

Dealing DECISIVELY with Sin ~ Ezra 9:1 - 10:44

→Scripture Reading - Exodus 9:4-15

Trembling at God's WORD ~ Ezra 9:1-4

¹ After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, "The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. ² They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness." ³ When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. ⁴ Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice.

IMPLICATION

⁴ Then everyone who TREMBLED at the Words of the God...

Psalm 119:9–11 (NIV) How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word. ¹⁰ I seek You with ALL my heart; do NOT let me stray from Your commands. ¹¹ I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might NOT sin against You.

How can I be Pure in my Walk with God?

- OBEY God's Word
- SEEK God with ALL my Heart
- ASK God for help
- HIDE His Word in my heart

Psalm 119:14–16 (NIV) I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. ¹⁵ I meditate on Your precepts and consider Your ways. ¹⁶ I delight in Your decrees; I will not neglect Your word.

TREMBLING at God's Word means we...

- REJOICE in Obedience
- REFLECT on God's Word
- DELIGHT in God's Word
- Never NEGLECT God's Word

Blatant DISOBEDIENCE ~ Ezra 9:5-15

⁵ Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the LORD my God ⁶ and prayed: "O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. ⁷ From the days of our forefathers until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today. ⁸ "But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in His sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. ⁹ Though we are slaves, our God has not deserted us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem. ¹⁰ "But now, O our God, what can we say after this? For we have disregarded the commands ¹¹ You gave through Your servants the prophets when you said: 'The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. ¹² Therefore, do NOT give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.' ¹³ "What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins have deserved and have given us a remnant like this. ¹⁴ Shall we again break Your commands and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would You not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no REMNANT or survivor? ¹⁵ O LORD, God of Israel, You are righteous! We are left this day as a Remnant. Here we are before You in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in Your presence."

GRACE and HOPE with God ~ Ezra 10:1-5

¹ While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a large crowd of Israelites - men, women and children - gathered around him. They too wept bitterly. ² Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, one of the descendants of Elam, said to Ezra, "We have been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the peoples around us. But in spite of this, there is still HOPE for Israel. ³ Now let us make a covenant before our God to send away all these women and their children, in accordance with the counsel of my lord and of those who fear the commands of our God. Let it be done according to the Law. ⁴ Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it." ⁵ So Ezra rose up and put the leading priests and Levites and all Israel under oath to do what had been suggested. And they took the oath. ⁶ Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. While he was there, he ate no food and drank no water, because he continued to mourn over the unfaithfulness of the exiles. ⁷ A proclamation was then issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem for all the exiles to assemble in Jerusalem. ⁸ Anyone who failed to appear within three days would forfeit all his property, in accordance with the decision of the officials and elders, and would himself be expelled from the assembly of the exiles.

Courts ESTABLISHED ~ Ezra 10:9-17

⁹ Within the three days, all the men of Judah and Benjamin had gathered in Jerusalem... ¹⁴ Let our officials act for the whole assembly. Then let everyone in our towns who has married a foreign woman come at a set time, along with the elders and judges of each town, until the fierce anger of our God in this matter is turned away from us.

Within the surrounding culture ...Divorce appears to have been common and uncomplicated, with economic implications being of greatest concern. IVP

Guilty as CHARGED ~ Ezra 10:18-44

¹⁸ Among the descendants of the priests, the following had married foreign women: .

IMPLICATION

- ➔ It was not about RACE - it was about RELIGION
- ➔ It was not about Skin COLOR - it was about SANCTIFICATION
- ➔ It was not about CULTURE - it was about Truly Believing and Obeying God

Psalms 106:34-39 (NIV) They did not destroy the peoples as the LORD had commanded them, ³⁵ but they mingled with the nations and adopted their customs. ³⁶ They worshiped their idols, which became a snare to them. ³⁷ They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons. ³⁸ They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was desecrated by their blood. ³⁹ They DEFILED themselves by what they did; by their deeds they prostituted themselves.

Remember that Ezra 9-10

- is DESCRIPTIVE - telling us what happened
- not PRESCRIPTIVE - telling us what to do today

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 (NIV) Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?

Do not form **any relationship**, whether temporary or permanent, with unbelievers that would lead to a compromise of Christian standards or jeopardize consistency of Christian witness. Expositors

TAKE AWAY ??

Hosea 6:6 (NET) For I Delight in faithfulness, not simply in sacrifice; I Delight in acknowledging God, not simply in whole burnt offerings.

Micah 6:8 (NIV) He has showed you, O man, what is GOOD. And what does the LORD Require of you? To act Justly and to love Mercy and to walk Humbly with your God.