

## Kneeling Down

### Part 7

Scripture will teach us more about the value of kneeling down in prayer to deal with the sins of the people of God and to correct things and restore them back to whole will of God.

27- *“1 After these things had been done, the leaders came to me and said, “The people of Israel, including the priests and the Levites, have not kept themselves separate from the neighboring peoples with their detestable practices, like those of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites. 2 They have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. And the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness.” 3 When I heard this, I tore my tunic and cloak, pulled hair from my head and beard and sat down appalled. 4 Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel gathered around me because of this unfaithfulness of the exiles. And I sat there appalled until the evening sacrifice. 5 Then, at the evening sacrifice, I rose from my self-abasement, with my tunic and cloak torn, and fell on my knees with my hands spread out to the LORD my God 6 and prayed: “I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens. 7 From the days of our ancestors until now, our guilt has been great. Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today. 8 “But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage. 9 Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem. 10 “But now, our God, what can we say after this? For we have forsaken the commands 11 you gave through your servants the prophets when you said: ‘The land you are entering to possess is a land polluted by the corruption of its peoples. By their detestable practices they have filled it with their impurity from one end to the other. 12 Therefore, do not give your daughters in marriage to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. Do not seek a treaty of friendship with them at any time, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it to your children as an everlasting inheritance.’ 13 “What has happened to us is a result of our evil deeds and our great guilt, and yet, our God, you have punished us less than our sins deserved and have given us a remnant like this. 14 Shall we then break your commands again and intermarry with the peoples who commit such detestable practices? Would you not be angry enough with us to destroy us, leaving us no remnant or survivor? 15 LORD, the God of Israel, you are righteous! We are left this day as a remnant. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence.” (Ezra 9:1-15)* Ezra in facing the unfaithfulness of the Israelites by intermarrying with heathen nations and adopting their practices and polluting the holy race, he fell down on his knees and prayed and intercede for such kind of sin. He described to God all the details of the sins that the Israelites did by following the customs and practices of the worldly nations that were

around them and how they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and their sons, and have mingled the holy race with the peoples around them. The Lord responded to that prayer and gave Ezra and the Israelites the wisdom how to handle this sin and the decision they finally reached by recording all those who did that and handled each case accordingly. Ezra kneeling down in prayer resulted in the following:

*1- God gathered people around him who confessed their sins and agreed to correct the wrong doings that had happened: “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. 2 Then Shekariah son of Jehiel, one of the descendants of Elam, said to Ezra, “We have been unfaithful to our God by marrying foreign women from the peoples around us. But in spite of this, there is still hope for Israel. 3 Now let us make a covenant before our God to send away all these women and their children, in accordance with the counsel of my lord and of those who fear the commands of our God. Let it be done according to the Law.” (Ezra 10:1-3)*

*2- They gave Ezra the authority and the right to decide on their behalf: “4 Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it.” 5 So Ezra rose up and put the leading priests and Levites and all Israel under oath to do what had been suggested. And they took the oath.” (Ezra 10:5-6)*

*3- Ezra encouraged to continue to mourn, pray and fast over the unfaithfulness of the Israelites: “6 Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God and went to the room of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. While he was there, he ate no food and drank no water, because he continued to mourn over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.” (Ezra 10:6)*

*4- God enabled them to be firm in the implementation that those who sin would separate themselves from the nations around them and from their foreign wives: “7 A proclamation was then issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem for all the exiles to assemble in Jerusalem. 8 Anyone who failed to appear within three days would forfeit all his property, in accordance with the decision of the officials and elders, and would himself be expelled from the assembly of the exiles. 9 Within the three days, all the men of Judah and Benjamin had gathered in Jerusalem. And on the twentieth day of the ninth month, all the people were sitting in the square before the house of God, greatly distressed by the occasion and because of the rain. 10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, “You have been unfaithful; you have married foreign women, adding to Israel’s guilt. 11 Now honor the LORD, the God of your ancestors, and do his will. Separate yourselves from the peoples around you and from your foreign wives.” 12 The whole assembly responded with a loud voice: “You are right! We must do as you say. 13 But there are many people here and it is the rainy season; so we cannot stand outside. Besides, this matter cannot be taken care of in a day or two, because we have sinned greatly in this thing. 14 Let our officials act for the whole assembly. Then let everyone in our towns who has married a foreign woman come at a set time, along with the elders and judges of each town, until the fierce anger of our God in this matter is turned away from us.” 15 Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite, opposed this. 16 So the exiles did as was proposed. Ezra the priest selected men who were family*

heads, one from each family division, and all of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to investigate the cases, 17 and by the first day of the first month they finished dealing with all the men who had married foreign women.” (Ezra 10:7-17)

### Those Guilty of Intermarriage:


“18 Among the descendants of the priests, the following had married foreign women: From the descendants of Joshua son of Jozadak, and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib and Gedaliah. 19 (They all gave their hands in pledge to put away their wives, and for their guilt they each presented a ram from the flock as a guilt offering.) 20 From the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. 21 From the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel and Uziah. 22 From the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad and Elasaah. 23 Among the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah and Eliezer. 24 From the musicians: Eliashib. From the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem and Uri. 25 And among the other Israelites: From the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah and Benaiah. 26 From the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth and Elijah. 27 From the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad and Aziza. 28 From the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai and Athlai. 29 From the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluk, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal and Jeremoth. 30 From the descendants of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui and Manasseh. 31 From the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluk and Shemariah. 33 From the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh and Shimei. 34 From the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai and Jaasu. 38 From the descendants of Binnui: Shimei, 39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, 40 Maknadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42 Shallum, Amariah and Joseph. 43 From the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel and Benaiah. 44 All these had married foreign women, and some of them had children by these wives.” (Ezra 10:18-44)

**My Dear and Beloved:** Kneeling down is an act of faith acknowledging that God is in our mid and we are at His feet submitting our will to Him and petitioned Him to help us and aid us in our needs. Ponder on the message and apply the lesson in your life as you agree to pray.

**My Prayer:** Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for all what I have received and learn from your word. Lord help me to put into practice what I learn today, and give me wisdom and remind me to apply that in the right situation and the correct application. I thank you and praise you; this is my prayer in Jesus name. Amen.

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## The Bread Of Life

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“9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number \*, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.” (Revelation 7:9-12)

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