

Nehemiah 13:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.

Analysis

In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals.

This verse within Nehemiah 13 addresses themes of reform, confronting compromise, vigilance, finishing well. Nehemiah's return from Persia reveals backsliding, requiring renewed reforms in areas previously addressed—showing constant vigilance's necessity. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

Historical Context

Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. Nehemiah's final reforms address recurring covenant violations, demonstrating the ongoing challenge of maintaining spiritual commitment across generations. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture, temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does regular engagement with Scripture transform understanding of God and His will for your life?
2. What specific commitments do you need to make (or renew) regarding Bible reading, worship, and obedience?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

Interlinear Text

גַּת וְתֵן	דְּרָכִים	בִּיהוּד הַן	כָּא יִתִּי	הָהּ מָה	בִּי וְ
wine presses	some treading	I in Judah	saw		In those days
H1660	H1869	H3063	H7200	H1992	H3117
הַחֲמֹר יִם	עַל	וְעִמָּס יִם	הָעֵרֹמ וְ	וּמְבִיא יִם	הַשַּׁבָּת
asses	and lading	and sheaves	and bringing in	on the sabbath	
H2543	H5921	H6006	H6194	H935	H7676
מִשָּׂא א	וְכָל	וּתְאֵנִים	עֲנָב יִם	יֵין	וְאֵר
and all manner of burdens		and figs	grapes	as also wine	
H4853	H3605	H8384	H6025	H3196	H637
וְאֵנִי יָד	הַשַּׁבָּת	בִּי וְ	יְרוּשָׁלַם	וּמְבִיא יִם	
and I testified	on the sabbath	In those days	into Jerusalem	and bringing in	
H5749	H7676	H3117	H3389	H935	
צִיד:	מִכָּר ם	בִּי וְ			
victuals	wherein they sold	In those days			
H6718	H4376	H3117			

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 10:31 (Parallel theme): And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.

Nehemiah 13:21 (Parallel theme): Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

Exodus 34:21 (Parallel theme): Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

Isaiah 58:13 (Parallel theme): If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the

LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Jeremiah 17:24 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;

Jeremiah 17:27 (References Jerusalem): But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

Exodus 35:2 (Parallel theme): Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.

Deuteronomy 8:19 (Parallel theme): And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

Ezekiel 20:13 (Parallel theme): But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.