

Advancing the Kingdom in Perilous Times II

Over the past two plus years we have seen crisis and perilous times. Some people have gained ground, some have lost ground, and some have seized ground. One thing about a crisis is you never come out the same. In crisis you may come out better, you may come out worse, but you never come out the same. No matter what conditions arise in life followers of Jesus are called to find the opportunity to advance the kingdom of God.

To advance means to accelerate the growth or progress of something or someone, such as to advance a cause.

To advance means to bring or move forward, such as to advance a pawn in chess.

To advance means to raise to a higher rank, such as advancing from clerk to assistant manager.

Consider **Daniel** as an excellent example of a man who *advanced in perilous times*.

I

Daniel lived in the days of a divided kingdom.

A divided kingdom cannot stand.

Ten tribes were in the north, Israel. Two tribes were in the south, Judah.

KJV Mark 3:24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, **that kingdom cannot stand.**²⁵ And if a house be divided against itself,

that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, **he cannot stand**, but hath an end.

Daniel was carried away into captivity when he was 13-16 years old.

These days of captivity were perilous times.

Babylon is present day Iraq.

II

Jerusalem was destroyed 586bc.

These were perilous times.

Daniel wrote during the rule of Darius 520bc.

Zerubbael, Zacariah, Haggai 536bc rebuilds the temple.

Ezra 458bc restores the law.

Nehemiah 444bc rebuilds the wall, gates, and restores the city of Jerusalem.

Why were these times so perilous?

NRSV Daniel 1:3 Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, ⁴ young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

The goal was to totally Babylonianize these young people:
New Babylonian appearance
New Babylonian name
New Babylonian clothes
New Babylonian language: Nehemiah 13:24
New Babylonian literature
New Babylonian thought
New Babylonian theology
New Babylonian jobs
New Babylonian equipment

Babylonianization is happening today in the western world.

In any nation, in the world, the system is designed by man to Babylonianize everyone in it and anyone who enters it.

Daniel went in right, stayed right, and came out right.

NLT Romans 12:2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

MSG Romans 12:2 Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity. God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

When we resist conforming to this world, we enter perilous times.

III

We live in a world where there are kingdoms in **conflict**.

There are the powers of darkness.

There is the Kingdom of his dear Son. **Colossians 1:13**

KJV Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from **the power of darkness**, and hath translated us into **the kingdom of his dear Son**: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: ¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in **heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible**, whether they be **thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers**: all things were created by him, and for him:

A kingdom is a realm or domain, where a king is in charge.

There is the kingdom of God, God's rule, domain, and influence on planet earth. **Vs 16**

There is the kingdom and rule of God in heaven.

There are kingdoms in the earth.

- Daniel was impacted by both.

There are kingdoms visible. **Vs 16**

There are kingdoms invisible.

Daniel and some prophets identified the visible and invisible powers he was **confronted** with in perilous times.

Kingdoms are made of thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.

Thrones are the visible seat and rule.

Dominions are the territory or areas of rule.

Principalities (prince) are the magistrates or rulers who sit on throne.

Power is the authority released from the throne.

This quartet is regularly repeated throughout the Christian scriptures.

There are the powers of darkness. **Vs 13**

There is also a Babylon today.

Babylon wants to indoctrinate young people into its pagan ways, false gods, and religions.

Mess Daniel 1:3 The king told Ashpenaz, head of the palace staff, **to get some Israelites from the royal family and nobility —⁴ young men who were healthy and handsome, intelligent, and well-educated, good prospects for leadership positions in the government, perfect specimens!—and indoctrinate them in the Babylonian language and the lore of magic and fortunetelling.**

Remember....

- You have been delivered from the power of darkness **Vs 13**

- You have been translated or conveyed into a new kingdom **Vs 13**
- His kingdom is not of this world.

KJV John 18:36 Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world:** if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: **but now is my kingdom not from hence**

NIV John 18:36 Jesus said, “**My kingdom is not of this world.** If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But **now my kingdom is from another place.”**

HCSB John 18:36 **My kingdom is not of this world,”** said Jesus. “If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I wouldn’t be handed over to the Jews. As it is, **My kingdom does not have its origin here.”**

Our kingdom is not of this world!

Our kingdom is out of this world!

*Rhema Christian Center
 Bishop La Fayette Scales
 Saturday & Sunday, January 14 & 15, 2023
 9:30 a.m.*