

Nehemiah 13:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

Analysis

And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

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. City gates were strategic both defensively and administratively, controlling access and serving as centers of commerce and justice. 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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

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

וְאָמַרְתִּי הָ	לְלֵוִיִּם	אֲשֶׁר	וְיִהְיֶה	מְטַהְרִים		
And I commanded	the Levites	H834	H1961	that they should cleanse		
H559	H3881			H2891		
וּבָאִים	וְשָׁמְרוּ	יְמֵי	הַשְּׁעָרִים	לְקַדֵּשׁ	אֶת	
themselves and that they should come	and keep	the gates	to sanctify	H853		
H935	H8104	H8179	H6942			
וְיֹם	הַשַּׁבָּת	גַּם	זֹאת	זְכֹרָה	לִי	אֱלֹהֵי
day	the sabbath	H1571	H2063	Remember	H0	me O my God
H3117	H7676			H2142		H430
וְחִי וְסָה	עַל־י	כְּרֹב	חֲסִדְךָ:			
concerning this also and spare	H5921	me according to the greatness	of thy mercy			
H2347		H7230	H2617			

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 13:14 (References God): Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.

Nehemiah 12:30 (Parallel theme): And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

Nehemiah 13:31 (References God): And for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.