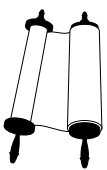


The Book of Ezra
Study #17
(Ezra 10:1-8)
Getting Serious About Sin



Effectual Prayer

Never underestimate the power of the prayers of one dedicated believer (James 5:16-18), for the intercession of only one concerned person can make a difference in what God will do to and for His people. As Ezra prayed and wept at the altar before the house of God, “a very great congregation of men and women and children” came together, and they fell under conviction of sin.

“They too wept bitterly” (Ezra 10:1, NIV). This response wasn’t something that Ezra worked up; it was something that he prayed down. The priests had offered a lamb on the altar, but Ezra gave the Lord an even greater sacrifice. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise” (Ps. 51:17, NKJV).

As I watch the contemporary religious scene, I note that churches occasionally feature “Christian comedians” and “Christian clowns,” but not much is said about people who know how to weep and pray. As much as anyone else, I appreciate a sense of humor and a good laugh, but there comes a time when God’s people need to stop laughing and start weeping and confessing. “Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:9-10, NKJV). That’s God’s formula for revival. (*Be Heroic*, Wiersbe)

REVIEW:

1. **Devastation**
2. **Depression**
3. **Deliberation**
4. **Delegation**
5. **Determination**

I. A Powerful Prayer (1A)

II. A Penitent People (1B- 5)

A. The Assembly (1B)

B. The Advice (2-4)

1. **The Man (2A)**

2. **The Message (2B-3)**

a. **The Repentance (2B; Ps. 32:5)**

b. **The Remembrance (2C; Isa. 1:18)**

c. **The Remedy (3)**

(Cf., Dt. 1:17; 16:19; Pr. 24:23; 28:21; Rm. 2:11; Col. 3:25; Jam. 2:1,9)

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." (Edmond Burke)

3. **The Mandate (4; Jos. 1:16-18)**

C. The Affirmation (5)

III. A Public Proclamation (6-8)

A. The Princes’ Deliberation (6)

B. The Presence Demanded (7)

C. The Penalty Declared (8; 7:26; 1 Cor. 5:11)

1. **A Loss of Belongings**

2. **A Loss of Brotherhood**

CONCLUSION:

A humble praying leader, a willing people, and a faithful and courageous committee worked together to accomplish a difficult task. What an example for the church to follow today!

EZRA: OUTLINE

- I. Rebuilding the Place of God (Chapters 1-6)
 (The Ministry of Zerubbabel)
 - A. The Return (Chapters 1-2)
 - B. The Rebuilding (Chapters 3-6)
 1. The Restoration of Worship (3:1-7)
 2. The Rebuilding of the Temple (3:8-6:22)
- II. Reviving the People of God (Chapters 7-10)
 (The Ministry of Ezra)
 - A. The Trip (Chapters 7-8)
 - B. The Trouble (Chapters 9-10)
 1. The Discovery (Ch. 9)
 - a. The Report of the Leaders (9:1,2)
 - b. The Reaction of the Leader (9:3,4)
 - 1) His Penitence (9:5-15)
 - 2) His Prayer (9:5-15)
 2. The Decisions (Chapter 10)
 - a. The Confession (10:1-4)
 - b. The Consecration (10:5-6)

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make a covenant (vs. 3) Lit., “Cut a Covenant.” This is an allusion to the solemn ceremony used by several ancient nations, when they entered into a covenant with each other. The victims, slain as a sacrifice on this occasion, were divided, and the parts laid asunder: the contracting parties then passed between them, imprecating, as a curse on those who violated the sacred compact, that they might in like manner be cut asunder (Ge 15:10). (*New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*)