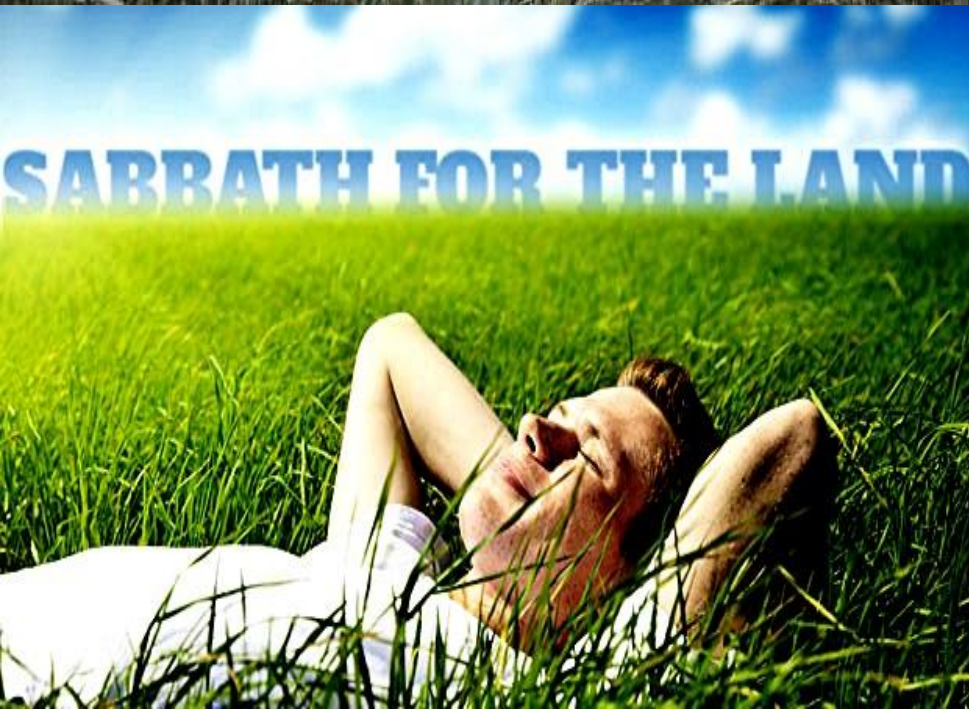


APPLYING TORAH THROUGH THE GENERATIONS

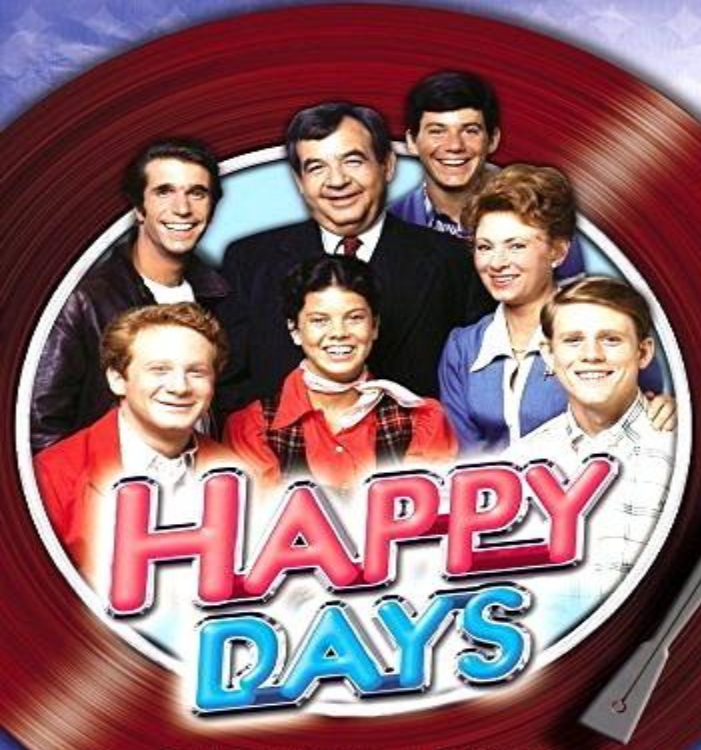
- Ezra's era (450 B.C) very different from Moses' era (1300 B.C.)
- Our era far removed from the Crusades (1100 A.D.)
- How do we apply the Law to each successive generation?
- In Babylon, it was impossible to observe all the Law
- None of the ritual law could be done
- The pagan society wouldn't allow for other laws to be observed



ADAPTING IN UNNOTICEABLE INCREMENTS

- In Babylon, Torah laws suspended.....But NOT by God
- In Judah, incorporating the ways and lifestyles of pagans
- Doesn't seem to be a conscious intent to fall away from God's Word
- In Book of Esther no mention of God, prayer, Shabbat, Festivals
- This was the mindset the Jews who came with Zerubbabel had buried deep in their minds
- Zealous to reinstitute SOME cherished Torah rituals





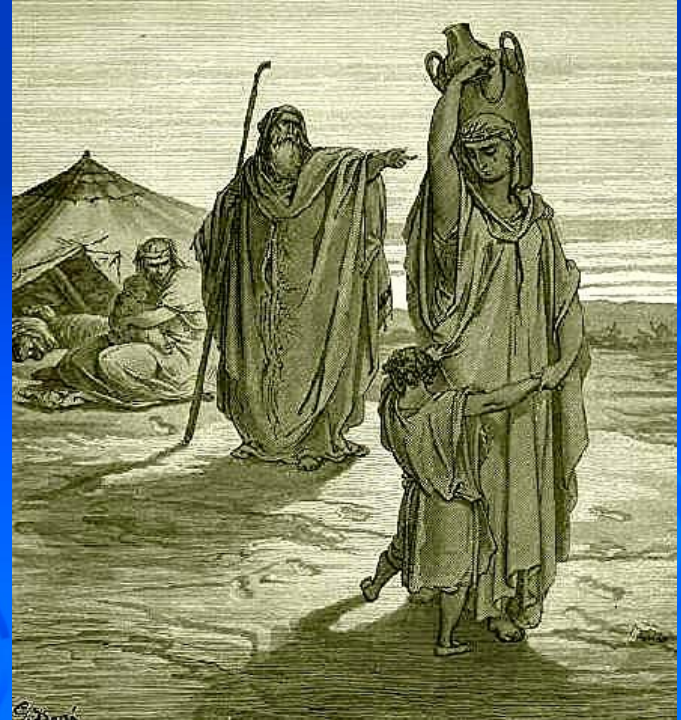
NOT SO EASY TO TURN BACK THE CLOCK

- Ezra's return 80 years after Zerubbabel's
- Ezra returns and realizes reviving the better ways isn't going to be easy
- Underlying conditions don't exist to recreate what once was
- How do we recover directives of the Torah in a 21st century society and church?
- Despite zealousness and devotion, how much reform is possible?
- Humanly, can't always put the Genie back into the bottle



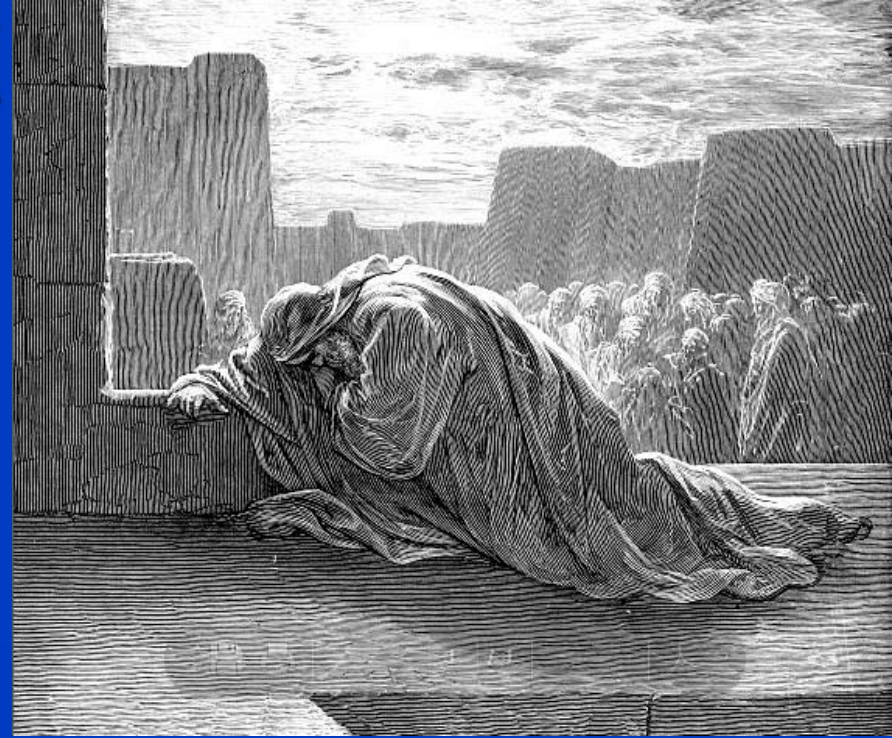
DEJA VU

- Most Jews had little or no knowledge of Torah
- Most marriages over the past century were illegitimate in God's eyes
- These illicit marriages existed from the Priests on down in Jewish society
- The Law didn't direct exactly how to deal with this
- It was Abraham and Hagar all over again, but 1000 times bigger
- "I HATE DIVORCE"



I'M OK, YOU'RE OK NOT!

- Ezra at the Temple, with crowds of people looking on
- Mourning, because he knew the enormity of the sin of illicit marriages with pagans
- People only want to hear good things from their leaders
- Starts to pray at the time of the evening sacrifice (3-4 pm)
- Prayer was also instructional to the people
- Ezra proclaimed himself guilty as one of the Jewish people



GOD JUDGES US IN 2 DOMAINS

INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN

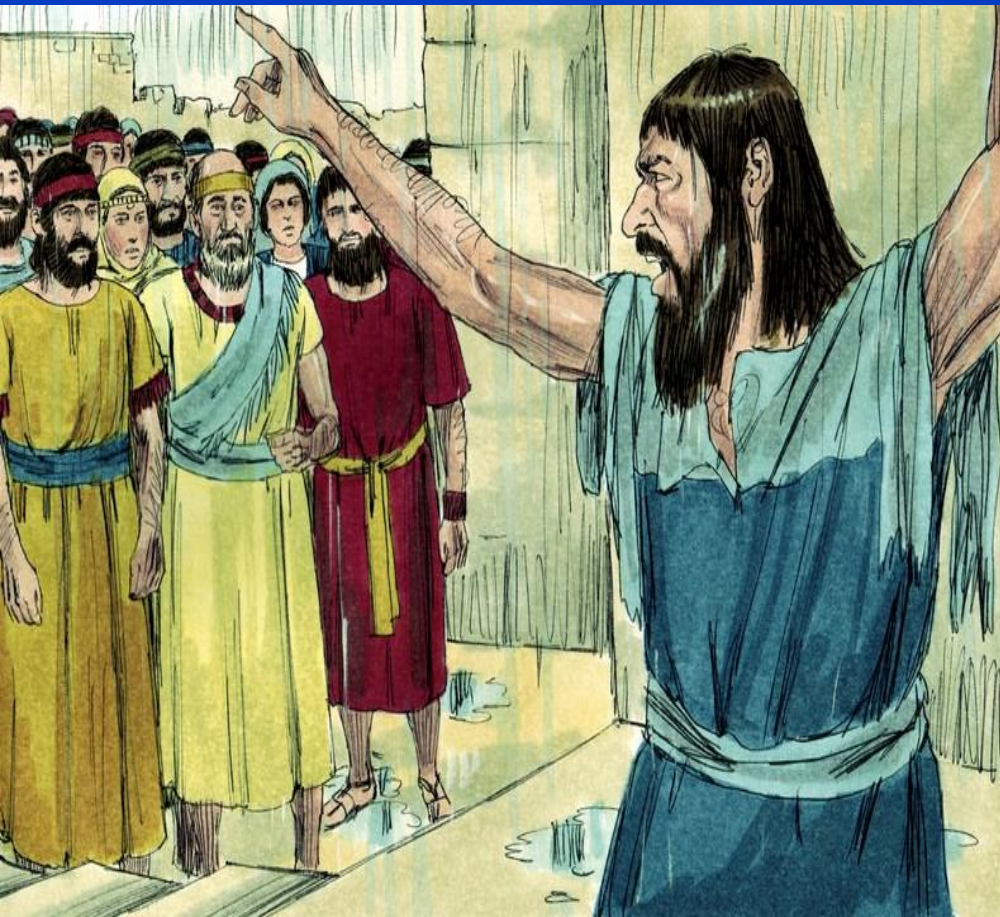


COLLECTIVE DOMAIN



2 COR. 6:14

EZRA EQUALLY GUILTY



- The guilt spans generations
- Iniquity = generational sins, built up over time
- It was their iniquities that caused God to turn them over to enemies
- A window of opportunity opened for the Jews to escape their shame
- Still under the control of a foreign government
- Ezra has liberty to institute Torah Law, BUT....only when it doesn't conflict with Persian Law

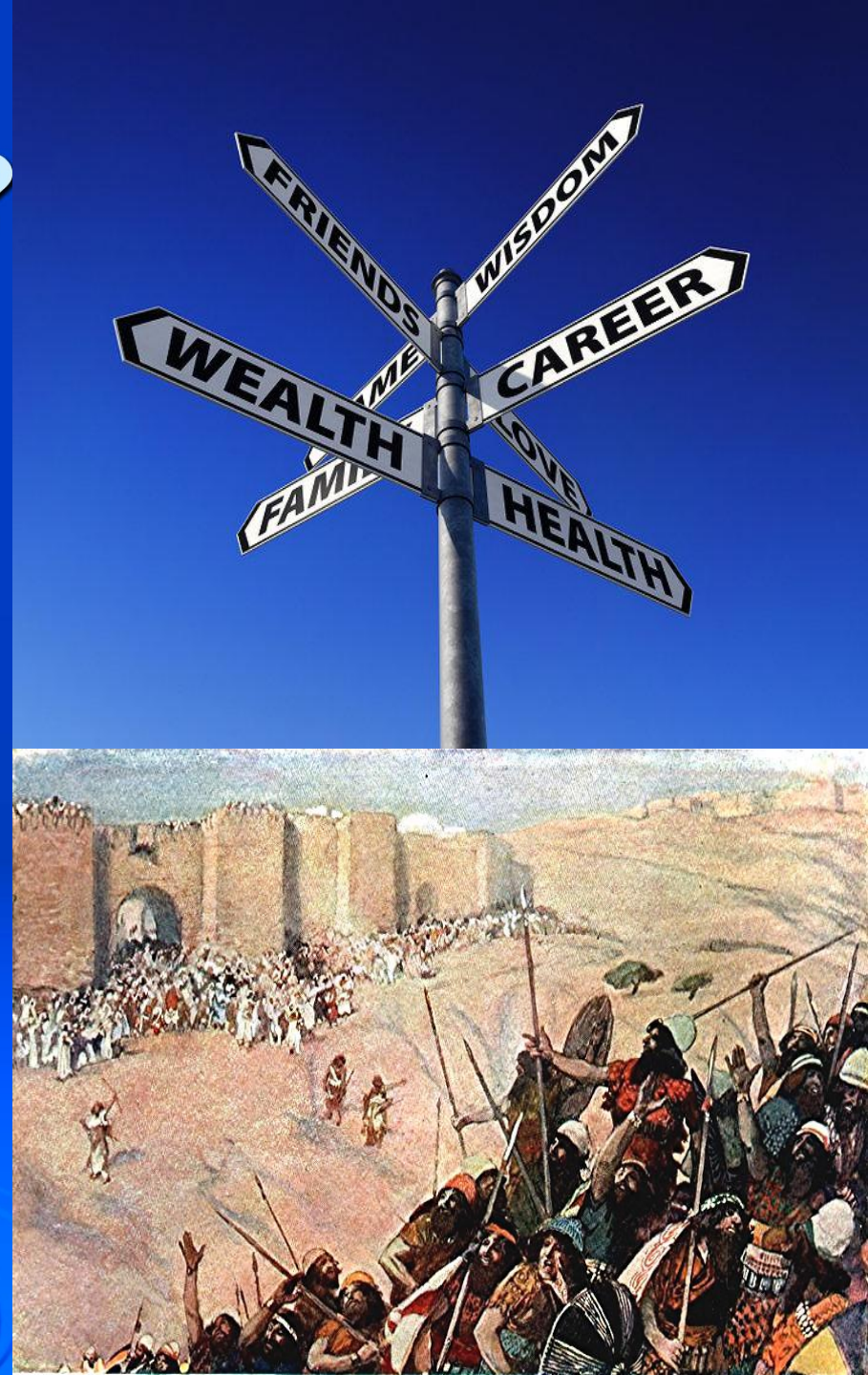
CAN THE GENIE BE PUT BACK INTO THE BOTTLE ?



- Religious freedom, yes, but with constraints that didn't always exist
- Because of sins, history has been altered and so everything can't be fixed
- God arranged for return to Judah
- BUT....Jews will live IN their slavery, won't be lifted FROM their slavery
- Slavery = citizens of a Persian (gentile) Empire

CHANGE ME OR CIRCUMSTANCES?

- Usually until we ask God to change US, our circumstances don't change
- When He does change us, we're no longer a victim of our circumstances
- Prophets spoke about what happens when God's people disobey
- God's purpose in giving the land to Israel, was to TAKE it from the Canaanites who defiled the land with their pagan filth
- NO MARRIAGE to the people God wanted rid of !



JEWES DID THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT THEY WERE TOLD

- They married the people they were supposed to drive out!
- Religious leadership promoted the illicit marriages
- How might God feel towards us about Gay marriage? Abortion? Standing against Israel? Declaring homosexuality as good and normal? Removing prayer and God from schools and public venues? Teaching obedience to God and His commandments is DEAD and gone?
- Be careful about the leaders you choose and the collectives you join
- Luke 14:26



DIVEST, BOYCOTT ISRAEL





WHY SHOULD THE JEWS LIVE?

- The Jews DID all these things
- They were AWARE of all these sins
- They knew God showed mercy
- So since they're doing it all AGAIN, why shouldn't God destroy even the remnant?
- The illicit marriages to pagans cannot stand !!

