

1393 The Faithful Remnant within the Remnant

As the children of Israel were about to enter the Promised Land, Moses told them why God had given it to them. **Deuteronomy 9:5** (NKJV):

⁵ It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Israeli people entered the land and conquered it for a time. Then, they relaxed and lived in their new-found prosperity. Eventually, they succumbed to the same failures as the Canaanites before them, and God sent them into Assyrian and Babylonian captivity.

After seventy years in Babylon, God sent a remnant of the Jews back to Israel to rebuild His nation and reestablish His worship. However, the few who returned compromised the will of God and intermarried with the land's inhabitants. Let me read some of **Ezra 9**:

³ So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down astonished. ⁴ Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice. -Ezra begins his prayer and recounts the sins of the people- ⁶ And I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens. -Then Ezra- acknowledges God's grace and the people's failure- ⁸ And now for a little while grace has been shown from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. ⁹ For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem. ¹⁰ And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken Your commandments, -Ezra concludes his prayer- ¹⁵ O LORD God of Israel, You are righteous, for we are left as a remnant, as it is this day. Here we are before You, in our guilt, though no one can stand before You because of this!"

In the next chapter, repentance emerges among the people as Ezra prays. This is a familiar pattern, but not just for Israel. America has followed a similar path and experienced at least two "Great Awakenings" after spiritual lulls.

America was not God's "chosen nation," although the people chose to follow Him. Early Americans knew the scriptures and had a healthy biblical worldview. As they honored God, He blessed them with abundant prosperity. Our patriotic songs of the past reflect our gratitude for His many gifts.

We follow the same pattern as God's people in the ancient past. Accustomed to His generosity, we have compromised and "**have not separated ourselves from the peoples of the lands, concerning their abominations**" (**Ezra 9:1**, adapted).

Though we are in the world, we are not "of the world" (**John 17:14-15**). God calls His people to "holiness" amid the world because HE is holy (**Leviticus 11:44**). To be "holy," one must be "sanctified" and set apart from the crowd to live with God's purposes in mind.

Too often, Christian Americans can become so "apart" from the world that they insulate themselves in their church buildings from those who need to hear God's good news of abundant life. Or, they ignore God's standards and participate in the "ways of the world" with no noticeable differences. Is it any wonder Ezra

pulled out his hair and tore his clothes when he heard the news that the people had compromised with the Canaanites?¹

We may recall that the day Jesus died, God tore the veil in the temple from top to bottom.² It is essential to see the direction because this was not an accident or a coincidence. The veil that separated the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was thicker than a man's hand. It was not a flimsy curtain. It took great force to tear it. Ezra expressed grief and anger and tore his clothes. God conveyed similar feelings when He tore the veil. He grieved the death of His Son and was angry at the sin that caused it.

Our forefathers dealt with the same issues the children of Israel, and we have had. Their solution is also ours. On Election Day, May 31, 1775, **Harvard** President **Samuel Langdon** addressed the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. He stated:

We have rebelled against God. We have lost the true spirit of Christianity, though we retain the outward profession and form of it. We have neglected and set light by the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and His holy commands and institutions. ... The worship of many is but mere compliment to the Deity, while their hearts are far from Him. By many, the Gospel is corrupted into a superficial system of moral philosophy, little better than ancient Platonism. ... My brethren, let us repent and implore the divine mercy. Let us amend our ways and our doings, reform everything that has been provoking the Most High, and thus endeavor to obtain the gracious interpositions of providence for our deliverance. ... May our land be purged from all its sins! Then the Lord will be our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble, and we will have no reason to be afraid, though thousands of enemies set themselves against us roundabout. May the Lord hear us in this day of trouble. ...

Corrupt leaders have been working for generations to remove America from its influential Christian position in the world. For at least seventy years, Christian Americans have been brainwashed into "going along to get along" and have cooperated with our "Canaanites." We have worshiped their idols and indoctrinated our children to their beliefs. Such a compromise is catastrophic to the cause of Christ and the blessings of liberty.

Dr. Benjamin Rush was a medical doctor and patriot. Many called him the "Father of Public Schools Under the Constitution." He stated the importance of teaching the Bible to our children in public schools.

The great enemy of the salvation of man, in my opinion, never invented a more effective means of limiting Christianity from the world than by persuading mankind that it was improper to read the Bible at schools.

It is no wonder America's soul is lost. We have neglected God's word and opportunities to get to know Him by removing the Bible and His presence from our schools, government, and families. Most "Christian" families do not read the Bible, pray, or even talk about God apart from Sunday services.

Ezra's remnant within the remnant made the difference. Perhaps God will rekindle His Spirit within our nation through His faithful few in America. Ezra prayed and acted in the best interests of his people. May we do the same for ours.

Keep The Light of God's Faithful Few Burning!

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¹ **Ezra 9:3**

² **Matthew 27:51**