

Wednesday, August 10, 2022

From Darren:

Ezra 10:1-44 — Mass divorce...not what you expect to find in the Bible

Ps 31:9-18 — “In your unfailing love, rescue me.”

Pro 21:3 — Faith with works is alive!

1 Corinthians 6:1-20 — “even though ‘I am allowed to do anything,’ I must not become a slave to anything”

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Ezra 10:1-44

10 1 While Ezra prayed and made this confession, weeping and lying face down on the ground in front of the Temple of God, a very large crowd of people from Israel—men, women, and children—gathered and wept bitterly with him.

2 Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, a descendant of Elam, said to Ezra, “We have been unfaithful to our God, for we have married these pagan women of the land. But in spite of this there is hope for Israel.

3 Let us now make a covenant with our God to divorce our pagan wives and to send them away with their children. We will follow the advice given by you and by the others who respect the commands of our God. Let it be done according to the Law of God.

4 Get up, for it is your duty to tell us how to proceed in setting things straight. We are behind you, so be strong and take action.”

5 So Ezra stood up and demanded that the leaders of the priests and the Levites and all the people of Israel swear that they would do as Shecaniah had said. And they all swore a solemn oath.

6 Then Ezra left the front of the Temple of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. He spent the night there without eating or drinking anything. He was still in mourning because of the unfaithfulness of the returned exiles.

7 Then a proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem that all the exiles should come to Jerusalem.

8 Those who failed to come within three days would, if the leaders and elders so decided, forfeit all their property and be expelled from the assembly of the exiles.

9 Within three days, all the people of Judah and Benjamin had gathered in Jerusalem. This took place on December 19, and all the people were sitting in the square before the Temple of God. They were trembling both because of the seriousness of the matter and because it was raining.

10 Then Ezra the priest stood and said to them: “You have committed a terrible sin. By marrying pagan women, you have increased Israel’s guilt.

11 So now confess your sin to the LORD, the God of your ancestors, and do what he demands. Separate yourselves from the people of the land and from these pagan women.”

12 Then the whole assembly raised their voices and answered, “Yes, you are right; we must do as you say!”

13 Then they added, “This isn’t something that can be done in a day or two, for many of us are involved in this extremely sinful affair. And this is the rainy season, so we cannot stay out here much longer.

14 Let our leaders act on behalf of us all. Let everyone who has a pagan wife come at a scheduled time, accompanied by the leaders and judges of his city, so that the fierce anger of our God concerning this affair may be turned away from us.”

15 Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this course of action, and they were supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite.

16 So this was the plan they followed. Ezra selected leaders to represent their families, designating each of the representatives by name. On December 29, the leaders sat down to investigate the matter.

17 By March 27, the first day of the new year, they had finished dealing with all the men who had married pagan wives.

18 These are the priests who had married pagan wives: From the family of Jeshua son of Jehozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.

19 They vowed to divorce their wives, and they each acknowledged their guilt by offering a ram as a guilt offering.

20 From the family of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

21 From the family of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah.

22 From the family of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa.

23 These are the Levites who were guilty: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (also called Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

24 This is the singer who was guilty: Eliashib. These are the gatekeepers who were guilty: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25 These are the other people of Israel who were guilty: From the family of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, and Benaiah.

26 From the family of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

27 From the family of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

28 From the family of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

29 From the family of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.

30 From the family of Pahath-moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.

31 From the family of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,

32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.

33 From the family of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

34 From the family of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,

35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi,

36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu.

38 From the family of Binnui : Shimei,

39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,

40 Macnadebai, Shashai, Sharai,

41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,

42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

43 From the family of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

44 Each of these men had a pagan wife, and some even had children by these wives.

Psalms 31:9-18

31 9 Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am in distress. Tears blur my eyes. My body and soul are withering away.

10 I am dying from grief; my years are shortened by sadness. Sin has drained my strength; I am wasting away from within.

11 I am scorned by all my enemies and despised by my neighbors— even my friends are afraid to come near me. When they see me on the street, they run the other way.

12 I am ignored as if I were dead, as if I were a broken pot.

13 I have heard the many rumors about me, and I am surrounded by terror. My enemies conspire against me, plotting to take my life.

14 But I am trusting you, O LORD, saying, “You are my God!”

15 My future is in your hands. Rescue me from those who hunt me down relentlessly.

16 Let your favor shine on your servant. In your unfailing love, rescue me.

17 Don’t let me be disgraced, O LORD, for I call out to you for help. Let the wicked be disgraced; let them lie silent in the grave.

18 Silence their lying lips— those proud and arrogant lips that accuse the godly.

Proverbs 21:3

21 3 The LORD is more pleased when we do what is right and just than when we offer him sacrifices.

1 Corinthians 6:1-20

6 1 When one of you has a dispute with another believer, how dare you file a lawsuit and ask a secular court to decide the matter instead of taking it to other believers !

2 Don’t you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can’t you decide even these little things among yourselves?

3 Don’t you realize that we will judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life.

4 If you have legal disputes about such matters, why go to outside judges who are not respected by the church?

5 I am saying this to shame you. Isn’t there anyone in all the church who is wise enough to decide these issues?

6 But instead, one believer sues another—right in front of unbelievers!

7 Even to have such lawsuits with one another is a defeat for you. Why not just accept the injustice and leave it at that? Why not let yourselves be cheated?

8 Instead, you yourselves are the ones who do wrong and cheat even your fellow believers.

9 Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality,

10 or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.

11 Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

12 You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. And even though “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a slave to anything.

13 You say, “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can’t say that our bodies were made for sexual immorality. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.

14 And God will raise us from the dead by his power, just as he raised our Lord from the dead.

15 Don't you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never!

16 And don't you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, "The two are united into one."

17 But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.

18 Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body.

19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself,

20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.