

NAVIGATING FAITH & GOVERNMENT

EPISODE 3:

EXILES IN BABYLON

look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, “How did we do?” Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

 **PRAYER** - Begin with prayer, inviting Jesus into the conversation.

Follow Up on Last Episode's Assignment

- As you reflected on the signs of Babylon in our culture, what stood out to you most?
- Were you able to keep your heavenly citizenship in mind during political or cultural conversations this week? How did that affect your attitude or response?
- Did God give you an opportunity to build a bridge with someone who sees the world differently than you do? What happened?
- Were you able to seek forgiveness or take a step toward reconciliation with someone from whom you've experienced political division?
- How is God helping you become more of a peacemaker and bridge builder in your family, community, and relationships?

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God's Word by asking, “What does Jesus want us to know?” If you haven't already, watch this week's video: “*Navigating Faith & Government: Exiles in Babylon*.” Then use the summary, questions, and Scriptures below to draw out the main truths together.

 **WATCH: Episode 3: Exiles in Babylon**

Episode Summary

Followers of Jesus are citizens of heaven living as exiles in the Babylons of this world. Rather than retreating from culture, compromising with it, or trying to dominate it, God calls His people to live as salt and light within it. Jeremiah's instructions to the exiles reveal a practical mission: invest in your community, build strong families, seek peace, and pray for your leaders. As we faithfully live out our faith, God uses our witness to influence the world around us.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you're studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward**. For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This six-part series helps believers navigate conversations about faith and government with biblical wisdom, humility, and hope. Each episode explores God's design for government, our identity as citizens of heaven, and our calling to live faithfully in an increasingly divided culture. The goal is not to win political arguments, but to point people to Jesus, engage others with grace, and pass on a legacy of faith to the next generation.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Which of Jeremiah's four commands for exiles challenges you most right now? Why?
2. Which of the four responses to Babylon—retreat, compromise, dominate, or be salt and light—do you see most often among Christians today?
3. Which of those four responses have you most leaned toward?
4. Why is it often easier to criticize culture than to influence it through faithful living?
5. What would it look like for your neighbors, coworkers, friends, or family members to genuinely be glad that you live among them?

Babylonians should be glad that we citizens of heaven live amongst them.

Episode Notes

1. We are exiles in Babylon

- Our citizenship is in heaven, not in any earthly nation
 - We belong to the heavenly Jerusalem while living in the City of Man
 - Jesus has intentionally left us here to be salt and light
 - God has a purpose for us in the Babylon where He has placed us
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2. Four commands for exiles

- Invest in your community
 - Raise godly families
 - Seek the peace and prosperity of your society
 - Pray for your leaders
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3. Four responses to Babylon

- Retreat from culture
 - Compromise with culture
 - Dominate culture
 - Be salt and light within culture
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4. Be salt and light

- Followers of Jesus influence others through faithful living
 - The Gospel changes hearts from the inside out
 - God transforms society; our responsibility is faithful obedience
 - The most powerful witness is a life that reflects Christ
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WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 29:5-7 – “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6 Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” God calls His people to actively bless the communities where He has placed them, even when those communities do not share their faith.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

John 17:15-18 – “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one... As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.” Jesus intentionally leaves His followers in the world so they can represent Him and carry out His mission.



Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, “What does Jesus want us to do?” Commit to practical steps for living out this week’s lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and move forward together in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

1 Timothy 2:1-4
Jeremiah 29:11-14
Romans 12:1-2

THIS EPISODE’S ASSIGNMENT

Choose one practical way to invest in the Babylon where God has placed you. This could involve serving a neighbor, supporting a local ministry or community effort, strengthening a family relationship, or encouraging someone who is struggling.

In addition, begin praying daily for your community and its leaders, asking God to help you become salt and light wherever He has placed you.

Reflect on Jeremiah 29:11-14 in its full context. Ask yourself: How should this promise affect the way you live, serve, and invest in *your* Babylon?

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS



- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to reach next-gen loved ones?

SHARE WITH THE GROUP



Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and real-life stories. Close with prayer.

