

# The Book of Ezra

REPENT - RETURN - REBUILD - RESTORE



Thursday Morning Bible Class  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Wauwatosa, WI

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1

## Chapter 9 – Intermarriage

- † “Exogamy” – the practice of marrying outside of one’s group
- † Important theme: Reject idolatry and pagan practices.
- † Israel had been warned by Moses and the prophets of the dangers of marrying heathen people. (Deut. 7:3-4)
- † A deeper issue was the corruption of the “holy seed” – This threatened the coming of the Messiah.

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## Chapter 9 – Intermarriage

- † Intermarriage was attractive, especially to the upper classes, for political and economic reasons.
- † A second theme in Chapters 9 & 10 is repentance.
- † These chapters also show Ezra to be a wise spiritual leader of God’s people.

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**Chapter 9 – Intermarriage**

- † 9:1 – This took place some 4 ½ months after Ezra’s arrival.
- † A lot of ethnic groups were involved, but what was significant was their pagan religions and the fact that they would lead God’s people into idolatry. (2 Cor. 6:14-18)
- † 2 – The priests and leaders were accused of “unfaithfulness.”

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**Chapter 9 – Intermarriage**

- † 3-5 – Ezra’s reaction was one of grief. He tore his clothes, pulled out tufts of hair, and sat in silence for hours. He broke his silence when he fell to his knees in prayer.
- † 9:6-15 – Ezra’s prayer alternates between confession of sin and acknowledgement of God’s grace.

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**Chapter 9 – Intermarriage**

- † 6 – Ezra acknowledges shame both personally and corporately.
- † He connects with the present and the past.
- † One of their sins is that they did not learn from the past.

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6

**Chapter 9 – Intermarriage**

8-9 – Having confessed their guilt, Ezra turns to God’s mercy, which they did not deserve.

God granted mercy to:

- 1) Leave a remnant
- 2) Give the Judeans a “peg” – a secure hold so that God could enlighten them.

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**Chapter 9 – Intermarriage**

† 10-12 – The second confession focuses on the present generation’s sin. He offers no excuses or blame others.

† Ezra acknowledges their guilt and relies solely on the grace of God for absolution.

† 13-15 – 2 rhetorical questions:

- † 1) Should Israel turn it’s back on God?” – NO
- † 2) Would God be justified in destroying his people? YES

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

† 1 – Ezra’s prayer drew a large crowd who wept with him.

† 2 – Shecaniah – God’s grace gives them hope.

† 3 – He proposes a new covenant – that they put away their foreign wives.

† 4 – But Shecaniah did not have the authority to do this, but Ezra did.

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9

**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † 5 – Ezra gathers the leading priests and Levites to take an oath to rid themselves of their foreign wives.
- † An example of good leadership: Ezra had the authority to force the action, but he let the people propose the solution and commit to the oath.
- † 6-8 – The leaders called for an assembly.

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † 9-10 – They gathered, trembling from fear, and because it was December and it was raining.
- † 10 – Ezra confronts them with their sin
- † 11 – The solution? To confess their sin before God, and take action, separating themselves from the foreign influence.

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † The primary concern was to keep Israel separate and pure from false Gods.
- † But what about the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment?
- † God’s will for marriage is to be permanent. (Matt. 19:4)
- † Numerous examples of intermarriage – i.e. Ruth and Boaz

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † **The First Commandment takes precedence over all other commands, since without fear, faith and trust in God above all things, one cannot fulfill any of the commandments.**
- † **They needed to separate themselves from the abominations of their foreign neighbors.**

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † **We are, at times, faced with similar choices.**
- † **12-13 – The assembly agreed, but they are cold and wet and this would all take some time.**
- † **14 – So the leaders of each community worked out the details and applied it one community at a time.**

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**Chapter 10 – A New Covenant**

- † **15 – Are always some who vote “no.”**
- † **16 – It took three months to investigate all the marriages, from Dec. 29, 458 BC to March 27, 457 BC.**
- † **18-44 – The list of those who had intermarried. 113 men.**

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