

Ezra 10:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

Analysis

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. The unanimous response—"all the congregation answered" (kol-haqahal)—shows corporate agreement. Their reply "**with a loud voice**" (qol gadol) emphasizes public, unified declaration, not private whispered assent. This wasn't coerced compliance but vocal corporate commitment. The magnitude of their response mirrors the magnitude of the required action.

The phrasing "**As thou hast said, so must we do**" (ken lanu la'asot kaddevar) echoes Israel's covenant acceptance at Sinai: "All that the LORD hath said will we do" (Exodus 19:8, 24:3). This verbal parallel evokes covenant renewal—they're reaffirming commitment to Torah obedience after recognizing their violation. The necessity implied in "**must we do**" acknowledges they have no legitimate alternative; disobedience isn't an option.

However, verses 13-14 immediately add crucial qualifications: the task is too large for one day, the rainy season prevents quick resolution, and each case needs individual examination. Their agreement is sincere but recognizes practical realities. This demonstrates that commitment to obedience doesn't require naive presumption that difficult obedience will be easy. They commit to the principle while acknowledging the process will be complex and painful.

Historical Context

Public corporate response was standard in covenant ceremonies (Joshua 24:16-24, 2 Kings 23:3, Nehemiah 8:6). Speaking "with a loud voice" ensured everyone heard and could witness each person's commitment. This public nature created accountability—later retreat would mean breaking a publicly witnessed vow.

The congregation's quick agreement might seem surprising given the personal cost, but verse 9 noted they were already "trembling because of this matter." Conviction had been building. Ezra's leadership didn't manufacture artificial crisis but gave voice and direction to guilt they already felt. Their readiness to agree reflects prior work of conscience through the Spirit.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does their loud, public agreement create accountability that private decisions lack?
2. What does the echo of Sinai covenant language teach about viewing repentance as covenant renewal?
3. Why is it significant that they committed to obedience while simultaneously acknowledging the difficulty (verses 13-14)?

Interlinear Text

ג | גָּדַל וְלֹא
answered H3605 Then all the congregation and said voice with a loud H3651
H6030 H6951 H559 H6963 H1419

לְעֹשֹׂתָן עַל יְכוֹן כִּדְבָרִים

As thou hast said so must we do

H1697 H5921 H6213

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