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SPEAKERS

Baruch Korman, Intro Voice

Intro Voice

Shalom and welcome to Via Hafta Yisrael, a Hebrew phrase which means you shall love Israel. We hope you'll stay with us for the next 30 minutes as our teacher, Dr. Baruch, shares his expository teaching from the Bible. Dr. Baruch is the senior lecturer at the Zera Avraham Institute based in Israel, although all courses are taught in Hebrew at the institute, Dr. Baruch is pleased to share this weekly address in English. To find out more about our work in Israel, please visit us on the web at loveisrael.org. That's one word, loveisrael.org. Now, here's Baruch with today's lesson.

Baruch Korman

Well, I'm going to invite you to take out your Bible and look with me, if you would, to the very last chapter of the book of Ezra. And of course, I'm speaking about Ezra chapter 10. Now we're going to do the first half of this chapter at this time in this series, and we're going to continue next week for the second part of this chapter. So, with that said, look with me to Ezra chapter 10 and verse one. Now, what I want to do is to translate all of these verses in a most literal way because what we see so frequently is that translators like to take great liberties with the biblical text, and they ought not. Now, many times I will share with you that a translation that is good is the New King James. However, when we compare what is found in the Hebrew text to that which is found in the New King James. There are several problems. So, with that said, let's begin. Let's start with chapter 10 and verse one of this passage, where it says, "And Ezra." Now, he is the subject of the next two verbs, it says as Ezra, that he was praying. It's in the past tense, and he was as well confessing. So we see that he was praying and confessing. Now both of those verbs are in the past tense. So he was praying and he was confessing. Keep reading. We see the response of the people. Notice it says falling, or weeping is the first word. The next one is falling in the present tense before the house of God. So Ezra, he was praying, he was confessing, and there's a verb that's very important, or a word that's very important. We find this prefix as as as he prayed, and as he confessed, we see that there is weeping and falling before the house of God. Who was doing that? Ezra was, and then it says there was gathered unto him from Israel, and then we find the term Kahal Rav Meod, which means an abundant assembly that was very abundant. That's what literally it says. And this assembly consisted of men and women and children. And notice what it says: they wept. And who was that? The people, all those individuals. And then it says harve vechi. Now vechi is a word which means weeping. We saw this earlier on in the text,

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and I don't know why many will say weeping bitterly. We don't have any word for bitterly in this text. When we look at it literally, it simply says that there was much weeping. Let's move on now to verse two. We find an individual that becomes the subject of verse two, and his name is Shechania, and it says he answered. And who was this man? The son of Yechiel, from the children of Elam, and he said to Ezra, "We and there's that familiar word that we saw last week at the end of chapter nine. It's a word of acting in a treacherous manner. Now, related to this word is a word of rebellion. So both of these thoughts are appropriate. The people they acted in a treacherous way, and they acted in a rebellious way. That's what the scripture is saying. He spoke to Ezra, we. Have acted rebelliously against our God, and we've done something. We have caused to dwell foreign women from the people of the land, and we're talking about the land of Canaan. And now there is hope for Israel concerning this. Now we're going to learn what that hope is. This hope is going to be found in the people doing something, severing this influence from pagan women. Now, what the scripture is telling us, and again, we need to understand something. Yes, we know that scripture says in Malachi that God hates divorce, but this is an exception because God also hates idolatry, and these women are having an idolatrous influence upon their husbands and upon their families. So notice what it says again, verse two: Shehanah answered the son of Yechiel from the children of Elam, and he said to Ezra, "We have behaved rebelliously against our God, and we have caused to dwell foreign women from the people of the land. And now, and this is a word of of significance. And now, with a sense of urgency, there is hope for Israel concerning this.

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What is that hope? We'll keep reading. Look at verse three. It's the same word. And now, now let us cut a covenant again. You cannot in Hebrew make a covenant. You have to cut a covenant, and that's what it says here. And now a covenant be cut with our God to do something, to put forth, meaning to send away all the women, the ones who were born from them, and it says in the council of and notice this Adonai meaning the Lord's counsel. They weren't doing this on their own initiative; they had heard from God, and then we were to find out who we're talking about, the ones who are trembling in regard to the commandment of our God, and notice this, and according to the Torah, it will be done. Now again, we know that the Torah says something, and that is this: that idolatry is evil. It is not something that the people of God should ever engage in, and this is something as well for believers. We never want to behave in idolatrous way. We want to be people of faith. Faith, as I've said many times, is related to the Hebrew word emet, truth. We want to walk in truth. We don't want to walk in the deceitfulness of idolatry. Let's press on. Look, if you would, to verse four. We see here, and he got up for Unto you, is this thing, and we are with you. And then it says, "Be strong, and let it be done." Meaning, do this; you do this. So, what we're talking about here, and what do we learn in the previous verse? To put forth, to send away these these foreign women because they had an idolatrous influence upon the households, so they are going to be sent away. And now we find out that he got up, for unto you is this thing, and we are with you, and then it says, and the implication is for Ezra to be strong, and to do, verse five, and Ezra got up, and he did something. He caused to be taken an oath among the high officials, that is the leaders of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and all of Israel, to do according to this word. And what happened? Notice what it says at the end, and we find that they took an oath. They swore. In this action, look now to verse six, and Ezra got up from before the house of God, meaning the temple, and he went to the office. Notice this: the office of Yehohanan, the son of El Yeshif, and he went there, and what did he take? Well, notice bread he did not eat, and water he did

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not drink. For notice what they were doing, for he is mourning concerning concerning the rebelliousness of who the exile, so we see here what happened. Those who were in exile, they did something. They took to themselves foreign women. They were no longer in Judah. There was a shortage of of Jewish women, so what did they do? Well, in against what the Torah commands, they married pagan women, women who engaged in idolatry, and now there's only one solution, and what is that? For them to send the women and the children of that marriage away. Why? Well, again, even though God hates divorce, He hates idolatry as well, and this is seen as a tikkun that is a repair concerning this situation. Well, let's move on. Look, if you would, to the next verse, verse seven. We find again a hiphil, which is a hiphil verb. It's a causative. It's something that is made to happen. So it says here, and a voice was caused among Judah and Jerusalem for all the children of the exile to be gathered to Jerusalem, and again, what we see here is that this is being done where in Jerusalem, the holy city, and Jerusalem is a city of restoration, a very important truth that we need to remember. It's there in Jerusalem that God sets things in order according to His truth, and His truth is, of course, always related to His will. Let's press on. Look now to the next verse, verse eight. And all which does not come, it says here, for the three days, according to the counsel of the high officials and the elders. What's going to happen?

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Well, we have a word here that means to be cut off all their all his belongings, for he, it says here, is going to be distinguished from meaning separated from the congregation of the exile. So, if people will not act and do what is required, what's going to happen? They are going to lose their possession or his possession. It's in the third person singular, his possession, and we find that they are going to suffer loss. Now, why is that? Because idolatry always brings about a spiritual loss. So this is just showing what the punishment is going to be. They are going to suffer loss because of their unwillingness to to separate themselves from those who are part of this congregation of the exile or the assembly of the exile. Notice verse nine. And all the people of Judah, they were gathered, and notice also Benjamin, that is the tribe of Benjamin, where to Jerusalem for three days, and this took place when, in the ninth month. Now, why is that important? Because the ninth month is where Hanukkah takes place, and what is the word Hanukkah? It means dedication. It is not an accident that this is happen happening in the ninth month. Why? Well, it's a time for to be dedicated to the truth of God. So this renewal, this setting in orders happening during the month that Hanukkah takes place. So again, look at this scripture. It says here. They were gathered. Who was gathered? All of Judah and Benjamin to Jerusalem for three days, and they did so in the ninth month. And notice it says on the 20th day, and the implication is of that month. And notice it says, and all the people they they dwelt in the the square before the house of God, and notice what they were doing, they were were shaking, concerning the thing, and also the thing would be this word what they were commanded to do, and why else were they shaking? Because of the rain. Of course, the nine month is a winter month. It's the time of of cold weather in Israel when the rain also falls. Look now to verse 10, and Ezra the priest got up, and he spoke unto them. He says, "You and there's that same word, you have acted rebelliously or treacherously." And then he says, "Here, cause to to be dwelling the foreign women, and notice it says if you allow that for them to continue to dwell there, it's going to leovifif, meaning to add to the guilt of Israel. That's what it's saying here. So you don't want these foreign women to continue to dwell among the children of Israel. It only makes the situation worse by adding to the guilt of Israel. Look now at verse 11. It says, "And now give, and we have a word. Now this word Toda, if we just normally hear that, we think of thanksgiving. But that same root can also be a word of confession. So we have the Hebrew infinitive lehodot, which

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means to give thanks or to confess. Now, usually we have a a particle that will tell us what we're doing. Are we giving thanks or are we confessing? So here it says, "And now give confession to the Lord, the God of your forefathers, and do His will, and distinguish yourselves from among the people of the land, and from the women. What women? The foreign women. So again, we see over and over, it is not appropriate for the congregation of Israel to have within them women, foreign women, who are committed to idolatry. What is being commanded to be done in Jerusalem, in that holy city, which reflects the purposes of God? The word "holy" is always connected to the purposes of God, setting things in its proper order. Let's move now to verse 12. It says, "And all the assembly they answered, and they said, a great voice thus, according to your word, unto us to do now, what is that? It's an statement where it's basically saying, according to your word, this is going to be done. It's going to happen. So the people are demonstrating a faithfulness. They understand what they should do, and they are committed to doing that. Now again, what we see here is something very simple.

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Remember how we began with our call to worship, where so many times it says don't judge, but says don't judge lest you will be judged. And the point that we need to see is this: here is not a a issue of judgment. It's an evaluation, and this evaluation is this: marrying foreign women, women who do not acknowledge as God the God of Israel. This is not acceptable. Let me just simply say, we do not engage in a marriage where one is a non-believer and one is a believer. It is never God's will, and I want to say that very clearly, because people struggle with this. It is never God's will. He's never in this relationship. If. You are a believer, and the person that you're considering marrying is not. It is never God's will. You can be sure of that. God wants us to be equally yoked together, and yoking is indeed related to a marriage. So this is very important that we get this right. Well, look again at verse 12, and all the assembly, they answered, and they said, a great voice, thus, according to your word, unto us, to do, meaning they are committed to do according to your word, and we're talking about the word that Ezra received about sending forth these foreign women. Look now to verse 13. But an abundant people, the people. Notice it talks about in regard to the rain, and it's in the plural the rainy season. There is no power to stand outside, and the work it says not to do one day, and it says and not two, four. Notice what it says. There is a a a multiplying of the transgression in this matter. So we see here that people are spiritually weak, and they do not want to carry out the work that they're called to do on that day, which is to send forth their pagan wives. Look now at verse 14. What does it say? And the high officials. This is the Hebrew word sar. It means today in modern Hebrew a cabinet official, so it's a very important leader within the government. It says, and our high officials, they stood please to all the congregation. Now they are going to provide an example, and it says, and all who are in our cities, the ones who are caused to dwell with foreign women, it says, let him come at these appointed times. That time, the time that they're carrying out this, and it says, and with them, the elders of a city, and city meaning every city, and its judges, unto this this turning away of the hot anger of our God from before unto this thing, so it's all about understanding that because of these illicit marriages between a child of God and a pagan, this is not God's will, and God is against such marriages. Because of that, God is commanding, and Ezra heard this, to send forth these foreign wives away with their children. Now, it's not an easy thing to do, but it's the right thing to do. Why? Well, this was never a biblical marriage, and that's something that we need to understand. When a a believer engages in a marriage that is with a non-believer, this does not fulfill the marriage purpose. Why? Well, very simply, because that non-believer is not going to be committed to the marriage contract or the marriage covenant, and because

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of that, what we see here as an example is that God is not acknowledging these weddings. Why? Because they violated the biblical parameters of marriage. It is not a biblical marriage. Now we have to be careful, because today, if you are married, there's only one exception, and that is God forbid, if someone commits adultery. If that happens, then divorce is permissible. Other than that, there is no other biblical grounds for marriage. Now, I'm always asked the question: What about if the husband is being violent to his his wife? Obviously, it is not God's will for a woman to be. Maintaining a marriage where violence is the norm. Obviously, in a situation like that, if the the husband is committing a crime against the wife in in attacking her physically again, is there common sense in sending that man away. Obviously, he should be sent away to jail. This is a grievous sin.

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But again, just because of this, it doesn't mean that there are grounds for divorce. Not saying that she should stay in that marriage, but I'm saying, biblically speaking, we don't see a biblical reason for it. There can be separation. There can be many other solutions other than divorce. So, if you're asking the question, can someone, as we see in the scripture, divorce his wife just for any reason? The answer is no. The only biblical reason for divorce that we find in the scripture is adultery, and when that happens, we find that it is so painful for whoever is the victim in this, the one who has been adultery has been committed against. Obviously, it's a very very painful issue, and one that needs to be set in order. What we have here in the book of Ezra, as we begin this first half of chapter 10, is an example that God is not acknowledging these marriages because they did not meet the biblical covenant definition for a marriage, and this is why we see here that God is sending forth these foreign women, these pagan women, because they would have an adverse influence upon the household of Israel, and this is something that has plagued Israel throughout its history. That Israel so frequently falls into idolatry. We see that in the book of Jeremiah. We see that in the book of of Ezekiel, and also in Isaiah, so idolatry is a very serious matter. And again, the simple principle is this: Do not marry someone who does not share your commitment to our Lord and Savior Messiah Jesus. If they don't believe in Him and are not committed, this is not God's choice for you. And if you go through with it, you are going to know much misery, much suffering, and much shame. Do not violate the Word of God, and do what you want. Rather, we need to restrain ourselves. And remember that important Hebrew word. It's the Hebrew word ma'al. It means a act of treachery or act of rebellion. Do not rebel against the instructions of God. Well, close with that. Until next time, and God willing, will complete the book of Ezra. Until then, shalom from Israel.

Intro Voice
Well, we hope you will benefit from today's message and share it with others. Please plan to join us each week at this time and on this channel for our broadcast of loveisrael.org. Again, to find out more about us, please visit our website loveisrael.org. There you will find articles and numerous other lectures by Baruch. These teachings are in video form. May download them or watch them in streaming video. Until next week, may the Lord bless you in our Messiah Yeshua, that is Jesus, as you walk with Him, shalom from Israel.

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