

Ezra – Chapter Ten

“Radical Repentance”

Timeline

The Second Wave Returned in 458 (led by Ezra – chapters 7-10 of Ezra).

It was 80 years after the first wave of exiles returned.

It was 58 years after the rebuilding of the Temple was completed in 516.

Ezra was told of the sin of the people approximately 5½ months after returning to the Promised Land.

4 days later all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered in Jerusalem to deal with the matter.

Approximately 2 weeks later the examination of each case of intermarriage began.

It took 3 months to complete this process.

Review

Chapter 9

- Ezra was informed by the chief men of the nation about the intermarriage of the people.
- He reacted openly, visibly, and emotionally to the news. He was astonished (stunned)!
- Later that same day, with many people gathered around him who “trembled at the words of the God of Israel”, Ezra poured out his heart to God in confession on behalf of the people of Israel. His prayer served as a sermon to all who heard him pray.

The People Responded to Ezra’s Mourning 1-4

- 1 Brokenness
- 2 Confession
- 3 Genuine willingness to repent
- 4 Support and encouragement of Ezra as their spiritual leader

Ezra Responded to the People 5-6

- 5 He required an oath that they would put away their pagan wives and the children who were the offspring of those marriages.
- 6 He continued to fast and mourn

An Assembly Was Called 7-8

- 7-8 All the men of Judah and Benjamin who were descendants of the captivity had 72 hours to gather in Jerusalem or lose their property and their place in the assembly among the people of God. (The furthest anyone would have to travel was about 40 miles.)

They Assembled in Jerusalem 9-15

- 9 They were trembling because of the rain (it was in December), and because of the seriousness of their sin as a people against God.
- 10-11 Ezra called on them to confess their sin and do what real repentance required - (Acts 26:20).
- 12-14 The people responded with obedient hearts, but suggested a better process for dealing with this serious matter.
- 15 There were some in the crowd who were opposed to this course of action.

They Thoroughly Examined Each Case 16-44

16-17 It took 3 months to examine each case.

18-43 The names of each man who had taken a pagan wife is listed in God's Word. These names represent the lives of real people: men, women, and children.

- 111 cases: 17 priests, 6 Levites, 1 singer, 3 gatekeepers, 84 others
- Approximately .5% of the total population of males in the assembly (+/- 30,000)

44 This was a very sad, sorrowful, and emotionally difficult repentance.

Doctrinal Conclusions

1. Spiritual purity, not racial purity was the issue.

6:21; 9:1-2, 10, 11

Jonathan Edwards: "When the church fails to discriminate between believers and unbelievers they will be doing the work of satan."

1 Corinthians 7:39 [Believers are commanded to marry] **only in the Lord.**

Acts 17:26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth ...

2. The spiritual purity of God's people is corrupted by a few among them who are spiritually corrupt.

1 Peter 4:17 For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if *it begins* with us first, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Galatians 5:9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17; 1 John 2:15

1 Corinthians 5:13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "PUT AWAY FROM YOURSELVES THE EVIL PERSON."

3. What this chapter says about divorce is descriptive not prescriptive.

Malachi 2:15-16 But did He not make *them* one, Having a remnant of the Spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth. **(16)** "For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence," Says the LORD of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, That you do not deal treacherously."

Matthew 19:5-6 and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH' ? (6) So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."