

# Ezra 9-10

1. The dates of events:

- |   |                  |       |  |
|---|------------------|-------|--|
| a. Left Babylon –                             | April 8, 458     | 7:9   |  |
| b. Arrived in Jerusalem –                     | August 4, 458    | 7:9   | (5 month journey)                      |
| c. Recognized the problem –                   | December 458     | 10:9  | (4 ½ months since arrival)             |
| d. Appointed committee<br>began investigation | December 29, 458 | 10:17 | (began investigation<br>10 days later) |
| e. All Judea met in Jerusalem –               | March 27, 457    | 10:17 | (3 month investigation)                |

## Ezra 9

9:1 - **After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.**

PROBLEM

1. “After these things” refers to the three events at the end of chapter 8:
  - a. Weighing and accounting of the treasure (8:33-34)
  - b. Sacrificing on the Temple Mount (8:35)
  - c. It would appear Ezra had to travel for several months (August-November) to the Persian provinces or satrapies with orders given him by Artaxerxes
2. When Ezra arrived back to Jerusalem after visiting the governors and the Persian officials known as satraps he was met by some of the leaders of Judea with the problem of mixed marriages with the unbelieving Gentiles.
3. “leaders” or “officials” is the word *sarim* and is used both for those who reported the problem and those involved with the problem. These “officials” would include:
  - a. Public officials
  - b. Priests
  - c. Levites
4. The problem with foreign marriages was syncretistic tendencies where YHWH worship would be mixed with Pagan worship.
5. The list of foreign peoples is similar to the list in the Law of Moses, but updated to 458 BC
  - a. Hivites have been eliminated since they no longer existed
  - b. Ammonites, Moabites and Egyptians have been added to the list.
6. Notice the word “abominations” which refers to their idols, but also any part of worship or religious philosophy or worldview that violated YHWH and his truth. Thus, Mark 13:14.

9:2 – **For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost.”**

1. “Holy race” is literally “holy seed”

9:3 - **As soon as I heard this, I tore my garment and my cloak and pulled hair from my head and beard and sat appalled.**

1. Pulling hair is both a sign of personal grief when done to oneself here, but an act of violence or punishment in Isaiah 50:6 and Nehemiah 13:25 when done to others.
2. Ezra demonstrates publicly he grief.

9:4 - **Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice.**

9:5 - **And at the evening sacrifice I rose from my fasting, with my garment and my cloak torn, and fell upon my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God,**

9:6 - **saying:**

**“O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens.**

1. Ezra starts first person pronoun (individual), but quickly moves to the third person (our, we) because he is part of the group, the whole, the community, the holy people.
2. In the West we think as individuals often. Here Ezra was restoring the nation and their relationship with YHWH, not building his personal, individual relationship with YHWH. Both are necessary.

9:7 **From the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt. And for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as it is today.**

1. Past sins of past generations and dominion by Assyrian and Babylonian kings.

9:8 - **But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant and to give us a secure hold within his holy place, that our God may brighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our slavery.**

1. Now, in recent history the Persian kings had shown favor to the Jews.
2. This was the hand of God, reviving his people. But, the people were failing

9:9 - **For we are slaves. Yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to grant us some reviving to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us protection in Judea and Jerusalem.**

1. God had restored the remnant. The “remnant” are not all the Jews scattered everywhere, but the Jews that had returned to Judea between 538-458 during the last 80 years.

9:10 - **And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments,**

9:11 - **which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land that you are entering, to take possession of it, is a land impure with the impurity of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations that have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness.**

9:12 - **Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.’**

Here Ezra refers to the text of the OT Law of Moses.

9:13 - **And after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this,**

9:14 - **shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor any to escape?**

9:15 - **O Lord, the God of Israel, you are just, for we are left a remnant that has escaped, as it is today. Behold, we are before you in our guilt, for none can stand before you because of this."**

## **Ezra 10**

10:1 - **While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children, gathered to him out of Israel, for the people wept bitterly.**

1. Ezra was doing this on the Temple Mount publicly.
  - a. Praying
  - b. Confessing sin
  - c. Weeping/wailing loudly (and, others would join him)
  - d. "casing himself down before" the Temple over and over
2. A large crowd joined him in his weeping.

PEOPLE GATHER AROUND  
EZRA ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT

10:2 - **And Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, of the sons of Elam, addressed Ezra:**

**"We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this.**

10:3 - **Therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment**

**of our God, and let it be done according to the Law.**

10:4 - **Arise, for it is your task, and we are with you; be strong and do it."**

SHECANIAH SPEAKS; TELLS  
EZRA TO MAKE COVENANT

10:5 - **Then Ezra arose and made the leading priests and Levites and all Israel take an oath that they would do as had been said. So they took the oath.**

EZRA MAKES COVENANT;  
PEOPLE TAKE OATH

10:6 - **Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib, where he spent the night, neither eating bread nor drinking water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles.**

EZRA PRIVATE FASTING  
AND MOURNING

10:7 - **And a proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem,**

10:8 - **and that if anyone did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all his property should be forfeited, and he himself banned from the congregation of the exiles.**

1. “forfeited” refers to confiscation or excommunication. It is a modified version of capital punishment

PROCLAMATION FOR  
ALL TO ASSEMBLE

10:9 - **Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. And all the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain.**

1. The territory of Judah was small and all could travel to Jerusalem “within three days”.
2. The borders of Judah at this time were in Bethel in the north (35 miles), Beersheba in the south (35 miles), Jericho in the east (25 miles), Ono to the west (25 miles)
3. This is the time of the heavy torrential rains.
  - a. The rain season begins in October and continues to the middle of April
  - b. December and January are the cold months of 40-50 degrees F.
4. “Trembling”...
  - a. “because of this matter” – the problem of the sin of the intermarriages
  - b. “and because of the heavy rain” – the cold temperatures combined with the downpouring rain.

JUDAH  
ASSEMBLES

10:10 - **And Ezra the priest stood up and said to them,**

**“You have broken faith and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel.**

10:11 - **Now then make confession to the Lord, the God of your fathers and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives.”**

EZRA SPEAKS  
TO ASSEMBLY

10:12 - **Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice,**

**“It is so; we must do as you have said.**

10:13 - **But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for we have greatly transgressed in this matter.**

10:14 - **Let our officials stand for the whole assembly. Let all in our cities who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every city, until the fierce wrath of our God over this matter is turned away from us.”**

ASSEMBLY  
RESPONDS

10:15 - Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahzeiah the son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supported them.

THOSE WHO  
OPPOSED

10:16 - Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, heads of fathers' houses, according to their fathers' houses, each of them designated by name.

On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter;

10:17 - and by the first day of the first month they had come to the end of all the men who had married foreign women.

EXAMINATION OF  
THE SITUATION

1. "first day of the tenth month" – December 29, 458 the committee began their work
2. "first day of the first month" - March 27, 457 the committee had a complete list
3. 110 (115) cases of guilt were found
4. 89 days of investigation: (some say 75 days):
  - a. Dec. 2 days
  - b. Jan. 30 days
  - c. Feb. 30 days
  - d. Mar. 27 days. . . . . = 89 total days

### THE MEN FOUND TO BE GUILTY OF MARRYING FOREIGN WOMEN IN JUDEA

10:18 - Now there were found some of the sons of the priests who had married foreign women:

- Maaseiah
- Eliezer
- Jarib
- Gedaliah
- some of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak
- and his brothers

PRIESTS

10:19 - They pledged themselves to put away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the flock for their guilt.

10:20 - Of the sons of Immer:

- Hanani
- Zebadiah.

10:21 - Of the sons of Harim:

- Maaseiah,
- Elijah,
- Shemaiah,
- Jehiel,
- Uzziah.

10:22 - Of the sons of Pashhur:

- Elioenai,
- Maaseiah,

- Ishmael,
- Nethanel,
- Jozabad,
- Elasah.

10:23 - **Of the Levites:**

- Jozabad,
- Shimei,
- Kelaiah (that is, Kelita),
- Pethahiah,
- Judah,
- Eliezer.

24 **Of the singers:**

- Eliashib.

**Of the gatekeepers:**

- Shallum,
- Telem,
- Uri.

25 **And of Israel:**

**of the sons of Parosh:**

- Ramiah,
- Izziah,
- Malchijah,
- Mijamin,
- Eleazar,
- Hashabiah,
- Benaiah.

26 **Of the sons of Elam:**

- Mattaniah,
- Zechariah,
- Jehiel,
- Abdi,
- Jeremoth,
- Elijah.

27 **Of the sons of Zattu:**

- Elioenai,
- Eliashib,
- Mattaniah,

LEVITES

SINGERS

GATEKEEPERS

ISRAEL

- Jeremoth,
- Zabad,
- Aziza.

28 Of the sons of Bebai were

- Jehohanan,
- Hananiah,
- Zabbai,
- Athlai.

29 Of the sons of Bani were

- Meshullam,
- Malluch,
- Adaiah,
- Jashub,
- Sheal,
- Jeremoth.

30 Of the sons of Pahath-moab:

- Adna,
- Chelal,
- Benaiah,
- Maaseiah,
- Mattaniah,
- Bezalel,
- Binnui,
- Manasseh.

31-32 Of the sons of Harim:

- Eliezer,
- Isshijah,
- Malchijah,
- Shemaiah,
- Shimeon,
- Benjamin,
- Malluch,
- Shemariah.

33 Of the sons of Hashum:

- Mattenai,
- Mattattah,
- Zabad,
- Eliphelet,

- Jeremai,
- Manasseh,
- Shimei.

34-36 **Of the sons of Bani:**

- Maadai,
- Amram,
- Uel,
- Benaiah,
- Bedeiah,
- Cheluhi,
- Vaniah,
- Meremoth,
- Eliashib,
- Mattaniah,
- Mattenai,
- Jaasu.

38-42 **Of the sons of Binnui:**

- Shimei,
- Shelemiah,
- Nathan,
- Adaiah,
- Machnadebai,
- Shashai,
- Sharai,
- Azarel,
- Shelemiah,
- Shemariah,
- Shallum,
- Amariah,
- Joseph.

43 **Of the sons of Nebo:**

- Jeiel,
- Mattithiah,
- Zabad,
- Zebina,
- Jaddai,
- Joel,
- Benaiah.

44 **All these had married foreign women, and some of the women had even borne children.**