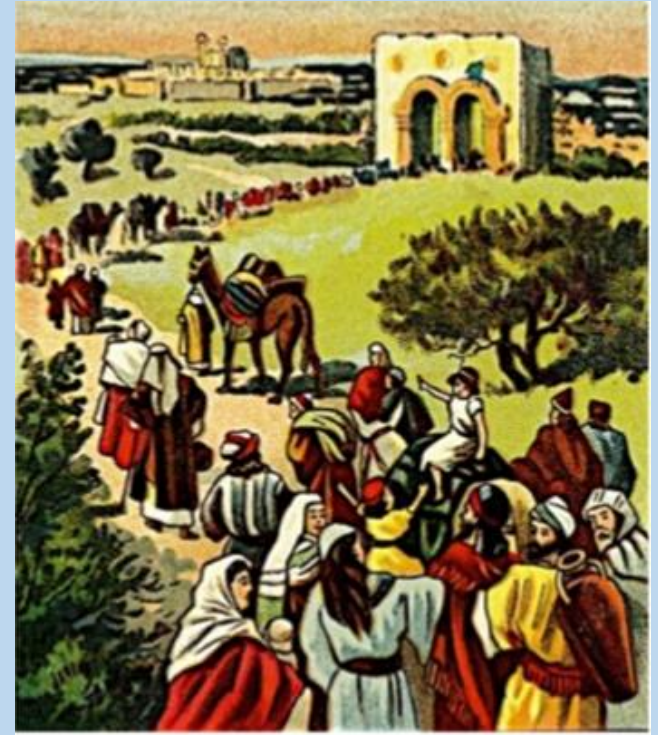


A crowd of people is shown from a low angle, with their hands raised in the air. The scene is dark, with a bright spotlight illuminating the center of the crowd. The text "Fully Devoted" is overlaid in large white letters on the right side of the image.

# Fully Devoted

*Ezra 9:1 – 10:1*

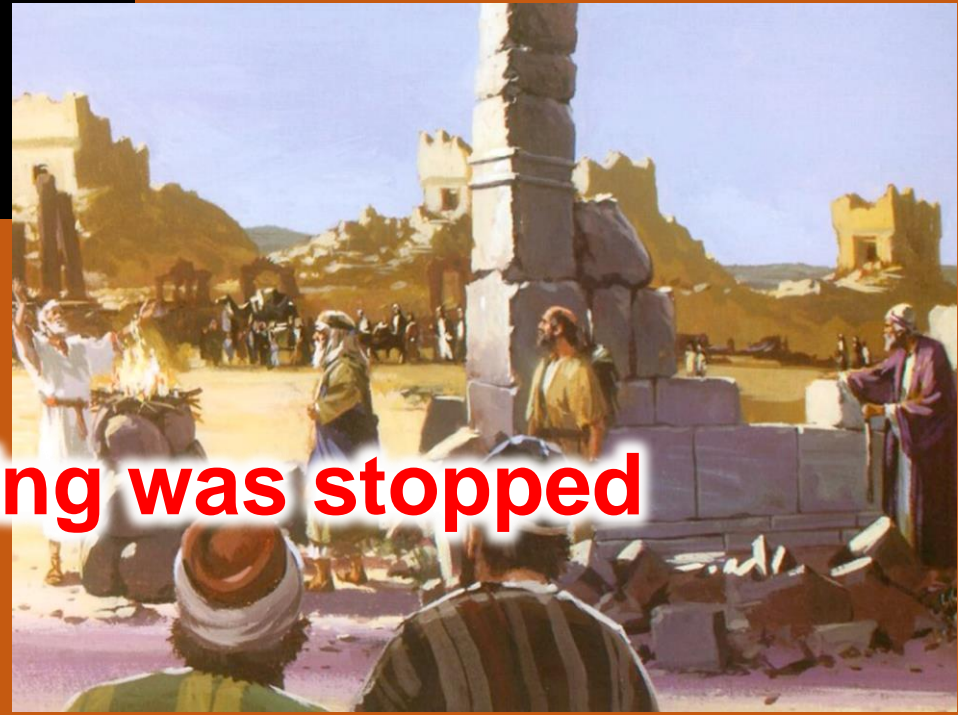
- Return from Exile



**“ ..everyone whose  
heart God had moved  
– prepared to go up  
and build the house  
of the Lord..”  
Ezra 1:5**

## **Oppositions – Ezra 4**

**The work of rebuilding was stopped**

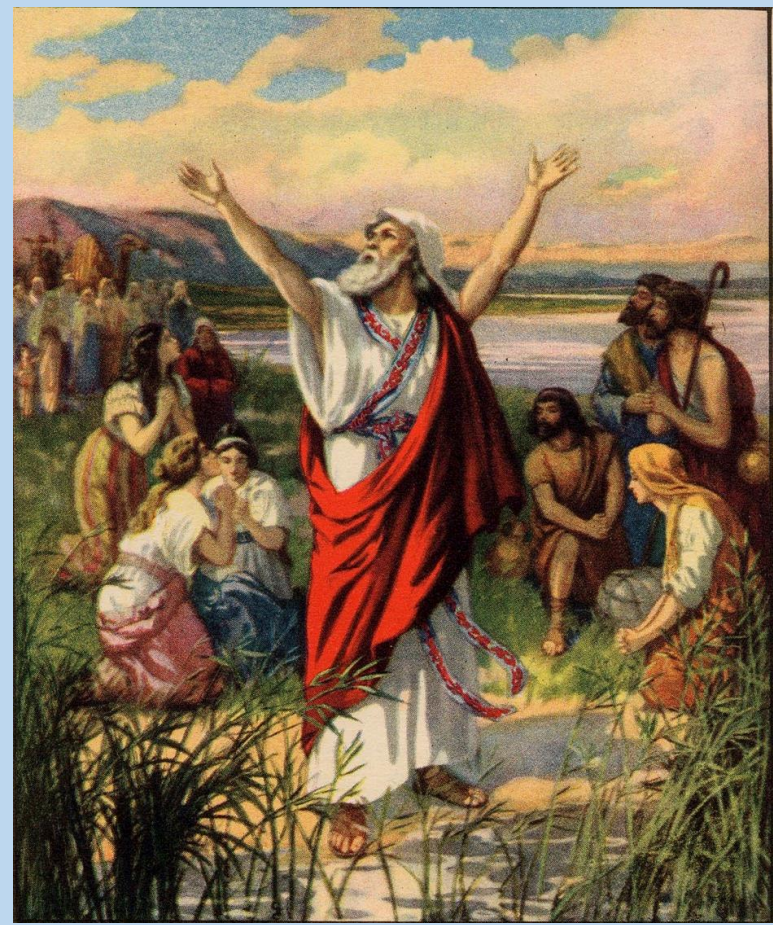


# Prophet Haggai

- "This is what the LORD of Heaven's Armies says: The people are saying, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the LORD'" (1:2)



- "Then the LORD sent this message through the prophet Haggai: 'Why are you living in paneled houses while my house lies in ruins?' (1:3-4)



**Zerubbabel  
(537-516)**

**Ezra (457-444) Nehemiah (444-430)**

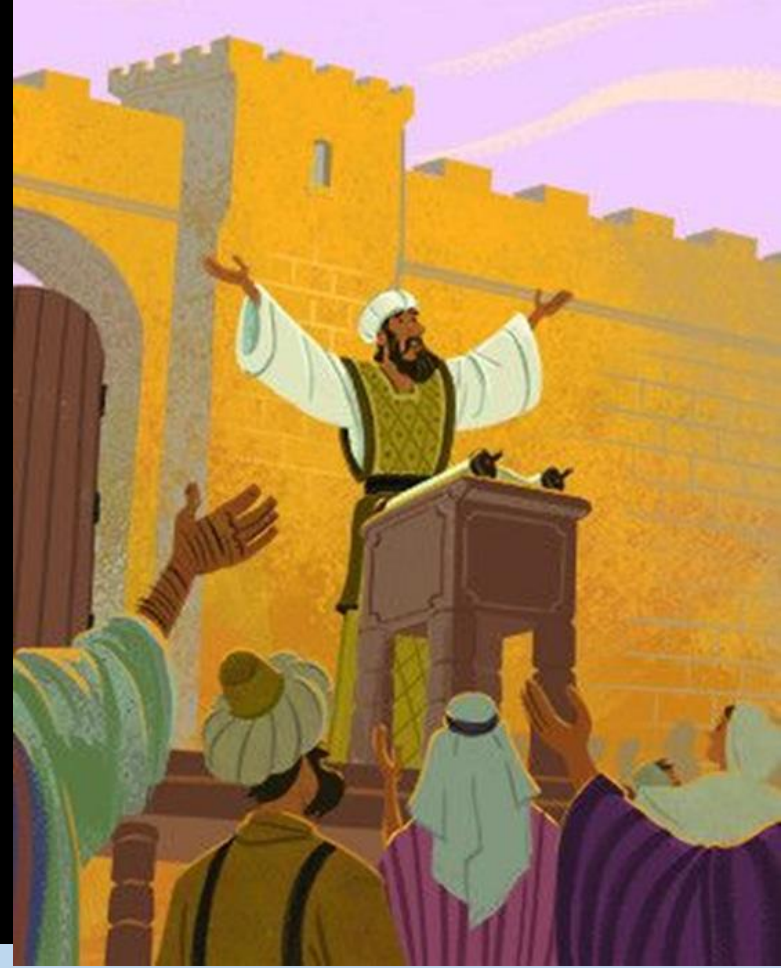
80 years after 1<sup>st</sup> Return





- Who is Ezra ?

- Son of priesthood lineage - Ezra 7
- His grandfather Hilkiah – helped in the reform during King Josiah
- 7:6, “a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses...”
- “ .. the hand of the LORD God was on him.”



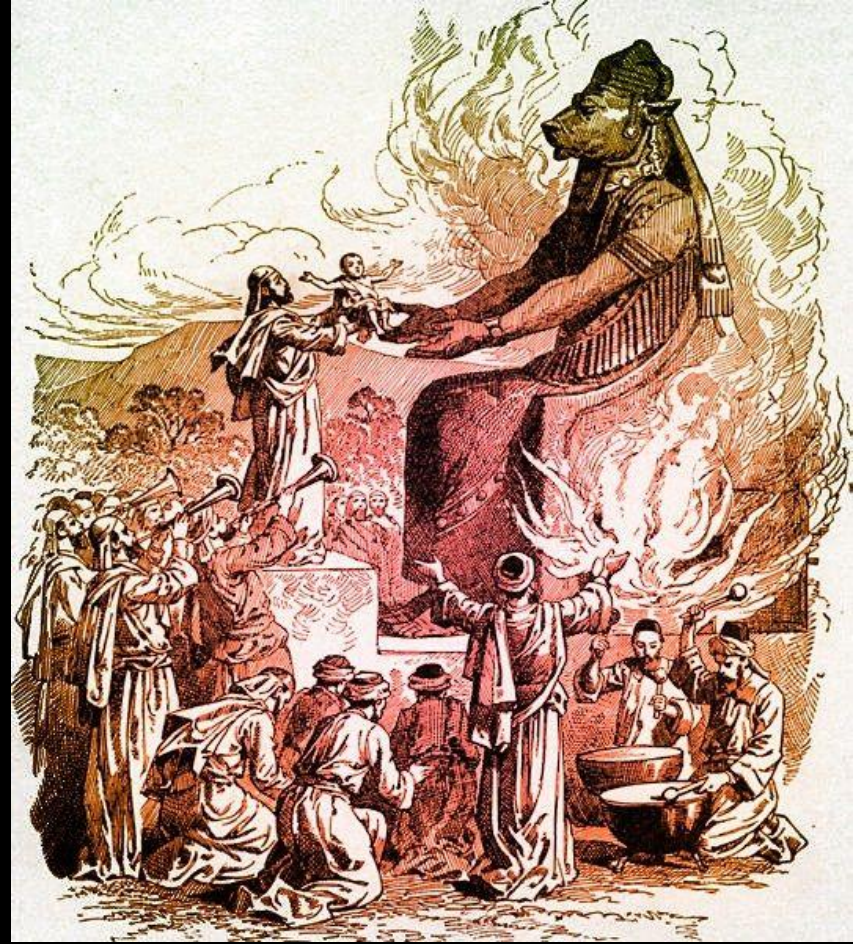
- **His mission – to teach the Law of God**
- **to restore the temple worship**
- **he was however immediately confronted with a big problem**

- **Detestable practices of the neighbouring people**

- many Israelites were involved – leaders, priests, Levites..







- It began with intermarriage
- Deut 7:3, “Do not intermarry with them ....”
- The reason: 7:4, “for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods,....”
- Joshua 23:13, “ ... until you perish from this good land, which the LORD your God has given you.”



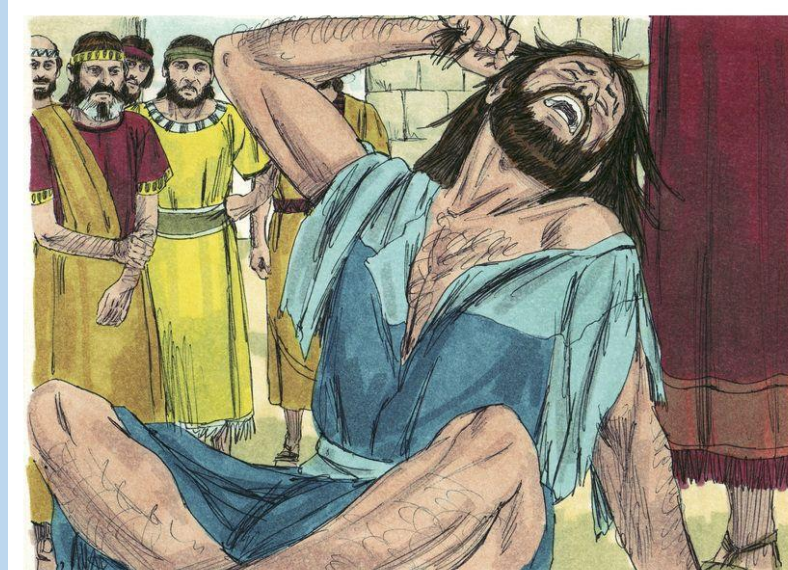
**For it came to pass, when  
Solomon was old, that his  
wives turned away his  
heart after other gods...**

**—1 Kings 11:4**

1 King 11:6 , “Solomon did evil..”

built altars for idols in high places

- Ezra was appalled and terribly grieved.
- He tore his clothes, pulled his hairs, sat there until the evening sacrifice
- He prayed



- In his prayer (Ezra 9:6-15)
  - he expressed he was ashamed & disgraced
  - he recognised the sins that resulted in Exile
  - he acknowledged God's grace of a remnant
  - God's kindness of a new life to rebuild
  - He lamented over the repeat offence

- Ezra 10:1
- “While Ezra was praying and confessing, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a large crowd of Israelites—men, women and children—gathered around him. They too wept bitterly.”



- They were touched by his actions and confession.
- it marked the beginning of healing
- Later a national confession in Nehemiah 10





SIN

**Intermarriage**



**Detestable Practices**



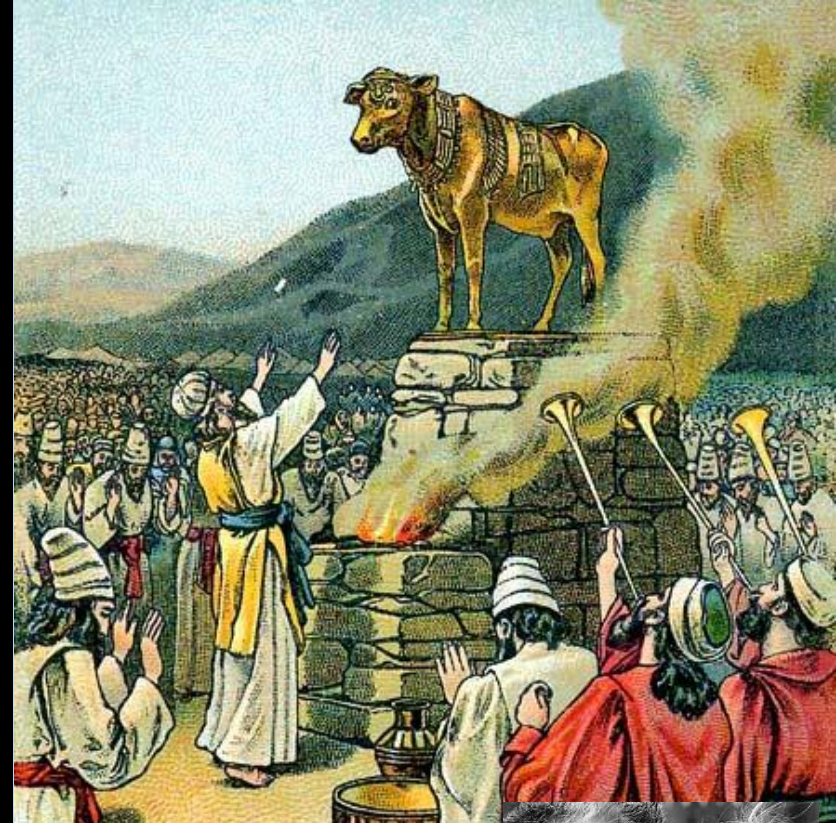
**Apostasy**

- James 1:14-15

- “but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”



I  YOU



*"i"dolatry  
and false gods*



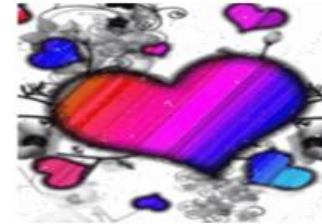
- Idolatry = if we love something
- or someone more than God



## Advice - Exhortation

<sup>5</sup> Remember the height from which you have fallen!  
Repent and do the things you did at first.

## Love is Paramount!



**Remember,  
Repent!  
Return  
to Love!**

**Recognise SIN  
as God calls IT !  
Seek God, Seek  
Healing!**

## Revelation 2-3 A Spiritual Healthcheck

- **Ephesus** – *Loyal but Loveless*
- **Pergamum** – *Faithful but Flaw*
- **Thyatira** – *Committed but Corrupted*
- **Sardis** – *'Dynamic' but Dying*
- **Laodicea** – *Crowded but Christless*





How may we be  
**FULLY DEVOTED**  
to God



**Practise Godliness**

**Be well versed**

**in the Word of God**

**Be a man or woman of prayer**

If you profess to be a Christian yet find full satisfaction in worldly pleasures and pursuits, your profession is false.

(Charles Spurgeon)