themselves completely and comfortably in the systems of the world. Only a remnant will guard closely their identity as the people of Yahweh, and ever keep in mind that they are strangers in a strange land.

God honored Daniel and his three friends for maintaining their set-apart identity as Yahweh's possession. He gave them favor and wisdom greatly exceeding all of their compromising contemporaries.

Daniel 1:17-20

And as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom; Daniel even understood all kinds of visions and dreams. Then at the end of the days which the king had specified for presenting them, the commander of the officials presented them before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king talked with them, and out of them all not one was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's personal service. And as for every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm.

In this series of writings I want to address some of the King of Babylon's meat that the people of God have been feeding upon. Few Christians understand how thoroughly the church has become immersed in this present evil world system. The thoughts presented here will certainly appear radical and strange, perhaps heretical, to some, but this is to be expected of a people who have

been dining for generations at the table of demons. The elect of God have food to eat that others do not have access unto, and this is part of their distinctiveness in the world. Their beliefs and doctrines are wholly different from that of the world and a worldly church.

I Corinthians 10:21

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

Hebrews 13:10

We have an altar, from which those who serve the tabernacle (fleshly body) have no right to eat.

I will begin by speaking of the matter of our identity as citizens of a heavenly kingdom and as the bond-servants of a heavenly King. I will speak of the disciple of Christ living as a stranger and alien in this world, and the error of getting caught up in the world's systems.

In recent blog postings I have spoken repeatedly about affairs of nations, and world politics and politicians. My intent has been to lead the people of God to understand the folly of embracing the fallen systems of this world, or engaging in carnal means of transforming society or nations. In these writings I have not once suggested that Christians should protest, vote, organize boycotts, write to their congressmen, refuse to pay taxes, or any other similar activity. My aim is always to get Christians to examine the common interpretation of things that they might separate themselves from involvement in the affairs of a fallen world and devote themselves to a pursuit of the kingdom of God.

The political systems of the world are a part of this dark world system. The kingdom of God stands altogether separate, and so too should those who are citizens in the heavenly kingdom. From ancient times those who were the people of God considered themselves as a people in exile, sojourners in a land that was not their own.

Hebrews 11:13

These people all died controlled and sustained by their faith, but not having received the tangible fulfillment of [God's] promises, only having seen it and greeted it from a great distance by faith, and *all the while acknowledging and confessing that they were strangers and temporary residents and exiles upon the earth.*

[Amplified Bible]

People of God, you are citizens of a heavenly kingdom. If your identity is bound up in some terrestrial nationalism, then you have not come to understand who you truly are in Christ. Christ is not an American, or British, or Canadian, or Russian, or Chinese. Christ is not even Hebrew. He is the Son of God, and His kingdom is a heavenly kingdom. If you are “in Christ” then you have been translated out of the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of this world, into the kingdom of God’s Son.

Colossians 1:13

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son...

Yahshua explicitly declared that His kingdom is not of this world.

John 18:36-37

Yahshua answered, "*My kingdom is not of this world.* If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, *My kingdom is not of this realm.*"

As I have recently written articles about Sarah Palin, and other national figures, I have been met with numerous protests from believers who have falsely understood that it is their duty to participate in the political systems of this fallen world system. Many believe the Dominion Theology false doctrine that Christians are to transform the world into God’s kingdom through involvement in the “seven mountains of culture.” They have embraced the idea that they must work to establish a Christian nation, or Christian world order, not understanding that they are aliens and strangers here.

The language the apostle Paul uses in declaring these things is very descriptive. It is as if a person were born in England, and all their life their identity was that of being an English citizen. Suddenly, God takes hold of them. He delivers them from their citizenship in England, and translates them to another realm altogether. What happens exceeds even being transferred to a foreign country, such as China. They have been translated right out of the entire realm of earthly dominion, and have become citizens of a heavenly kingdom. This is why Paul says in Hebrews that a Christian is a “stranger” and an “exile” upon the earth. Let us look at these words.

Hebrews 11:13-14

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were *strangers* and *exiles* on the earth.

[New American Standard Version]

The word rendered as “*strangers*” is the Greek word *xenos*. Vine’s Dictionary defines it this way:

“Strange”; denotes a “*stranger, foreigner.*”

The word for “*exiles*,” which the KJV renders as “*pilgrims*,” is *parepidemos* in the Greek. Strong’s Concordance gives us the following definition:

parepidemos (par-ep-id'-ay-mos); from NT:3844 and the base of NT:1927; an alien alongside, i.e. a resident foreigner:

Thayer’s Greek Lexicon says the following about this word.

One who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives; hence, stranger; sojourning in a strange place, a foreigner.

This present world system has sought to entice the people of God into its embrace. It has been very successful in doing so. Rare is the Christian who does not identify himself as a citizen of this world. Rare indeed is the believer who consciously understands that they dwell here as a resident foreigner, a man or woman without earthly nation, or city, or people, or race. Like Abraham dwelling among the inhabitants of Canaan, we are to understand that this world is not our home. We have a heavenly city to which we look to one day return.

Hebrews 11:13-16

All these (champions of faith) died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, *they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to*

be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Let me use a modern analogy to shed some light. Suppose a Russian citizen came to America on a visit, having no ties to America, no work permit, no educational visa, not speaking English, and was in all ways a Russian citizen. It would be preposterous for this Russian citizen to say “I am an American” just because he was standing on American soil. He is not a citizen of America. He is a foreign visitor. He is nothing more than a resident alien.

If this is true of a citizen from another nation on earth, then how much more is it true of those who have been made citizens of a heavenly kingdom? If you are a Christian in America, then your identity is no longer that of an American. You are no longer even a citizen of the world. You belong to another realm entirely. When you became a Christian you were translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. You are a citizen of the kingdom of God. You are an alien and a stranger in America. America is not your home, you are merely sojourning; you are passing through.

Now as you pass through, like any good alien or visitor to a foreign nation, you should obey the government and laws of the land. Yet you must always remember that you are merely in temporary residence there. This is not your home, nor your identity. You are a child of God, a citizen of heaven, and Yahweh is your Sovereign. Too many Christians are under the deception that they are still citizens of this earthly realm. They are involving themselves in the political processes of nations. They are engaged in the support, or overthrow of regimes. They are rooting for a particular candidate that they believe will best represent their beliefs and morals.

People, you are an alien and stranger here. What have you to do with the affairs of this world?

II Timothy 2:4-5

No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

Yahshua answered, “*My kingdom is not of this world.*”

If Christ’s kingdom were of this world He would instruct all of His children to fight to gain control of the kingdoms of the world. He would tell all His disciples to vote, to run for office, to protest, to lobby, to insert themselves into

the fabric of national politics and to seek to bring it all under His dominion. But this earth is not His kingdom. America is not His kingdom. He said "*My kingdom is not of this world.*"

As Christians, God has left us here upon this earth to reside by the side of the natives of this place, but we are no longer native to this place. We are sojourning in a strange place. When we view what is transpiring in this world we should have the perspective of strangers. When we observe national and world events we should always understand that we are sitting in the bleachers of the visiting team. We do not have home field advantage here, for this is not our home.

Matthew 10:16

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves."

Christ's kingdom is inhabited by sheep. They are meek and humble creatures that are gentle and who follow their Shepherd. The world is inhabited by wolves with ravenous appetites. The Spirit within a Christian is as contrary to the spirit of those in the world as light is to darkness.

II Corinthians 6:14-17

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. *Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,*" says the Lord.

How can a Christian in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ make themselves a political candidate in a fallen world system dominated by Satan and yoke themselves to a running mate who is filled with darkness? Do they not understand that they are running with wolves? Do they not perceive the darkness of the kingdoms of this world and the contradiction of being yoked together with unbelievers?

In various writings I have revealed the Babylonian spirit of America. America is a land of idols, as was Babylon. America is a great merchant empire, as was

Babylon. America is ruthless in her treatment of enemy nations, as was Babylon. America has many of the people of God dwelling in her midst, as did Babylon. America is the seat of the United Nations, which stands as a figure of Babel united again after God confused the languages and separated the peoples of the earth. America even occupies and controls Iraq, the location of the ancient empire of Babylon.

As Christians, we are citizens of Zion, which stands in strict contrast to Babylon. Zion is the city of Yahweh as Babylon is the city of Satan. These cities are so foreign to one another in spirit and work and appearance that “strange” seems hardly to convey the distinctions among them. The citizen of Babylon has no place in Zion. They are alien to it. Even so, the citizen of Zion has no place in Babylon. Consider the words of the apostle Paul:

I Corinthians 5:12-13

For what have I to do with judging *outsiders*? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But *those who are outside*, God judges.

Paul understood that there are two kinds of people upon this earth. There are the people of God who are here in temporary residence, and there are all others. There are insiders and outsiders. Paul said it was not his place to judge outsiders, yet is this not what political rulers of this world system do? What have you or I to do with judging the kingdoms of this world? We are called to judge those inside the church. “*Those who are outside God will judge.*”

Understanding this overturns the argument of those who say that the world will suffer terribly if Christians do not take their place in this world government. Did you hear Paul’s words? “*Those who are outside God will judge.*” Do you think God is incapable of judging wicked men? The history of the Old Testament reveals that God judges the nations. Read the major and minor prophets as they speak forth God’s judgments upon Egypt, Edom, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and a host of other nations. If you will examine these Scriptures you will find that God did indeed do all that He said He would, and He did not need the assistance of His chosen people to accomplish the judgments.

Do you really believe God’s arm is now shortened where He cannot hold the nations in check today without the help of Christian political activism? Indeed, He is well able. “*Those who are outside God will judge.*”

I have heard all the arguments based upon human logic. The phrase is often quoted, "*All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing*" (Edmund Burke). Believe it or not, this quotation is not found in the Bible. Yet it has probably been preached from more church pulpits than a great many of the sayings of Christ. It certainly ranks ahead of "*My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, My disciples would fight.*"

People of God, I am not advocating that good men do nothing. I am saying Christians belong to another kingdom and their duty is to proclaim that kingdom. If they are involved in battles over the control of the world's kingdoms, then they have strayed from their calling.

Luke 9:1-2

And [Yahshua] called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. *And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God...*

Luke 9:60-61

But [Yahshua] said to him, "*Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.*"

Do you understand these words? The spiritually dead of this world can tend to the affairs of the spiritually dead. Christ's disciples are to proclaim another kingdom. When we come to Christ we are to leave all behind even as Lot left Sodom and was commanded to not look back.

Luke 9:61-62

And another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." But Yahshua said to him, "*No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*"

Over and over we read that there is a separation from this world system when one becomes a Christian. From the moment of their calling as a disciple of Christ, they must leave all behind and follow Christ wherever He goes. The believer is not to remain as they were, seeking to maintain their place in the world, adding Christianity to their lives as if it were some appendage, or sideline. They must see themselves as no longer a citizen of the earth, a member of earthly affiliations. They have been translated to a new realm and

given a new citizenship.

Do you believe that the fate of the kingdom of heaven is bound up in whether America elects a Christian to the Vice Presidency? I tell you it does not matter at all. God's kingdom will come no matter what the kingdoms of this world do. An hour will arrive when every knee will bow before Christ, and every tongue will confess Him as Lord to the glory of God the Father. And in no way will this event be influenced by who Americans elect to their governmental positions. The kingdom of this world becoming the kingdom of our Lord and Christ will not be quickened in its coming, nor slowed in its pace, through the political workings of man. Its establishment is fixed, and it will arrive at the appearing of the Son of God. It will happen when the angel blows the seventh trump of God.

Revelation 11:15-18

And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.*" And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign."

This world system is dark, deceptive, cunning, and corrupt. It will not be reformed. But the citizens of this dark kingdom can be translated out of it into the kingdom of light as the good news of Christ is proclaimed. Let us be about proclaiming the kingdom of God, for it is at hand. It will not be voted in. It will arrive with omnipotent power at the appearing of Christ.

May God grant all His children understanding of their status as aliens and strangers in this world. May He also make known to them their heavenly citizenship.