

## THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

### "The Sealed Covenant" Nehemiah 10:1-39

#### Introduction

1. The great events of the previous chapter led Israel to "make a sure covenant" (9:38) with the Lord. Nearly 100 individual names are listed as signers (10:1-27). Others signed, but are not named (v. 28).

2. What was done with this covenant was both national and familial, for "wives, sons, and daughters" are mentioned as participating (v. 28). All knew and understood their decisions (v. 28). The covenant was so firm that to disobey would bring a curse (v. 28). It was considered a matter of "brotherly" concern (v. 29).

3. Items included in the covenant are of major concern for those who desire to know what a true relationship to the Lord involves. Mark those which are listed:-

#### 1. THE WORD OF GOD vv. 28, 29.

Note: The "law" is referred to as "God's law" for it is the Word of God! But the divine element is balanced with the human, for it was given "by the hand of Moses" (2 Pet. 1:21).

##### a. They covenanted to "walk in it".

The Hebrew verb used here makes it certain that Israel now meant to use the law as its standard for conduct (Psa. 119:105).

##### b. They covenanted to "observe it".

The verb employed here means to "keep" the law. It is a strong argument against any human indulgences.

##### c. They covenanted to "do it".

Here is a firm verb for it argues that Israel intended to actually perform the Word. Four words for the Bible are used here: 1) "Law." This is "torah" and means to point a direction by throwing out the hand for guidance. 2) "Commandments." This speaks of charges laid upon men as expressions of God's will. 3) "Judgments." This refers to specific laws or ordinances. 4) "Statues." This means engraven laws and refers to statutory laws.

## 2. THE WAY OF GOD v. 30.

The intent of this single verse is separation from entanglements with non-believers (cf. vv. 28,30). It is standard teaching in both Testaments that believers and non-believers cannot mix (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). The violation of this principle of the Word of God is blatant today amongst many! Israel concerned herself in Nehemiah's day with three items: 1) Parental dominance. 2) Child obedience. 3) Spiritual separation. This is unquestionably God's way. The modern church has lost this principle and with it the power.

## 3. THE DAY OF GOD v. 31.

It is clearly stated that Israel agreed to keep the sabbath day as given in the law (Ex. 20:8-11). We know the sabbath does not hold for the Gentile or the church; it was a sign between God and Israel (Ex. 31:13-17; Ezek. 20:12, 20). The sabbath will be reinstated during the tribulation (Matt. 24:20, 21) and the millennium (Isa. 66:23). Grace dispensation believers worship on the first day of the week to celebrate a completed redemption through Christ (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1, 2). It is a day of activity rather than rest.

## 4. THE LAND OF GOD v. 31.

The nation also agreed to remember the "sabbatic year (Lev. 25:1-7). The land would rest and the spontaneous growth would provide for man and beast. But there is a principle here: The life of faith. It testified to Israel's intent to allow the land to regain its richness as God provided for the people. True, we do not have land to leave, but we do have a God to trust! Increase our rest upon the Lord, O God!

Conclusion If we, like Israel, covenant with God, we too can expect the blessing of the Lord for which the nation yearned. They dealt with God about His Word, separation, a day of worship, and the principle of faith. Let us do likewise today! Amen.