“Patriotism Gone Wrong”
July 5, 2026

SLIDE 1
After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost.” 3 As soon as I heard this, I tore my garment and my cloak and pulled hair from my head and beard and sat appalled. 4 Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice.
Ezra 9:1-4, ESV

SLIDE 2
“And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, 11 which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land that you are entering, to take possession of it, is a land impure with the impurity of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations that have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. 12 Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.’
Ezra 9:10-12, ESV

SLIDE 3
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.
Ezra 10:2-5, ESV

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SLIDE 4
Patriotism Gone Wrong
What Makes A People “Holy?”

SLIDE 5
As Christians, we read all of scripture in light of the Gospel: the life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.

Luke 24:25-27
Romans 15:4
Hebrews 1:1-2

SLIDE 6
So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.
Galatians 3:26-29, NIV

SLIDE 7
Guiding Questions for Ezra 9-10

What is God’s Word describing in this story?
What “red flags” do we see in the story?
How should we proceed as Gospel-centered readers of this story?

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SLIDE 8
What is Being Described in the Text?

After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, “The people of Israel and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2 For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. And in this faithlessness the hand of the officials and chief men has been foremost.” (Ezra 9:1-2, ESV)

SLIDE 9
Is there any biblical background for this accusation?

Exodus 34:11-16
Deuteronomy 7:1-4

SLIDE 10
What “red flags” do we see in the story?

For they have taken some of their daughters to be wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands. (Ezra 9:2, ESV)
Qodesh Zera (holy race/seed) — Isaiah 6:13; Ezra 9:2
Qodesh gowy (holy nation) — Exodus 19:6
Qodesh 'am (holy people) — Deuteronomy 7:6

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SLIDE 11
How should we proceed as Gospel-centered readers of this story?

1. Be Humbled by Ezra’s Zeal for Holiness

“And at the evening sacrifice I rose from my fasting, with my garment and my cloak torn, and fell upon my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God…” (Ezra 9:5, ESV)

SLIDE 12
How should we proceed as Gospel-centered readers of this story?

2. Be “Good Bereans” about the Scriptures
Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. (Acts 17:11, NIV)

A. No One Asked, No One Answered
B. Man's Wisdom vs. God's Word

Deuteronomy 24
Matthew 19
Exodus 22
Jeremiah 7

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SLIDE 13
The New Humanity
For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.
Galatians 3:27-29, ESV

SLIDE 14: BENEDICTION
But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.
Ephesians 2:13-16, ESV