

***Rebuilding What Was Lost***  
***The Book of Ezra-Nehemiah***



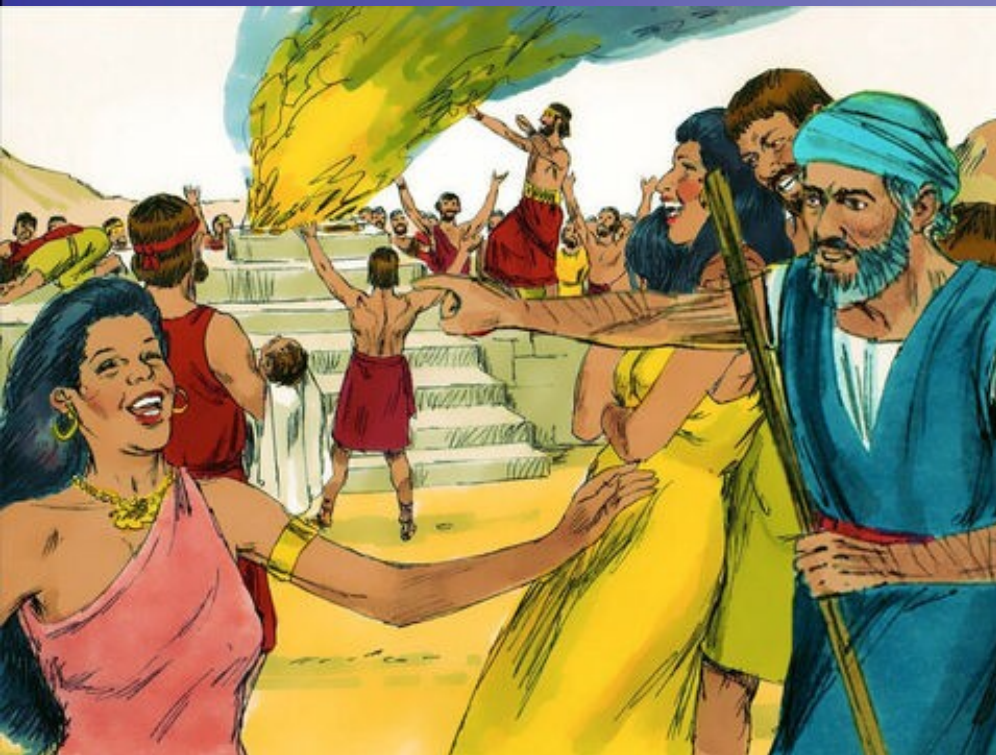
# ***Rebuilding What Was Lost***

- *A Little Bit of Background*
- *The Return*
- *Laying the Foundation*
- *Letters to Kings*
- *The Return of the Heroes*
- *After “The End” (part 3)*



# After “The End”

- Ezra the Scribe has come back to Jerusalem
  - Everyone was doing it right at the end of Chapter 8
    - Please read Ezra 9:1-2
      - What had God specifically said to His people when they entered Canaan way back in Deuteronomy 7:1-4?
        - How could they keep screwing this up (in Judges, here in Ezra, etc.)?  
(for that matter, how can we keep screwing things up today?)



# After “The End”

- Ezra the Scribe has come back to Jerusalem
  - Everyone was doing it right at the end of Chapter 8
    - Please read Ezra 9:1-2
    - What was Ezra's reaction in Ezra 9:3-4?
      - Why did Ezra and his people respond this way?  
(in particular, why were they so *personally* shocked and devastated by the actions of those who had ignored or forgotten God's commands?)



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    - Please read Ezra 9:1-2
    - What was Ezra's reaction in Ezra 9:3-4?
    - How did Ezra pray in Ezra 9:5-7?
      - Why would he pray this way—wasn't the whole point that *he* had been trying to do the right thing and that it was the *other* group that was sinning?



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    - How did Ezra pray in Ezra 9:5-7?
    - Please read Ezra 9:8-9
      - How did we read this last week?
        - Is this a light of hope to cling to in the darkness?
        - Is this a light of hope to cling to in the darkness that we've now just foolishly thrown away?
      - Why would people ever do that?



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    - How did Ezra pray in Ezra 9:5-7?
    - Please read Ezra 9:8-9
    - Please read Ezra 9:10-12
      - But aren't these the *less-important* commands?  
(y'know, not the “Ten Commandment”-type sins that everyone *knows* are wrong)



- How can it really be a sin to want to make peace with your neighbors?
- How can it really be a sin to love or to marry the “wrong” person?
- How can it really be a sin to eat the “wrong” fruit?
- What are we expecting to grow when we plant something that God has told us not to in our lives?



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    - How did Ezra pray in Ezra 9:5-7?
    - Please read Ezra 9:8-9
    - Please read Ezra 9:10-12
    - Please read Ezra 9:13
      - How is this the Gospel message in a nutshell?
  - What should our reaction to it be?
    - 1) To ignore it and try to keep on living in our comfortable ignorance?
    - 2) To accept it and live in guilt and abject shame?
    - 3) To accept it, accept God's grace, and then daily—in *His* strength—try to live in that grace?
  - Why is that so hard for people to wrap their heads around?





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    - Please read Ezra 9:13
    - Please read Ezra 9:14-15



- Why was this such a conundrum?
  - How can the people come and make sin offerings to God in the Temple to be forgiven when those leading worship in the Temple are themselves so corrupted by sin?
  - How does an episode like this help us to understand the immensity of Truths like we see in Hebrews 4:13-16?

