

11/10/19

Ezra 9-10

We come to the last two chapters of the book of Ezra, the unequally yoked condition of the people of God at the arrival of Ezra. Ezra 9

* The resolution to rectify their disobedience and repent from their sin.

9:1-4 The grief of Ezra over the compromise of the people.

- 1) The general evil report was about God's people joining themselves to the pagans of the land. vs. 1
 - a) The time of the bad news is given, "When these things were done." vs. 1a
 - 1)) The phrase indicates the arrival of Ezra on the 1 of August 457 B.C. and rested three days. Ezra 8:32
 - 2)) The fourth day also as they delivered the articles and offering for the temple, plus the report of the delegated authority to Ezra by Artaxerxes. Ezra 8:33-36
 - b) The accusation was by some men, "the leaders came to me." vs. 1b

* These had not been part of failure.
 - c) The accusation was of their unfaithful to Yahewh, "saying, "The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not

separated themselves from the peoples of the land." vs. 1c-d

- 1)) The common people.
 - 2)) The priest.
 - 3)) The Levites.
 - 4)) They had compromised their loyalty to Yahweh to live apart from the pagans of the land.
- d) The charge was an ungodly lifestyles with eight of the nations, "with respect to the abominations of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites." vs. 1e-l
- 1)) The word abomination "tow' ebah" means a disgusting thing that was wicked in the sight of God.
 - 2)) Certain unclean animals, foods, homosexuality, idol gods. Lev. 18; 11; 20:13; Duet. 7:25
- 2) The specific evil report was about being unequally yoke in marriage. vs. 2
- a) The people had disobeyed the Scriptures, "For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons. vs. 2a
 - 1)) When they entered the land they were to destroy all the people, children and altars of the pagan for they were a holy people, but they did not.

- 2)) The reason was they were a special treasure above all the people on the face of the earth. Deut. 7:3-6
- 3)) They went into captivity of 70 years, returned again and disobeyed God.
- b) The people were endangering the pure bloodline of the Jews, “so that the holy seed is mixed with the peoples of those lands.” vs. 2b
 - 1)) The holy seed indicated the pure line of the twelve tribes as a peculiar people to God, a godly seed! Mal. 2:10-15
 - 2)) The Messiah was to come from the tribe of Judah.
- b) The greatest cuprits were the leaders, “Indeed, the hand of the leaders and rulers has been foremost in this trespass.” vs. 2c
 - 1)) Some leaders and rulers were the worst examples to everyone.
 - 2)) Sin is the missing the mark, through human weakness of sin nature, but this was willful disobedience!
- 3) The demonstrative response of Ezra’s grief. vs. 3
 - a) Ezra ripped his vestment, “So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe.” vs. 3a
 - 1)) An expression of distress and grief.

- 2)) Mordecai tore his clothes, Hezekiah and the High Priest at the trial of Jesus . Esth. 4:1; Is. 37:1; Matt. 26:65
 - b) Ezra pulled out his hair in despair and anger, “and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard.” vs. 3b
 - * Nehemiah struck the people and pulled out their hair. Neh. 13:25
 - c) Ezra was dumbfounded, overwhelmed, “and sat down astonished.” vs. 3c
 - 1)) Over the people’s presumptuous arrogance.
 - 2)) Over the destructive consequences of their trespass
 - 4) The people of like mind joined Ezra. vs. 4
 - a) Those that feared God, “Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me.” vs. 4a
 - b) The reason was they also grieved over their evil, “because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive.” vs. 4b
 - c) The sin of the people affected Ezra deeply, “and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice.” vs. 4c
 - * The word astonished “shamem” means appalled or to be awestruck.
- 9:5-15** The prayer of Ezra confessed their guilt.
- 1) The posture of Ezra in prayer. vs. 5

- a) The time of his prayer, “At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting.” vs. 5a
 - b) The outward sign of grief and humiliation, “and having torn my garment and my robe.” vs. 5b
 - c) The humility in prayer, “I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the LORD my God.” vs. 5c
- 2) The perception of Ezra in prayer. vs. 6
- a) The brokenness before God, “And I said: “O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God.” vs. 6a-b
 - 1)) Ashamed “buwsh”, disgraced.
 - 2)) Humiliated “kalam” confounded or blushing in embarrassment.
 - 3)) Solomon lifted up his hands at the dedication of the temple. 1Kngs 8:22
 - b) The confession of Ezra, “for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.” vs. 6c-d
 - 1)) Their iniquities are the totality of their disobedience and betrayals against God, figuratively over their heads drowning and destroying them.
 - 2)) Their guilt is so going on so long it reaches heaven.
 - 3)) Daniel and Nehemiah prayed the same. Dan. 9:4-19; Neh. 9:5-38

- 3) The reflection of Ezra over their sinful history against God. vs. 7
 - a) About their constant disobedience to God, “Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been very guilty.” vs. 7a
 - b) About their judgment by God, “and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands.” vs. 7b-d
 - c) About the various ways God’s judgments, “to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and to humiliation, as it is this day.” vs. 7e-i
 - * To Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Byzantines!
- 4) The proclamation of Ezra about the goodness of God. vs. 8
 - a) The lovingkindness of God, “And now for a little while grace has been shown from the LORD our God.” vs. 8a
 - 1)) A little while, the return to repatriate the nation.
 - 2)) Grace “t@chinnah” means is unmerited favor, undeserved!
 - b) The steadfastness of God, “to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place.” vs. 8b-c
 - 1)) Patiently waiting through the 70 years of captivity for the remnant, “p@leytah” is literally those who have escaped. vs. 8b

- 2)) To fulfill His promise, “and to give us a peg in His holy place”, a metaphor of a peg “yathed”, referring to a tent stake, pin or nail, indicating God had established them in Jerusalem. Is. 22:23
- c) The faithfulness of God, “that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage.” vs. 8d
- 1)) The word enlighten “owr”, means to illuminate them spiritually to see the things God had done for them in their present bondage “abduwth” servitude to the Persian kings.
- 2)) The petition is one, that God might give them revival, an outpouring of God’s Spirit on the remnant.
* As the days of Haggai and Zechariah to rebuild the temple. Ezra 5:1-2
- 3)) Remember revival is for the people of God that have become complacent, indifferent and compromising to be revived to their love for God and obedience through repentance!
- 5) The recognition of Ezra in the protection of God. vs. 9
- a) God did not abandon them in captivity, “For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage.” vs. 9a

- b) God was kind through their enemies after captivity, “but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia,” vs. 9b
* Beginning with Cyrus!
- c) God enabled them to have a living hope at the end of captivity, “to revive us.” vs. 9c
* To revitalize their spiritual life for God and the things of God!
- d) God provided everything rebuild after captivity, “to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.” vs. 9d-f
- 1)) The word wall “gader”, means is another metaphor, a hedge or fence.
- 2)) Indicating that the return to repatriate was God’s protection for them.
- 6) The overwhelming comprehension of Ezra about the entire matter. vs. 10
- a) The nation had no defense before God, “And now, O our God, what shall we say after this?” vs. 10a-b
* The historical evidence was stacked against the nation of Israel!
- b) The nation was guilty before God, “For we have forsaken Your commandments.” vs. 10c
- 1)) To love God with all their hearts, mind and soul.
- 2)) To live for God all the days of their lives.

- 7) The citation of Ezra about the commands God gave them. vs. 11-12
- a) Ezra declared the prophets gave a general warning about the defilement of those in the land, “which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity.’” vs. 11
- * They had no excuse, God warned them and instructed them what to do, but they disobeyed and compromised. Lev. 18:24-30; Deut. 7:1-6
- b) Ezra declared the prophets gave specific prohibitions about the people in the land. vs. 12
- 1)) Never intermarry with them, ‘Now therefore, do not give your daughters as wives for their sons, nor take their daughters to your sons.’ vs. 12a-b
- * Ex. 34:6; Deut. 7:3; 11:8-9; Josh. 23:12-13
- 2)) Never be one with their politics or commerce, “and never seek their peace or prosperity.” vs. 12c
- * Ex. 23:32; Deut. 23:13
- 3)) The reason was two-fold, “that you may be strong and eat the good of the

- land, and leave it as an inheritance to your children forever.” vs. 12d-e
- 8) The national blessing by God was due to His sovereign lovingkindness, “And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, since You our God have punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and have given us such deliverance as this.” vs. 13
- a) If God had punished Israel according to their sins, they would not have survived.
- b) God in His mercy punished them less than they deserved.
- 9) The refexion of Ezra over the presumptuousness of the people. vs. 14
- a) Can we be so brash in Your sight, “should we again break Your commandments, and join in marriage with the people committing these abominations?” vs. 14a-b
- b) Can we take advantage of Your mercy, “Would You not be angry with us until You had consumed us, so that there would be no remnant or survivor?” vs. 14
- 10) The presentation of their guilt before God with no defense or excuse. vs. 15
- a) The one being prayed to is the covenant God of Israel, “O LORD God of Israel.” vs. 15a
- b) The character of Yahweh is declared, “You are righteous.” vs. 15b

- c) Their deminished number, “for we are left as a remnant, as it is this day.” vs. 15c-d
- d) Their only hope, “Here we are before You, in our guilt, though no one can stand before You because of this!” vs. 15e-g

10:1-5 The call to repent of their sin.

- 1) The response of the people was brokenness. vs. 1
 - a) The time was as Ezra was interceding for Israel, “Now while Ezra was praying, and while he was confessing, weeping, and bowing down before the house of God.” vs. 1a-d
 - b) The individuals that were also grieved joined Ezra, “a very large assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept very bitterly.” vs. 1e-h
- 2) The representative of the repentant people, vs. 2
 - a) He directed his words to Ezra, “And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra.” vs. 2a-c
 - b) He acknowledge and confessed their sin, “We have trespassed against our God, and have taken pagan wives from the peoples of the land.” vs. 2d-e

- c) He expressed hope for the future, “yet now there is hope in Israel in spite of this.” vs. 2f
- 3) The proposed reform to rectify their trespass. vs. 3
 - a) To repent and separate from their pagan family, “Now therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them.” vs. 3a-b
 - b) To obey Ezra and the Scriptures, “according to the advice of my master and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.” vs. 3c-d
 - 4) The agreement of the people to stand behind Ezra. vs. 4
 - a) The person to execute the matter was Ezra, “Arise, for this matter is your responsibility.” vs. 4a-b
 - b) The people would stand with Ezra in the matter, “We also are with you.” vs. 4c
 - c) The exhortation, “Be of good courage, and do it.” vs. 4d-e
 - 5) The firm action of Ezra to call the trespassors to repent. vs. 5
 - a) The confrontation, “Then Ezra arose, and made the leaders of the priests, the Levites.” vs. 5a-c

- b) The stipulation, “and all Israel swear an oath that they would do according to this word.” vs. 5d
- c) The binding seal, “So they swore an oath.” vs. 5e

10:6-8 The call to gather at Jerusalem.

- 1) The gathering was at the temple. vs. 6
 - a) Ezra went to the high priest, “Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib.” vs. 6a-b
 - b) Ezra continued his fast and grief, “and when he came there, he ate no bread and drank no water, for he mourned because of the guilt of those from the captivity.” vs. 6c-e
- 2) The command for all the people to present themselves at Jerusalem, “And they issued a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the descendants of the captivity, that they must gather a Jerusalem.” vs. 7
- 3) The failure to come would be dealt with swiftly. vs. 8
 - a) The time frame was stated, “and that whoever would not come within three days.” vs. 8a
 - b) The authority was absolute, “according to the instructions of the leaders and elders.” vs. 6b

- c) The consequences would be severe, “all his property would be confiscated, and he himself would be separated from the assembly of those from the captivity.” vs. 6c-d
* Like the blessings and curings. Deut. 27-28

10:9-17 The call to confess and repent and separate from their pagan wives.

- 1) The day of the gathered assembly came. vs. 9
 - a) The obedience to the command, “So all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered at Jerusalem within three days.” vs. 9a
 - b) The date is stated, “It was the ninth month, on the twentieth of the month.” vs. 9b-c
* December the 20th, the religious calendar.
 - c) The multitude of men were nervous and uncomfortable, “and all the people sat in the open square of the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of heavy rain.” vs. 9d-e
- 2) The accusation was declared to all present, “Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel.” vs. 10
- 3) The proclamation of resolution of their guilt. vs. 11

- a) To acknowledge their sin and ask forgiveness, “Now therefore, make confession to the LORD God of your fathers.” vs. 11a-b
 - b) To obey the word of God, “and do His will.” vs. 11c
 - c) To put away their unbelieving wives, “separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the pagan wives.” vs. 11d
- 4) The obedient response of the men, “Then all the assembly answered and said with a loud voice, “Yes! As you have said, so we must do.” vs. 12
- * Paul deals with unequally yoked different the believer is not to leave the unbeliever in marriage, except for adultery, though it is not a command, but the unbeliever must initiate the divorce, not wanting to be married to a believer. 1Cor. 7
- 5) The difficulty of resolving the matter right away. vs. 13
- a) The number of men was great, “But there are many people.” vs. 13a
 - b) The severe weather complicated things, “it is the season for heavy rain, and we are not able to stand outside.” vs. 13b-c
 - c) The matter would take some time, “Nor is this the work of one or two days.” vs. 13d

- d) The men guilty were many, “for there are many of us who have transgressed in this matter.” vs. 13d-e
- 6) The plan announced to resolve the matter of their pagan wives. vs. 14
- a) The leading men would preside over the hearings, “Please, let the leaders of our entire assembly stand.” vs. 14a
 - b) The guilty were to present themselves by appointment, “and let all those in our cities who have taken pagan wives come at appointed times.” vs. 14b
 - c) They were to be accompanied by their heads and judicial officials, “together with the elders and judges of their cities.” vs. 14c
 - d) The duration was stated, “until the fierce wrath of our God is turned away from us in this matter.” vs. 14d
- 7) The opposition was small, “Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite gave them support.” vs. 15
- * Nothing else is stated or known of them.
- 8) The plan was executed as planned. vs. 16
- a) The guilty men presented themselves, “Then the descendants of the captivity did so.” vs. 16a
 - b) The leaders to hear the cases were chosen, “And Ezra the priest, with

certain heads of the fathers' households, were set apart by the fathers' households, each of them by name." vs. 16b-e

c) The completion of the plan. vs. 16d-17

1)) The date of the commencement is stated, "and they sat down on the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter." vs. 16d

* This would be January 1.

2)) The terminating date is also stated, "By the first day of the first month they finished questioning all the men who had taken pagan wives." vs. 17

a)) That would be April 1.

b)) This problem would repeat itself when Nehemiah came 445 B.C. left and returned in 433 B.C. , just about 23 years after the arrival of Ezra in 457 B.C. the children of unequally yoked marriages spoke the language of Ashdod, but not Hebrew. Neh. 13:23-31

10:18-44 The geneological list of the guilty priests.

1) The guilty among the priests. vs. 18-22

a) Their names, "And among the sons of the priests who had taken pagan wives the following were found of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah." vs. 17

b) Their word and offering of repentance, "And they gave their promise that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they presented a ram of the flock as their trespass offering." vs. 19

c) The names of the other priests, Also of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah; of the sons of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah; of the sons of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa." vs. 20-22

2) The guilty among the Levites, "Also of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (the same is Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer." vs. 23

3) The guilty among the singers, "Also of the singers: Eliashib; and of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri." vs. 24

4) The guilty among the people, "And others of Israel: of the sons of Parosh: Ramiah, Jeziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchijah, and Benaiah; of the sons of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Eliah; of the sons of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza; of the sons of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai; of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Ramoth; of the sons of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Chelal,

Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh; of the sons of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah; of the sons of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei; of the sons of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluh, Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasai, Bani, Binnui, Shimei, Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph; of the sons of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.” vs. 25-43

- 5) The summary statement of the guilt of having pagan wives, “All these had taken pagan wives, and some of them had wives by whom they had children.” vs. 44
- a) The total was 111 were guilty.
 - b) The highest percentage was with the Levites, 74 returned, 6 had intermarried, an 8:1 %
 - c) The lowest were the layity of the 24,144, 84 had intermarried, a .3 of a 1%
 - d) All the priest, levites, singers and gatekeepers had higher intermarriages than the layity.