

# THE *Spirit* OF THE Law

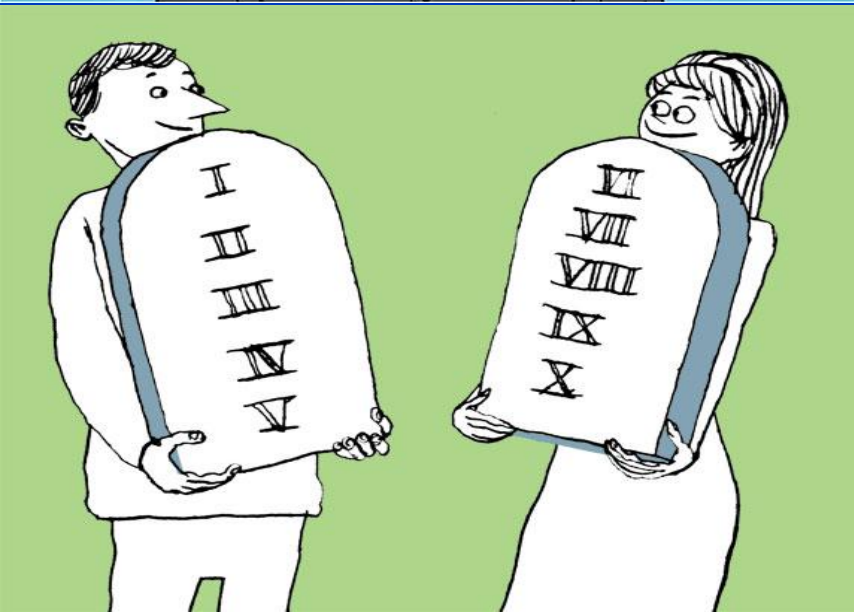
- Ezra sought a return to the Law of Moses, but not to the days of Moses
- Challenge: bring the divine principles of the Law into the contemporary society of Judah
- Sending society back in time is not necessary
- The Torah's most amazing quality is that its laws and principles never change, applicable to evolving societies, adaptable to life under any government system

# A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY PARABLE

- 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries could manufacture, but they had no market in their nation
- The Western nations were needed to buy their products
- Efforts usually failed because Western business couldn't trust them to do what they promised
- A deal is a deal.....NOT!
- Agreements are really contests of cunning to defeat the other party
- These qualities were seen as admirable by the 3<sup>rd</sup> world nations !



# THE SEARCH FOR UNIVERSAL ETHICS



- The roadblock to success: No standard business ethic in 3<sup>rd</sup> world countries
- Attempted to create one from scratch, but nothing worked, there were always contradictions and exceptions
- Solution? The Law of Moses
- The perfect, universally adaptable business ethics model
- Western world operates on Judeo-Christian business ethics and morals, even if it has forgotten this fact

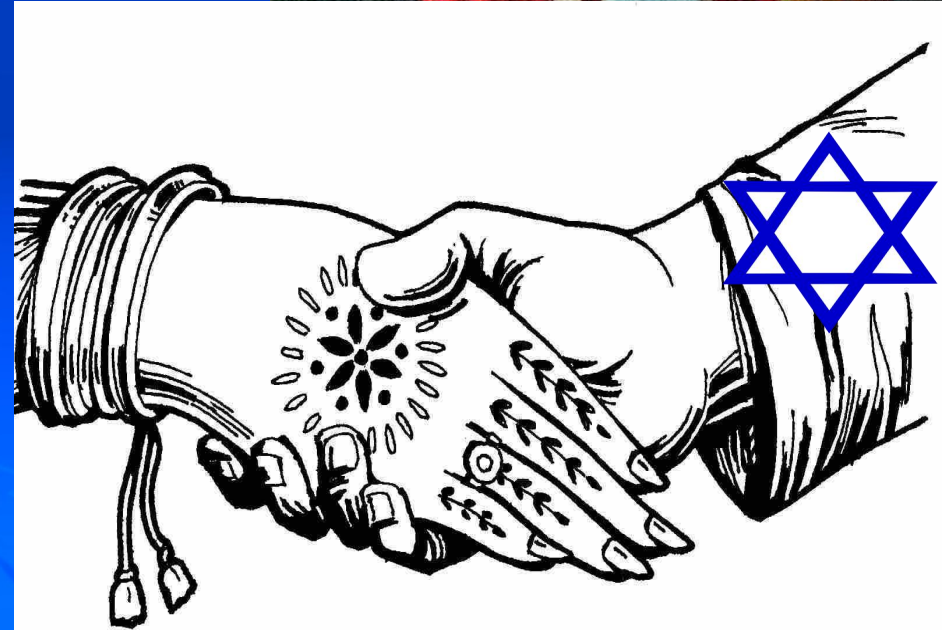
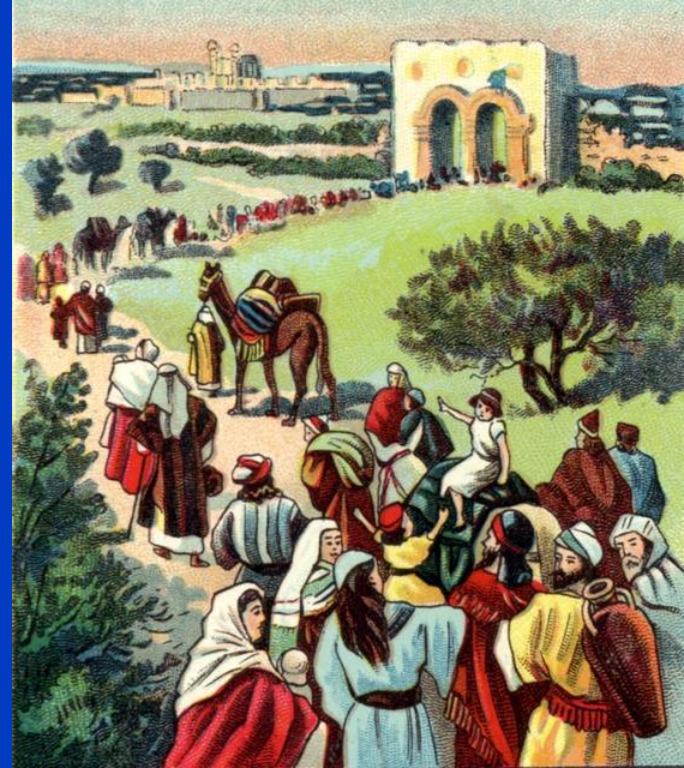
# WE MUST REDISCOVER OUR FAITH ETHIC

- Our faith ethic is bound-up in God's laws and commandments
- We don't have to live in the past to live the Torah life
- We must NOT separate ourselves from God's principles and instead rely on easier doctrines and philosophies
- It doesn't matter where we live, or in what era
- God's laws are universal and timeless



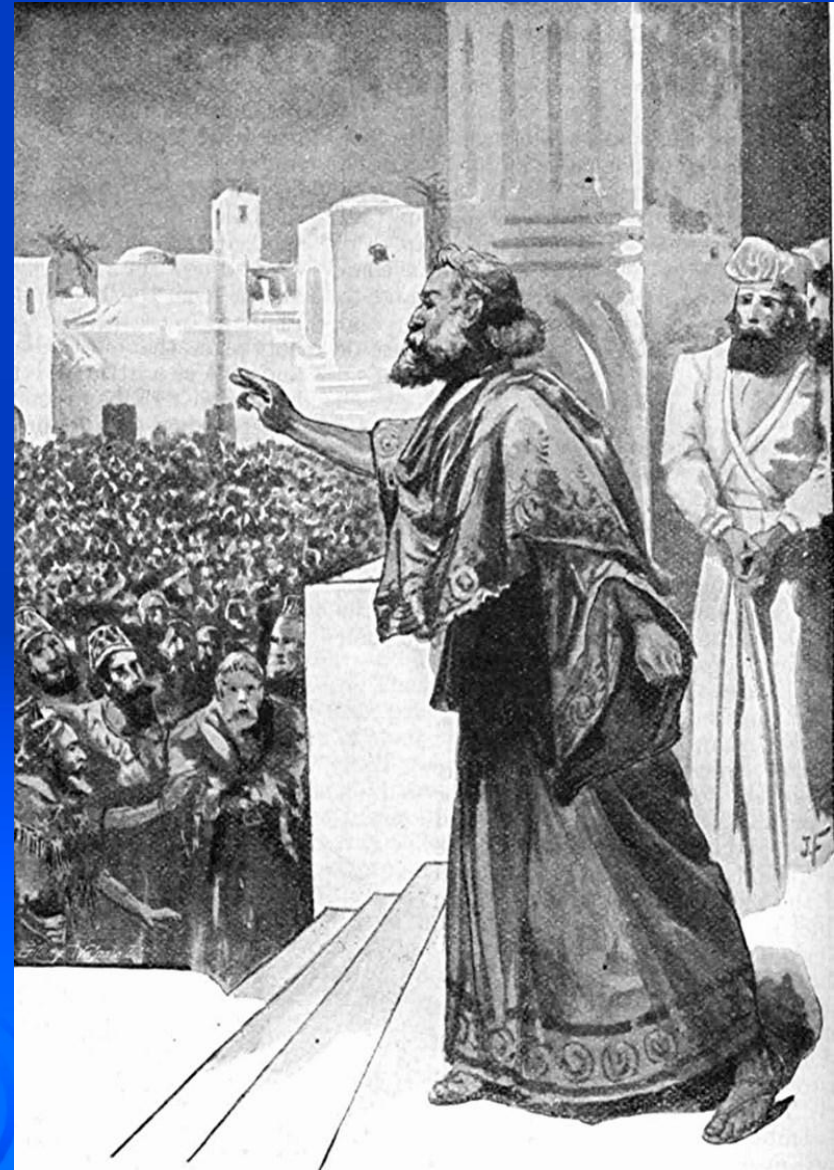
# APPLYING TORAH TO NEW SITUATIONS

- Ezra lived 900 years after Law given to Moses
- Circumstances didn't allow for following Torah to the letter
- It is the principles and spirit of the Law that must be applied to new situations
- The big issue confronting Ezra was mixed marriages



# EZRA CHAPTER 10: THE MIXED-MARRIAGE DEBACLE

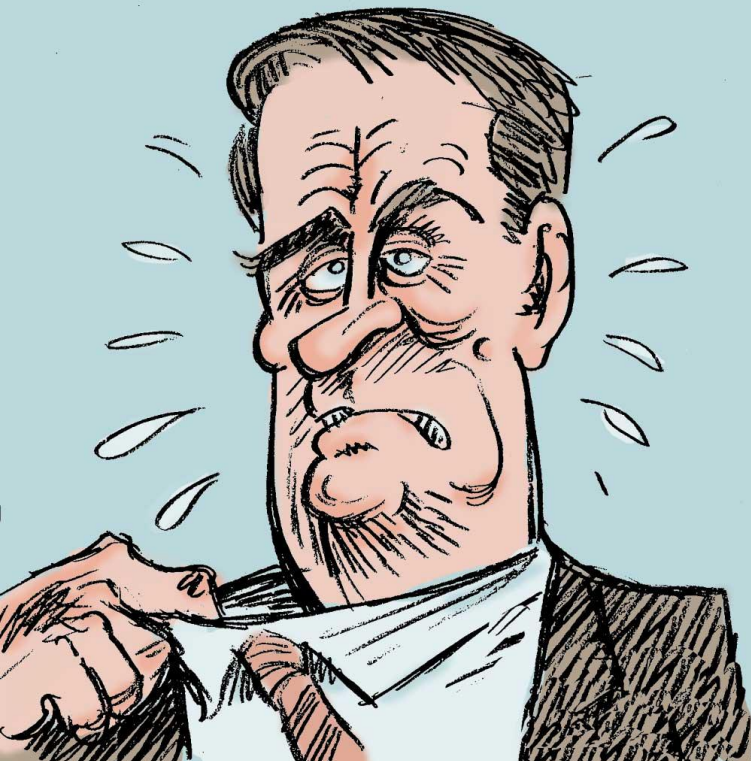
- First words of chapter 10 refer back to first words of chapter 9
- Crowd consisted of all levels of Jewish society
- **Sh'khanyah** comes up to Ezra, and tells the crowd that “we have acted treacherously” towards God
- He is declaring guilt by association (collective)
- **Sh'khanyah** believes there is still hope for the Jewish people
- He is depending on God’s loving-kindness to accept their repentance



# MARRIAGE OR SOMETHING ELSE?



- *Yashav* only used here and in Neh. 13
- Means “causes to dwell”
- Various Hebrew marriage words are: *ya’ad*, *laqakh*, *yavam*, *nathan*
- *Yashav* refers to a union with a *nokri* (foreigner)
- In Proverbs a Hebrew married to a *nokri* views the woman as a harlot
- Either Ezra is using disparaging words for these unions, or, God views these “marriages” as NON-marriages



# ETHNICITY AND RELIGION OVERLAPPED

- Several modern commentators make embarrassed apologies for Ezra and for God
- They say this is blatant racism
- Nations were defined by the god they worshipped, territory, king, language, and more
- Bible assumes each ethnic group and race had their own particular god(s)
- A *nokri* could denounce their god, marry a Hebrew, accept YHWH, and now they were Kosher!





# COVENANT RENEWAL

- *Sh'khayah* says they should make a covenant with God to dissolve the unions with the foreign women
- Hebrew people veered far away from Torah, broke covenant, so they need to renew the Covenant of Moses
- Similar to modern Believers who want to be re-Baptized
- A public and personal expression of allegiance to God and to His Word





# lord OR LORD ?

- *Adonai* = Lord
- The Lord, or my lord?
- Adonai is spelled אֲדֹנָי
- Hebrew is all consonants
- Vowel sounds have to be memorized
- *Adonai* = Lord God
- *Adoni* = human lord
- In context this is referring to Ezra
- Ezra did not order the “divorces”, but no doubt he implied it



# DIVORCE

- Most English versions do NOT say “divorce”, but rather “put or send away”
- *Yatsah* = send away
- Regular Hebrew words for divorce are: *shalach* and *kerithuth*
- Ezra seems to put a very different light on the dissolution of these unions
- Deut. 24:1 – 4
- 1Cor. 7:10 – 17
- No such thing as atheism in Bible times

