

Promise Keeper

Ezra 10:1-44

- After arriving in Jerusalem Ezra discovers that the people's hearts were in worse condition than the temple and city which still lay in ruins. So instead of getting to work he calls the people to repentance, and that means first confession.
- Before proper repentance through confession can be made there must be an admission of guilt **V15**- "here we are before You, in our guilt" > **Rom 3:19** says the whole world is guilty before God, the unsaved does not want to admit that they are guilty, and sadly you have some in the church who believe the same lie also. This is how repentance and restoration happens, after we admit our guilt.

V1-44

- **V1-4** in 9:4 we left off with Ezra on his knees confessing to God his and the sin of the people, and as he bowed down in prayer, those who trembled at God's word began to gather with him in agreement, that they also needed to repent before God. This shows that not only is God listening, but within the people, hearts are breaking as folks began to weep and bow down before the house of God.
- Ezra's brokenness had sparked something inside the people at Jerusalem as they began to cry uncontrollably, and a man named Shechaniah steps forward as a spokesman for the people acknowledging their guilt. But you know true repentance requires more than just acknowledgement, it also must include action as well.
- So he makes the suggestion of them putting away the wives that they had taken from the surrounding nations and the children which they bore from those unions. To many this may sound radical, but when you realize how all this came about then you will understand why such extreme measure was even being considered.
- **Mal 2:11-14** were told that not only had Judah taken unbelieving wives but also divorced their believing spouses to do it, so whole households were split up by this sin. We see this today, how divorce not only negatively affects the adults, but many of the children are severely damaged well into their adulthood as well.

- **V4** they understood that they couldn't do this by themselves so they ask Ezra to lead them in their reformed behavior. This proves that before anyone can reap the benefits of leadership for their lives they first must give them authority in their lives, as Judah says we have made a mess and we need your help and leadership to fix it.
- **V5-8** the plan is simple but demanding > **1st** the people would agree to obey God's Laws **V5**, **2nd** they would all come within three days to receive specific instructions **V8**, **3rd** whoever doesn't come would have their possessions taken away and be removed from the community **V8**. Notice if there is not consequence for disobedience then whatever changes you agree to eventually become ineffective.
- **V9-14** it has been four months since Ezra arrived and now a national day of repentance is taking place, don't ever think that one person cannot make a difference they can. Ezra tells them four things that come with repentance people try and avoid at all costs > **1**. Confession, **2**. Exposure, **3**. Obedience, **4**. Separation.
- Notice he starts with the leaders telling them to come forward in front of everyone > **1Tim 5:19-20** those who commit public sin are to be corrected publicly. Usually you'll see a letter or note admitting some transgression and then in a year or two later they show up someplace else declaring themselves fit for leadership again.
- **V15-19** there's always resistance when it comes to making things right, as four guys want to go a different route. It took them years to get into this mess and three months before the final confession and repentance is made and fellowship with God is restored. From **V20-44** the chapter ends with a listing of one hundred people who had participated in this sin, including the Priests-Pastors, Levites-Elders-Deacons, Temple singers- Praise team or choir and Gatekeepers- Ushers-Security.
- All of which are people that you would have expected to be models of obedience and not agents of chaos, it shows that much of the damage caused inside the church is by those who hold leadership and titles within the church. But this shows that no one will get away with anything as God is keeping up with the names.
- In closing this chapter shows that its never enough to just identify sin, we must also address sin and here's how > **1**. Be Sorrowful- there must be brokenness over our sin, **2**. Be Specific- no room for generalization when confessing our sin,

- **3. Be Ready-** take action immediately to correct the sin, **4. Be Teachable-** Ezra gave counsel and the people were expected to listen and apply it.