

Building for God

Pembroke Bible Chapel
D Axford – May 24, 2009
Series No. DA-EZRA-07

Separation Ezra 9

I. THE PROBLEM (verses 1-4)

When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem he found that some of the exiles had intermarried with the pagan peoples of the land – in direct violation of God's command.

II. THE PRAYER (verses 5-15)

Ezra immediately recognizes the grave nature of this sin and confesses this to God in one of the great intercessory prayers of the Old Testament (*Neh.1; Dan.9*)

III. THE PURPOSE (Old Testament)

The Lord describes in detail why these commands were given to His Old Testament chosen people.

1. They were owned by God (*Ex.19:5; 1 Ki.8:53*)
2. They were to worship God alone (*Ex.34:14-15*)
3. They would be drawn into following the false gods of the nations (*Ex.34:12*)
4. So that they could participate fully in their religious obligations (*Ezr.6:21*)

The Church is not Israel and is not under the Law as they were. What then can we learn from their experience that is applicable for us today?

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Application

IV. THE PRINCIPLES (New Testament)

1. The born again believer is owned by God – our sanctification (*1 Cor.6:19-20*)
2. We too are to worship God alone (*Jn.4:24*)
3. We too can be entrapped by the world (*Col.2:8*)
4. We are not to enter into partnerships with unbelievers (*2 Cor.6:14-18*) “This injunction applies to marriage, business, and to ecclesiastical and intimate personal relationships.” [Ryrie]
5. We are not to fellowship with sinning believers (*1 Cor.5:9-13*)

V. THE PEG (New Testament)

In Ezra 9:8 the peg - that which anchored the Israelite - was the temple in Jerusalem. For the born again believer our peg is the Lord Jesus Christ and His truth. This is what enables us to maintain the appropriate separation from the world and its attractions (*Is.22:23; Zech.10:4*)

1. **Example:** The Lord Jesus Christ was holy, innocent, undefiled, and separate from sinners- fix your gaze on Him (*Heb.7:26;12:2*)
2. **Death:** We were co-crucified with Christ on the cross and are to reckon on this truth continuously in our everyday experiences (*Gal.2:20; 6:14*)
3. **Life:** We are to recognize that we are incapable of living the Christian life; it is only God the Holy Spirit who can live His life in and through us. We thus consciously and continuously yield to His leading (*Romans 6:13*)