

Nehemiah 13:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

Analysis

And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.

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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

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

וְאִנִּי יָבִיחַ And I contended H7378	עִמָּם H5973	וְאִקְלָלָם with them and cursed H7043	וְאֶפְּסָם them and smote H5221	מִיָּה H1992
אֲנִשׁ יֵם H376	וְאֶמְרֵם of them and plucked off their hair H4803	וְאֶשְׁבִּיעַם and made them swear H7650	בְּאֵלֵהּ יֵם by God H430	
אֵם H518	תִּתֵּן ו saying Ye shall not give H5414	מִבְּנֵי תִיָּה their daughters H1323	לְבָנֶיךָ unto their sons H1121	וְאֵם H518
				תִּשָּׂאוּ nor take H5375
מִבְּנֵי תִיָּה their daughters H1323	לְבָנֶיךָ unto their sons H1121	לְכֶם: H0		

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day?

Ezra 10:5 (Creation): Then arose Ezra, and made the chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word. And they sware.

Nehemiah 13:11 (References God): Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place.

Deuteronomy 7:3 (Parallel theme): Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.