

# ***Violations in the Office of Marriage Part 10***

## ***Marrying with Non Believers and the Unlawful Marriages***

### ***The Reformations of Ezra***

We continue to discuss in this message the violations in the office of marriage

***G. God warned them not to intermarry with non-believers:*** We continue in this message to speak about the violations in the office of marriage and in pertain not to intermarry with non-believers.

The book of Ezra speaks more clearly about foreign wives and their children who were sent away. Ezra and Nehemiah were working together in rebuilding the wall and in putting principles of Godly marriage and correcting wrongdoing, including the unlawful marriages that harmed God's church.

Let us read in ***Ezra 9*** and ***10***, and meditate of what had taken place in dealing with such shameful marriages: There were many at that time, the same as today, who transgressed the command of the Lord and married strange wives, and they were in unlawful marital relationships. ***When God's people marrying wrong partners that had endangered the holy seed and mingled themselves with the people of the land.*** At the time of Ezra such unlawful marriages were reported to Ezra the priest and he was forced to face it and to deal with it so that the holy race, the next generation will be preserved: ***"1 Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands."*** (Ezra 9:1-2 KJV) In spite of their large numbers who did such, the matter was not neglected and put aside. They dealt with it properly and precisely. ***Even today, there are many unlawful marriages and live-in relationships that dishonor God and need to be dealt with according to God's commands and the leading of the Holy Ghost. We should not be intimidated that there are a large number of such marriages and surrender ourselves and accept the havoc that the devil did. If we do that, destruction would come into the church and will not spare the rest who want to live in obedience to God's Word.***

***"3 And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished. 4 Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice."*** (Ezra 9:3-4 KJV) In spite of their large numbers who did such, the matter was not neglected and put aside. Ezra took it seriously and they dealt with it properly and precisely. ***\* Even today, there are many unlawful marriages, for example single parents who had not married the parents of their children but went and married others: and live-in relationships having children without marriage that dishonor God and need to be dealt with according to God's commands and the leading of the Holy Ghost: and the cases of divorce and remarriages. \* We should not be intimidated that there are a large number of such marriages and surrender ourselves and***

***accept the havoc that the devil did. If we do that, destruction would come into the church and will not spare the rest who want to live in obedience to God's Word.***

Ezra at that time knelt down and prayed to God for that situation and interceded for such a sin for the people: ***"5 And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the LORD my God, 6 And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. 7 Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. 8 And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. 9 For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem. 10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, 11 Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. 12 Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. 13 And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; 14 Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? 15 O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this."*** (Ezra 9:5-15 KJV) Ezra in facing the unfaithfulness of the Israelites by intermarrying with heathen nations and adopting their practices and polluting the holy race, he fell down on his knees and prayed and interceded for such kind of sin. He described to God all the details of the sins that the Israelites did by breaking His commands who prohibited them to intermarry with the nations around them, and in following the customs and practices of the worldly nations that were around them and how they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. The Lord responded to that prayer and gave Ezra and the Israelites the wisdom how to handle those sins and the decision they finally reached by recording all those who did that and handled each case accordingly. ***In the same way we need to kneel down and pray to God to face such issues of unlawful marriages who will teach us how to handle such.*** Ezra kneeling down in prayer resulted in the following:

***A. As Ezra was kneeling down and praying God gathered people around him who confessed their sins and agreed to correct the wrong doings that had happened:*** At that time of Ezra, it was agreed upon, that what had happened is sin and needed to be dealt with, by sending the strange wives and their children away. Ezra initially faced the matter in prayer and fasting, grieving the sins that the people did, crying to God, confessing that sin, and renouncing it. ***"1***

Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.” (Ezra 10:1 KJV) While Ezra was doing that the Lord touched the heart of the people around him to come, joined Ezra, and agreed with him to deal with it, “2 And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. 3 Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law.” (Ezra 10:2-3 KJV) They trusted Ezra and gave him the lead to do what was needed to be done to solve this issue. Who would believe that the people will be willing to do that to please God? Such encourages us today that we should not doubt and fear that people will not agree if theirs sins are faced and are requested to mend their ways. The people commissioned Ezra to deal with this matter. In the same way as we kneel down and pray about such matters God will bring to us people who will confess their sins and who are willing to correct their wrong doings as we kneel down and pray as Ezra did.

**B. They gave Ezra the authority and the right to decide on their behalf:** They told him: “4 Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.” (Ezra 10:4 KJV)

**C. Ezra took the courage to face this matter:** “5 Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they swore.” (Ezra 10:5 KJV) Ezra through prayer and fasting trusted God that He will help him; God used Ezra’s willingness to confront the people with their sins and implement in their lives what they ought to follow. In the same way we need today to be encouraged and go and face the people of such sinful matter and oblige them to correct it.

**D. Ezra was encouraged to continue to mourn, pray and fast over the unfaithfulness of the Israelites:** “6 Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib: and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away.” (Ezra 10:6 KJV) In the same way we need to continue in our prayer and fasting until such issues are dealt with.

**E. God enabled them to gather the people and to be firm in the implementation that those who sinned would separate themselves from the nations around them and from their foreign wives:** “7 And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; 8 And that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away. 9 Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.” (Ezra 10:7-9 KJV)

**F. Ezra faced them with their sins, pronounced to them God’s will and gave them the decision and what they needed to do:** “10 And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them,

Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. 11 Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.” (Ezra 10:10-11 KJV)

**G. With Ezra, God raised good number of other people to deal with this critical issue and great sin and with the large number who were involved in such unlawful marriages:** “12 Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. 13 But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither is this a work of one day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this thing. 14 Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us. 15 Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah were employed about this matter: and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. 16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. 17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.” (Ezra 10:12-17 KJV) In the same way God will raise up with us Godly people who will help us to deal with such a great sin and the multitude who committed such sin.

**H. Those guilty of Intermarriage were finally forced to comply with God’s will:** “18 And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives: namely, of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19 And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass. 20 And of the sons of Immer; Hanani, and Zebadiah. 21 And of the sons of Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uziah. 22 And of the sons of Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethaneel, Jozabad, and Elasa. 23 Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah, (the same is Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. 24 Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri. 25 Moreover of Israel: of the sons of Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah. 26 And of the sons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah. 27 And of the sons of Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza. 28 Of the sons also of Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. 29 And of the sons of Bani; Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth. 30 And of the sons of Pahathmoab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh. 31 And of the sons of Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. 33 Of the sons of Hashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. 34 Of the sons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel, 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau, 38 And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei, 39 And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah, 40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41 Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. 43 Of the sons of Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah. 44 All these had taken strange wives: and some of them had wives by whom they had children.” (Ezra 10:18-44 KJV)

We as a church when we are willing to honor God and do what is right then God will help us and He will raise people with us to do what is needful as He did with Ezra. To deal with such issues it will take time, but we should deal with it and go through it.

People's lives should be weight with the salvation of Christ. Sin in their lives here is in the form of marriages with foreign wives, and today the unlawful marriages and live-in relationships, needed to be corrected and managed so that when people repent the salvation of Christ will come true into their lives.

Ezra and Nehemiah needed to deal with such sin properly and radically. We, the Church of God, are responsible for keeping the Holy seed, our offspring to be raised in a Godly way. Therefore, we should deal with the sin of wrong marriages radically.

Nehemiah and Ezra inspire us to repent and be obedient to God in viewing and dealing with certain marital issues and situations that will bring defilement to our children and descendants and bring them away from God. For this purpose and at this stage, we can commit ourselves to do the following:

- We will not approve of marrying non-believers.
- We will not approve marriages that man is not mature and well prepared materially and spiritually to care for the family.
- We will not approve dating, courting, or having a boyfriend or girlfriend as a way of finding a partner for marriage. These are worldly practices and non-Biblical. We will not do as the Israelites did and corrupted themselves with practices of the people around them, ***“I Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.” (Ezra 9:1 KJV)***
- We will approve and officiate marriages of our co-workers as long as we are sure that they are in line with God's will.
- We will discontinue our ministry and fellowship with our co-workers who did not listen to instruction and went ahead and married not following God's will. We do that so the rest of our co-workers will not be enticed to do the same.
- Married person whose partner is involved in adulterous relationship with another person we advise him or her to separate from his or her partner till she or he repent.
- Married person whose partner is bringing to him constant trouble (drunkard, a thief, or a violent person who beat and endanger life) and who harm the children, then we advise her or him to temporarily separate till her or his partner repent and become harmless.
- Divorced person cannot remarry as long as his or her partner is alive.
- Those who are divorced and married another person, while their ex-partner is still alive, we consider their marriage relationship is adultery and their marriages are unlawful marriages and we recommend them to separate, ***“9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. 10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. 11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. 12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.” (Mark 10:9-12 KJV)***

***My Dear and Beloved:*** Let us be encouraged with the Word of God that we received in this message and let us stand firm willing to deal with the sin of the unlawful marriages. Let us have faith in God that as He enabled Ezra to deal with such a sin, He will enable us to deal with such unlawful marriages. Let us trust God fully that He will turn the heart of the people back toward Him and He will raise people who will trust us and are willing to work with us to cleanse God's churches and God's people from such sins. Let us trust Him fully that He will protect us, provide our needs and He will sustain us as we are willing to deal with unlawful marriages and until the time He will come to take us with Him to Heaven. Let us pray ...

***My Prayer:*** Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for the teaching that I received in this message that motivated me to stand firm to face the sin of unlawful marriages.

*Come now to God and confess and renounce all your sins. Confess and renounce your lack of faith and trust in God. Confess and renounce your approval for marrying with non believer. Confess your marriage with a non believer. Confess and renounce your yoke with non believers, having many friends and your bondage with the world, material things and the Media. Confess and renounce your lust, immoralities and your approval for dating, courting, or having a boyfriend or girlfriend. Confess and renounce doing your own will and not the will of God, your tolerance to various sins and your non willingness to serve God and suffer for Him as He ordained in His Word. Confess and renounce your fear of man and your non willingness to face people with their sins and your non willingness to be persecuted. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Lord I commit myself to stand against the sin of unlawful marriages. Lord I am willing to stand firm as Ezra did and deal with those who are involved in such marriages. Lord I am willing to implement the discipline and the teaching we learned in this message in the life of my family, ministry and the church that you placed me in. Lord strengthen me, protect me, provide my needs and give me good health to continue to serve you.*

*Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented and committed themselves to follow the teaching that we received from you and implement it in the life of their families, ministries and the church. Lord use them to cleanse your churches and your people from such a sin. Lord protect them and provide for them to continue to serve you and implement your will.*

*Lord help us as your church and sustain us to continue to deal with the sin of unlawful marriages. Lord we trust you to raise more workers to help in this ministry. Lord lead us to churches and ministries who are willing to be helped and cleansed from such a sin. Lord protect us from persecution and prove your Word to those who oppose us. We come against all the works of the devil and demons against us, and we cast them away from the people of God who are infected with such a sin in the name of Jesus. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need and lead us to evangelize and to reach new people with the gospel of Jesus. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord help us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord prepare us for your coming to take us with you when you come. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all in Jesus name, Amen.*

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