

People are people ...

- did not separate themselves
- the holy race intermingled with “gods”
- faithlessness
- officials and chief men foremost
- appalled
- ashamed and blushing
- iniquities risen higher than our heads
- guilt mounted up to the heavens
- iniquities
- utter shame
- slaves
- forsaken your commandments
- our evil deeds
- our great guilt
- break your commandments again
- before you in our guilt
- none can stand before you because of this
- broken faith with our God

God is God ...

(But now for a brief moment/Ezra 9:8 ...)

- favor has been shown by the LORD our God
- to leave us a remnant
- and to give us a secure hold within his holy place,
- that our God may brighten our eyes
- and grant us a little reviving in our slavery.

(For we are slaves /Ezra 9:9 ...)

- yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery,
- but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia,
- to grant us some reviving,
- to set up the house of our God,
- to repair its ruins,
- and to give us protection in Judea and Jerusalem.



What shall we say ... Again?

- God had stirred the hearts of three kings to bring his people back to Israel. Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes had carried out God’s will to the letter.
- Many faithful men and women left their homes to honor God in this rebuilding project. They traveled hundreds of miles and settled into a new land.
- After many years they laid the foundation and built the temple.
- Back finally in the holy land, worshiping in the temple of the God of heaven and earth.
- But now here they were, up to the heavens in sin as they had broken faith with God **AGAIN** and had sought the peace and prosperity of the people of the land.

Yet there is hope ...

(Ezra 10:1–44 ESV) 1 While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children, gathered to him out of Israel, for the people wept bitterly. 2 And Shecaniah the son of Jehiel, of the sons of Elam, addressed Ezra: “We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. 3 Therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the Law. 4 Arise, for it is your task, and we are with you; be strong and do it.” 5 Then Ezra arose and made the leading priests and Levites and all Israel take an oath that they would do as had been said. So they took the oath.

Even now (2014) there is hope ...