

Ezra 10:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.

Analysis

Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand—the proposal suggests delegated authority through representatives (sarim, leaders/officials) rather than mass assembly. This demonstrates organizational wisdom in crisis management.

Let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times (le'ittim mezummanim)—scheduled appointments allowed individual cases to receive proper attention. The phrase 'strange wives' (nashim nokhriyot) refers not to ethnicity per se but to covenant outsiders who worshiped other gods, threatening Israel's spiritual identity.

Until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us—the goal was removing divine charon aph (חֲרוֹן אַף, 'burning anger'). This phrase appears throughout Scripture in contexts of covenant violation (Exodus 32:12, Numbers 25:4). The theology recognizes that unaddressed sin brings corporate judgment, while repentance averts wrath.

Historical Context

The proposal for scheduled hearings reflects Persian legal influence—the empire operated through local magistrates and appointed officials. The 'elders and judges' of each city would investigate local cases, bringing results to central authority. This protected individuals from mob action while ensuring thorough justice. The three-month timeline (vv. 16-17) demonstrates this deliberate process.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this structured approach to discipline demonstrate the balance between holiness and justice?
2. What does the concern for 'fierce wrath' teach about the corporate consequences of tolerating sin in the church?
3. How can modern church discipline processes learn from this model of delegated authority and individual hearings?

Interlinear Text

יַעֲמִדוּ stand H5975	נָ א H4994	שָׁ רִינוּ Let now our rulers H8269	לְכָל H3605	הַקֶּה ל of all the congregation H6951	אֶשׁ ר וְכָל ל H3605	אֶשׁ ר H834
וְעַיִר in our cities H5892	וְהָשִׁיב and let all them which have taken H3427	נָשִׁים wives H802	נִכְרִיּוֹת strange H5237	יָבֹא come H935		
לְעֵת יָמִים times H6256	מִזְמַנִּי יָמִים at appointed H2163	וְעִמָּהּ H5973	וְזִקְנֵי and with them the elders H2205	וְעַיִר in our cities H5892		
וְעַיִר in our cities H5892	וְשֹׁפְטֵי יָהּ and the judges H8199	עָד H5704	לְהָשִׁיב יָב be turned H7725	חֲרֹן thereof until the fierce H2740	אָפַי wrath H639	
אֱלֹהֵינוּ of our God H430	מִמֶּנּוּ H4480	עָד H5704	לְדָבָר ר for this matter H1697	הַזֶּה: H2088		

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 29:10 (Judgment): Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

2 Chronicles 30:8 (Judgment): Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

Numbers 25:4 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.