

Ezra 9:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

Analysis

The rhetorical question: 'And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments.' This acknowledges speechlessness before God—what defense can be offered after receiving mercy? The confession 'we have forsaken thy commandments' admits willful violation, not ignorant mistake. This is covenant breaking, not mere failure. The question format demonstrates that genuine repentance recognizes it has no excuse, no justification, no mitigation to plead. Standing guilty before God with no defense is the beginning of true repentance.

Historical Context

The rhetorical question emphasizes that after experiencing God's covenant faithfulness (return from exile, temple restoration, Persian favor), renewed sin is inexcusable. They had no ignorance excuse—Torah was clear, recent history demonstrated consequences, and they sinned anyway. The confession's direct, unvarnished language ('we have forsaken thy commandments') avoids euphemism or excuse-making. This brutal honesty characterizes biblical repentance versus worldly regret that justifies, minimizes, or blames others.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the question 'what shall we say after this?' demonstrate that genuine repentance has no excuses, only confession?
2. What does straightforward admission 'we have forsaken thy commandments' teach about avoiding euphemism or excuse-making in confession?

Interlinear Text

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H6258 H4100 what shall we say And now O our God after
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