

SO MUST WE DO

EZRA 10

Text: Ezra 10:12

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¹² Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

Introduction:

No doubt Ezra experienced great joy and satisfaction when he found himself worshiping in the restored Temple and ministering to the spiritual needs of the people of the people.

Not long after the completion of the completion of the Temple he learns that all wasn't well because many had deliberately disobeyed the command of God.

How Ezra faced this troubling problem and solved it is an example for any Christian today who takes seriously God's repeated command.

Leviticus 11:44-45

⁴⁴ For I *am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ⁴⁵ For I *am* the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I *am* holy.

1 Peter 1:16

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1. THE CONTAMINATION OF THE PEOPLE (EZRA 9:1-2)

Ezra 9:1-2

¹ Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, *doing* according to their abominations, *even* of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. ² For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of *those* lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass.

A. Disobedience (vs. 1)

B. Defilement (vs. 2)

2. THE CONCERN OF THE PEOPLE (EZRA 9:3-15)

Ezra 9:3-15

³ And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished. ⁴ Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice. ⁵ And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto

the LORD my God, ⁶ And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over *our* head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. ⁷ Since the days of our fathers *have we been* in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, *and* our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as *it is* this day. ⁸ **And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.** ⁹ For we *were* bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. ¹⁰ And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, ¹¹ Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. ¹² Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave *it* for an inheritance to your children for ever. ¹³ And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities *deserve*, and hast given us *such* deliverance as this; ¹⁴ Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed *us*, so that *there should be* no remnant nor escaping? ¹⁵ O LORD God of Israel, thou *art* righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as *it is* this day: behold, we *are* before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

A. We Have Sinned (vs. 5-7, 10-12)

B. We Are Unworthy (vs. 8-9)

C. We Are Guilty (vs. 13-15)

3. THE COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE (EZRA 10:1-8)

Ezra 10:1-8

¹Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore. ² And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, *one* of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. ³ Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. ⁴ Arise; for *this* matter *belongeth* unto thee: we also *will be* with thee: be of good courage, and do *it*. ⁵ Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swore. ⁶ Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib: and *when* he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away. ⁷ And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; ⁸ And that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be

forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away.

When God's people obey God's Word by humbling themselves, praying and seeking the Lord's face, turn from their wicked ways –there is hope!

2 Chronicles 7:14

¹⁴ If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Notice:

A. A Confession (vs. 2)

1. Trespassed

2. Taken

B. A Covenant (vs. 3)

C. A Commitment (vs. 4)

4. THE CLEANSING OF THE PEOPLE (EZRA 10:9-17)

Ezra 10:9-17

⁹ Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It *was* the ninth month, on the twentieth *day* of the month; and all the people sat

in the street of the house of God, trembling because of *this* matter, and for the great rain. ¹⁰ And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. ¹¹ Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives. ¹² Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. ¹³ But the people *are* many, and *it is* a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither *is this* a work of one day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this thing. ¹⁴ Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us. ¹⁵ Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah were employed about this *matter*: and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. ¹⁶ And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, *with* certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by *their* names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. ¹⁷ And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.

A. Everyone Participated (vs. 9)

1. No one allowed the element to prevent their participation

A. Ezra Preached the Truth (vs. 10)

B. Sin was confessed (vs. 12)

C. Sin was forsaken

Note:

They were not lax in forsaking their sin, but were very specific and thorough.

Close:

Our only hope is in God. That hope comes as we acknowledge our condition, humble ourselves, pray and seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways. Only then God says He will hear from Heaven and will forgive our sin and heal our land.

May God's Word and His Spirit move us to this place.