

Sermon Series Notes

REDEMPTION

A STUDY IN EZRA



"Sin, Marriage & the Mercy of God" (Ezra 9)

Danny Hodges - OT2335

I. THE SIN

A. God's Commandments Regarding Marriage

* See Ex.34:16; Deut.7:1-4; II Cor.6:14-15

B. The Issue Was Not Racial, But Spiritual

* Rahab (Joshua 2, 6; Matt.1:5; Ruth; Matt.1:6a)

C. The Vital Importance Of Marrying In The Will Of God

* Luke 14: 20 "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.'

* Solomon (I Kings 11:4)

D. How To Know I Am Marrying In The Will Of God

1. Is the person I intend to marry born again?

2. Are they mature/responsible?

3. Overall character

- Integrity

- Character is more important than looks

- Prov.31: 30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

4. Are they humble?

5. How do they handle money?

- Honor the Lord?

- In debt?

6. Have they been married before?

- Why did the marriage end?
- Am I free biblically to marry this divorced person?

7. Do I have the blessing of the church? (Heb.13:17)

II. REACTION TO THE SIN

A. Ezra's Emotion

* vv.3-4 This is a very emotional reaction to the news. Tearing one's clothing was an act in this culture that suggested something very serious had happened.

* Gen.37: 29 When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not there, he tore his clothes.

* Gen.37: 31 Then they got Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood.

32 They took the ornamented robe back to their father and said, "We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son's robe."

33 He recognized it and said, "It is my son's robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces."

34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days.

* Gen.44: 12 Then the steward proceeded to search, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13 At this, they tore their clothes

* Matt.26: 65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.

* We should not be surprised at Ezra' emotional response to this sin. Here they are in a place of blessing (vv.8-10) right in the midst of God's blessing upon their lives, they disregard His commands

B. Ezra's Prayer

1. It is not self-righteous

* v.6 "Our" sins. This is way an intercessor should pray. He does not put himself above his brothers in any kind of self-righteous manner.

* When we pray for America, confessing the sins of America, let's include ourselves as part of the problem.

* II Chron.7:14; Isaiah 6:1ff

* Luke 18: 11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector 13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but

beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' 14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

* Self-righteous prayers reveal a heart that does not see the wickedness within one's own heart (Jer. 17:9) it could happen to you if you become careless, you could make the same mistake I Cor. 10: 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

* Story of Friday 8-28-09, Diving and came up w/boat drifted away If you are careless, disaster could happen to you God is no respecter of persons

* Note: I am a leader, and I failed three men that I am called to lead the leaders here failed Ezra as a leader prays for them, realizing the same thing could happen to him!

2. It makes no excuses for the sin

* I could have tried to blame Ryan for not setting the anchor

* v.7 We understand why we're in the situation that we're in

* Prov. 19: 3 A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the LORD.

* King Saul made excuse for his sin/failure (see I Samuel 15:8-23).

3. It recognizes the mercy of God on their behalf

* vv.8-9 We are still in bondage, yet God has blessed us and shown us favor v.13b

* Lam.3: 22 It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

* Gen.19: 16 When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.

Hab.3: 2 LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

4. It realizes that if there is no repentance, mercy will end one day (v.14).

* Prov.25: 13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

* John 5: 14 Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."

* Amos 4: 11 "I overthrew some of you as I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD.
12 "Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel."

5. It concludes with them standing before the mercy of God

* This is exactly where one wants to be - if your heart is contrite (godly sorrow).

* Nehemiah 9: 31 But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

* Daniel 9:18 We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy.

* II Sam.24: 14 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men."

* See Psalm 51:1-7, 10, 16-17; Note: Ezra 8:35

CONCLUSION

* Heb.4:16

* If the pattern of Ezra's prayer is followed in the lives of those who had sinned, a fresh batch of mercy would fall upon them