

Nehemiah 9:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

Analysis

And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

This verse within Nehemiah 9 addresses themes of confession, God's faithfulness, corporate prayer, covenant history. Extended corporate prayer recounts God's faithfulness through Israel's history while honestly confessing persistent covenant violations. 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 spiritual reforms under Ezra and Nehemiah shaped Judaism for centuries, establishing Scripture's centrality and patterns of worship continuing into the intertestamental period and beyond. 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. These 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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

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

וְתַעֲד And testifiedst H5749	בָּהֶם H0	לְהָשִׁיב against them that thou mightest bring them again H7725	אֵל H413
תּוֹכַחַתְךָ unto thy law H8451	וְהִמָּה H1992	הֵזְיָדוּ yet they dealt proudly H2102	וְלֹא H3808
לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ not unto thy commandments H4687	וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ against thy judgments H4941	חָטְאוּ but sinned H2398	בְּ H0
וַיַּעַשׂ do H6213	אִם which if a man H120	וְחָיָה he shall live H2421	וַיִּתֵּן in them and withdrew H5414
סוֹךְ H5637	וְעִרְפָּם their neck H6203	וְהִקְשִׁיחַ and hardened H7185	וְלֹא H3808
			וַיִּשְׁמָעוּ and hearkened H8085

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 9:16 (Word): But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments,

Leviticus 18:5 (Judgment): Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.

Nehemiah 9:10 (Parallel theme): And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.

Nehemiah 9:26 (Word): Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.

Jeremiah 43:2 (Parallel theme): Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

Hosea 6:5 (Judgment): Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.

Jeremiah 7:26 (Parallel theme): Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.

Jeremiah 19:15 (Word): Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

Jeremiah 17:23 (Parallel theme): But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction.

Jeremiah 44:10 (Word): They are not humbled even unto this day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.