

# Exile.

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Many of us born from above through faith in the Lord Jesus, the Christ, have gone, or are going through, similar experiences and frustrations.

With elders - problems. Without elders - problems.

The real issues though are much deeper.

In Daniel chapter 7, Daniel has a dream in which he is shown the 4 succeeding world kingdoms, Chaldean (Babylonian), Median-Persian, Greek starting with Alexander the Great and finally the Roman Empire with special mention of Constantine.

Daniel 7:15 "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 'Those great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings *which* arise out of the earth. But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.' Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, *with* its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, *which* devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; and the ten horns that *were* on its head, and the other *horn* which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance *was* greater than his fellows. I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing (literally 'making old – wearing out') against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made *in favor* of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all *other* kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces. The ten horns *are* ten kings *Who* shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first *ones*, and shall subdue three kings. He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy *it* forever. Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

If we miss the fact that Constantine achieved this wearing out of the saints through the establishment of a world religion called Christianity, then we risk being caught up in it, in some form or another. He didn't invent the Roman Catholic Church or the Greek Orthodox Church. They arose later. So did a thousand other things like them.

In Daniel chapter 8 these four world kingdoms are further explained and identified, with Rome and ultimately Constantine pointed out. Jesus made reference to these chapters in the Gospels, as they clearly prophesy the era of the coming of the Christ, the later destruction of the temple and Judah in AD70 and then the defeating of the saints (the assembly of the Christ) in Constantine's reign.

Daniel worked out the exile of the Jews in Babylon as being of 70 years duration (see Daniel chapter 9). But he didn't just carry on making the best of things until the time was up.

He got down on his knees. He confessed the sin of the people of God and himself. He acknowledged the righteousness of God in His judgements. He pleaded for the restoration of the temple and the service. **Dan 9:1** In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. [We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem. As *it is* written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God *is* righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as *it is* this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly! O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people *are* a reproach to all *those* around us. Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. 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 do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, *there shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to

sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.”

If we understand where we are in history, post Constantine, in the time of the destruction of the assembly of the saints, the Holy habitation, the body of the Christ, what is our reaction?

To moan about the state of things?

To make the best of a bad job?

To think it has nothing to do with us - what will be, will be?

To pretend that we can create our own version of Jerusalem, our own assembly of the Christ, by our efforts and determination?

To love the world?

Or will we get down on our knees?

On our faces?

Tears in our eyes?

Pain in our heart?

Like Daniel, knowing that the exile will come to an end, but hastening the day, pleading, asking in faith that the assembly may be built again, through the name of the Lord Jesus, the Christ (Anointed King) of God, who will return for a spotless bride, very soon.

When Jesus brings back the captivity of His people, again we will be one flock, one body, one Holy nation, one Kingdom.

Not all the Jews in Babylon behaved like Daniel and his three friends. Many ate the food from the King's table, but not these four.

Many may have bowed to Nebuchadnezzar's image, but not the three friends - they refused and visited the lions.

Many may have ceased praying to the God of Heaven during the prohibition of Darius, but not Daniel, he chose to carry on praying to the God of Heaven come what may. Many probably just got on with life, going to the synagogue, keeping out of trouble. But then, not all were given to understand the times and the seasons.

To whom much is given, much shall be required.

We do have something very positive we can be doing at this time.

If we have the heart.

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