

Topic: Exalting God in a Foreign Land

Bible Text: Jeremiah 29:1-11

Key Verse: I Peter 2:11a

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims...”

Introduction

The Christian life is a journey. Every believer is a pilgrim and stranger on earth. So many Christians have struggled with this concept of being a foreigner on earth. Some try to deal with this reality by choosing to withdraw from this world, while others who understood the biblical injunction of living “in the world, but not of the world” John 17:16, has come to grips with this question; “How do I live as a Christian in an un-Christian world?” The Word of God gives us proper guidance and answers to all our questions pertaining it.

Biblical examples of believers that literally lived in foreign lands at some point in their lives are: Abraham, Joseph, Daniel and his three friends, the Israelites, Naomi, Queen Esther, Paul and the other apostles of Jesus Christ.

There are many reasons or causes why people find themselves in another land other than theirs, and they include: i. Crises, wars and insecurities ii. Disasters iii. Education iv. Job v. Tourism. The circumstances that lead to human migration as recognized by the United Nation, could be good or bad. God has foreknowledge of everything and everyone in the entire cosmos. Since nothing comes to God as a surprise, it means that “all things works together for the good of them that love the God” Romans 8:28.

How to Live as Strangers in a Foreign Land

The Israelites who lived in the time of prophet Jeremiah are a perfect case study. The ways to successfully live and exalt God in a foreign land as outlined in Jeremiah 29:1-11 are:

1. Participate in the community
2. Seek the peace of the community
3. Pray for the community
4. Reproduce godly seeds in the community

1. Participate in the Community:

God brought us here. Once we understand “who” it was that positioned us in this location at this time, we can begin to better understand “why” we are here and “what” we should be doing while we are here, which signifies our divine assignment for this time frame.

First of all, it is an established fact that you are here by God`s global positioning, Roman 8:28. Secondly, when you pass through hard, difficult and challenging times just know that God has not forgotten us, Jeremiah 33:3. For instance, the history of Israel up to this time had always been a history of deliverance. He delivered them out of the land of Egypt, the armies of Pharaoh, the Philistines, the Assyrians. Perhaps you might have thought that God had deserted you; just remember that He said “I will never leave you nor forsake you” Hebrew 13:5. Thirdly, God wants you as a Christian to utilize your time, talents, gifts and resources to serve Him and humanity. This is achievable through volunteerism; Christian political leadership, Christian musician who plays more than ordinary music in order to exalt God, television and radio on air personality etc. Get involved and be a part of the society in order to establish a godly presence in the community.

2. Seek the Peace of the Community

This command resonated with God`s word in Jeremiah 29:7 concerning peace. The Hebrew word “shalom” means peace. Peace is comprehensive and entails total well-being, contentment, wholeness, health, prosperity, safety, and rest.

There are many ways to seek the peace of the community. This includes: being a good neighbor, greeting people, community services, cleaning the hostel and street, planting a tree, feeding the poor, volunteering at the local school for positive influence on the youth, driving safely, helping people with car trouble, shutting down immoral activities and businesses, embracing people from every ethnic background with the love of Christ, and wisely reporting environmental threats like cultism and suspicious evil activities.

3. Pray for the Peace of the Community

In Jeremiah 29:7b God didn't tell them to destroy public property, form an "aluta" protest, or to form a parallel committee to overthrow the government. He wanted His people to infiltrate it and be in charge directly or indirectly in order to influence the quality of the leadership. Daniel in a foreign land rose up through the ranks to become the unbeatable head over the presidents in Babylon just like Joseph was a prime minister, Nehemiah the cupbearer to the King, and Esther Queen. A closer study of the lives of these impactful people of God reveals the power of prayers.

We must pray for our community for the following reasons: i. The safety of the community ii. The politics and administration iii. The salvation of the people of the community iv. The economic prosperity of the land. Let's keep praying for God's blessing on all our brethren, our neighbors and families.

4. Reproduce Godly Seeds in the Community

Godly seeds represent our spiritual children, new converts and those whom we disciple in the faith. God leaves us in our cities and towns after we received our salvation so as to establish a godly presence in our communities, Jeremiah 29:5,9. We must maximize every opportunity to share the gospel of Christ and win souls. Truly educated and wise people win souls. Proverbs 11:30b says "...he that winneth souls is wise". Will you go through this earth without bringing and establishing a soul in Christ?

Conclusion

God created us for His praise and glory according to Revelation 4:11 "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created". We must exalt Him at any level we find ourselves. By doing so, He will lift us up, fill us, equip us and make us greater.

Source:

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