

Nehemiah 5:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

Analysis

Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

This verse within Nehemiah 5 addresses themes of justice, integrity, selfless leadership, economic reform. Internal crisis threatens to destroy what external opposition could not—economic exploitation requiring bold reforming leadership. 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. The 52-day wall completion represents remarkable achievement given opposition and limited resources. Excavations have confirmed portions of Nehemiah's wall and various gates mentioned in the text. 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Nehemiah 5:9 deepen your understanding of God's character and His work in human history?
2. How should you respond when facing opposition or mockery for obeying God's call?
3. What balance between spiritual response (prayer) and practical action (wise planning) does this passage model?

Interlinear Text

הֵל וְאֵלֶּיךָ עֲשֵׂה יְהוָה אֲתָם אֲשֶׁר הִדְבַּרְתָּ לִּי לֹא וַיֹּאמֶר רַ
Also I said H3808 **It is not good** **that** H834 H859 **ye do** H3808
H559 H2896 H1697 H6213

הַגּוֹיִם מִחֶרֶץ תִּלְכּוּ כֹּה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיִרְאָתוֹ
in the fear H3374 **of our God** H430 H1980 **because of the reproach** H2781 **of the heathen** H1471

אֹיְבֵינוּ:
our enemies
H341

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 25:36 (References God): Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

1 Peter 2:12 (Good): Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

2 Samuel 12:14 (Parallel theme): Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

Titus 2:5 (Good): To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

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