

13 – Ezra 10:1-44 – Putting things right

Ezra 10 is a dangerous chapter to half read.

Deep sorrow

They have seen Ezra's deep grief and they have come to feel the same way.

verse 2 ... the covenant be renewed before YHWH and that the foreign wives be sent away.

A complicated situation

Ezra ensures that all the people are genuinely repentant

v 5 ... gets them to take an oath.

v 9 ... they are deeply distressed

v 10 – 14 ... to seek a God honouring solution is not easy.

v 14 ... the officials of God's people as well as the elders and judges of each town the people come from be empowered

v 15 ... four people opposed this decision

A serious solution

... they are seeking to turn God's right and fierce anger away from them.

Serious sin called for deep repentance and serious actions that flowed from this repentance.

... we are simply not told what was discussed

... might be hard for our ears to hear, we are in a deep danger of jumping to conclusions regarding how we feel about this if we fill in or assume details simply not given to us.

For us today**1) Seriousness of sin**

... sin is serious and it sometimes has serious consequences on others.

Matthew 5:29-30 *"If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."*

Do we see sin in our lives as really serious?

... that we weep deeply and bitterly

... that we are prepared to take drastic action to avoid it or flee it?

2) Unbelieving spouses

1 Corinthians 7:12-14. *“To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. ¹³ And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.”*

... the idea of an unbelieving spouse being sent away because they do not follow YHWH is not there in any shape, form or description.

1 Peter 3:1-2, *Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, ² when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.*

... in the NT a believing wife with an unbelieving husband is not told to leave but to seek to win her husband over with her behaviour.

... if you are thinking of getting married

2 Corinthians 6:14, *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”*

3) A future hope

Hebrews 1:1-3 *“In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

Hebrew 4:14-16, *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*