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THE BITTERSWEET STORY OF EZRA & NEHEMIAH



Sometimes our “solutions”
make **bad** situations **worse**.



**How do we know if a solution
is truly **from God**?**



Ezra 7:6

ESV

⁶ this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a **scribe** skilled in the Law of Moses that the Lord, the God of Israel, had given, and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was on him.

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Ezra 7:10

ESV

¹⁰ For Ezra had set his heart to **study** the Law of the Lord, and to **do** it and to **teach** his statutes and rules in Israel.

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Ezra 9:1

ESV

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.

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Ezra 9:2–3

ESV

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.**

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Ezra 10:3–4

ESV

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."

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Ezra 10:10–11

ESV

¹⁰ And Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have broken faith and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. ¹¹ Now then make confession to the Lord, the God of your fathers and do his will. **Separate yourselves** from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives.”

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Malachi 2:13

ESV

¹³ And this second thing you do. You cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because **he no longer regards the offering or accepts it** with favor from your hand.

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Malachi 2:14

ESV

¹⁴ But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and **the wife of your youth**, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

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Malachi 2:15

ESV

¹⁵ Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? **Godly offspring**. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

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Malachi 2:16

ESV

¹⁶ “For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the Lord, the God of Israel, **covers his garment with violence**, says the Lord of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.”

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We've all "**covered** our garment
with violence," haven't we?



God's solution is
patient, merciful, self-giving love.



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patient, merciful, self-giving love.



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