

Chapter 9

For mariages and other affociation which the Iewes had with Gentiles, Efdras lamenteth, 5. and confesing the peoples iniquitie, prayeth God to conferue them from vtter destruction.

And after theſe thinges were accompliſhed, the princes came to me, ſaying: The people of Iſrael, and the Prieſts and Leuites ^a)are not ſeperated from the people of the landes, and from the abhominations of them, to witte, of the Chananeite, and Hetheite, and Pherezeite, and Iebuſeite, and of the Ammonites, and Moabites, and the Ægyptians, and Amorrhaites. ² For they haue taken of their daughters to them and to their ſonnes, and haue mingled the holie feede with the people of the landes. The hand alſo of the princes and magiſtrates hath bene firſt in this tranſgreſſion. ³ And when I had heard this word, I rent my cloke and my coate, and plucked of the heares of my head and bearde, and ſate mourning. ⁴ And there aſſembled to me al that feared the God of Iſrael, for the tranſgreſſion of them, that were come from the captiuitie, and I ſate ſorrowful, vntil the euening ſacrifice. ⁵ And at the euening ſacrifice I roſe out of my affliction, and my cloke and coate being rent I fell vpon my knees, and ſpred forth my hands to our Lord my God, ⁶ and ſaid: My God I am confounded and aſhamed to liſte vp my face to thee: becauſe our iniquities are multiplied ouer our head, and our finnes haue growen euen vnto heauen, ⁷ from the dayes of our fathers: yea and we our ſelues alſo haue finned greuouſly vnto this day, and in our iniquities haue we bene deliuered our ſelues, and our Kinges, and our Prieſtes into the hand of the kinges of the landes, and into the ſword, and into

^a Malachias the Prophet complaineth alſo of this fault *c. 2. v. 11.* threatning Gods puniſhment both to ſuperiors and ſubiectes for not correcting it. *v. 12.*

captiuitie, and into fpoyle, and into confufion of countenance, as alfo at this day. ⁸ And now as it were a litle, and for a moment was our prayer made before the Lord our God, that a remnant might be left vs, and ^{a)}a nayle might be geuen vs in his holie place, and that our God would illuminate our eies, and would geue vs a litle life in our bondage. ⁹ Becaufe we are bondmen, and in our bondage our God did not forfake vs, & he inclined mercie vpon vs before the king of the Perfians, to geue vs life, and to aduance the houfe of our God, and to build the defolations therof and to geue vs a hedge in Iuda and Ierufalem. ¹⁰ And now what fhall we fay, ô our God, after thefe things? becaufe we haue forfaken thy cōmandmēts, ¹¹ which thou haft cōmanded in the hand of thy feruantes the prophetes, faying: The land, to the which you enter to poffeffe it, is an vncleane land, according to the vncleanneffe of peoples, and of other landes, by the abominations of them that haue filled it from mouth vnto mouth in their coinquination. ¹² Now therefore geue not your daughters to their fonnes, and their daughters take not for your fonnes, and doe ye not feeke their peace, and their profperity for euer: that you may be ftrengthned, and may eate the goodes that are of the land, and may haue your children heyres for euer. ¹³ And after al thinges that come vpon vs in our moft wicked workes, and our moft great finne, becaufe thou our God haft deliuered vs from our iniquitie, and haft geuen vs health as it is at this day, ¹⁴ that we fhall not turne away, and make frustrate thy commandementes, neither fhould ioyne matrimonies with the peoples of thefe abominations Why art thou angrie with vs vnto vtter deftruction, not to leaue vs a remnant vnto faluation? ¹⁵ Lord God of Ifrael thou art iuft: becaufe we are leift, which fhould be faued as at this day. Behold we

^a In refpect of their great iniquities Eldras prefumeth not to afke the conferuation of the whole people, but fome reliques or fmalleft part, as it were a litle poft, or a naile of a whole houfe towards the reedifying therof.

are before thee in our finne, for there can be no ftanding
before thee vpon this.