

NEHEMIAH CHAPTER 13

¹ In that day they read in the Book of Moses in the ears of the people; and it was found written in it, that the Ammonites and Moabites should not enter into the congregation of God forever; ² because they did not meet the children of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them, but our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ And it came to pass, when they heard the law, that they were separated, *even* every alien in Israel.

⁴ And before this time Eliashib the priest dwelt in the treasury of the house of our God, connected with Tobiah; ⁵ and he made himself a great treasury, and there they were formerly in the habit of bestowing the offerings, and the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithe of the grain, and the wine, and the oil, the ordered portion of the Levites, and singers, and porters; and the firstfruits of the priests. ⁶ But in all this *time* I was not in Jerusalem; for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I came to the king, and after a certain time I made my request of the king; ⁷ and I came to Jerusalem, and I understood the evil which Eliashib had done in the case of Tobiah, in making for him a treasury in the court of the house of God. ⁸ And it appeared very evil to me; so I cast forth all the furniture of the house of Tobiah from the treasury. ⁹ And I gave orders, and they purified the treasuries; and I restored the vessels into the house of God, *and* the offerings, and the frankincense.

¹⁰ And I understood that the portion of the Levites had not been given; and they had fled everyone to his field, the Levites and the singers doing the work. ¹¹ And I contended with the commanders, and said, "Why has the house of God been abandoned?" And I assembled them, and set them in their place. ¹² And all Judah brought a tithe of the wheat and the wine and the oil into the treasuries, ¹³ to the charge of Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites. And next to them *was* Hanan the son of Zaccur, son of Matthaniah; for they were accounted faithful. *It was* their office to distribute to their brothers.

¹⁴ Remember me, O God, in this, and let not my kindness be forgotten which I have wrought in *regard to* the house of the Lord God.

¹⁵ In those days I saw in Judah *men* treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and carrying sheaves, and loading donkeys with wine, grapes, figs, and every *kind of* burden, and bringing them into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. ¹⁶ And I testified in the day of their sale. Also there dwelt in it *men* bringing fish, and selling every *kind of* merchandise to the children of Judah and in Jerusalem on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ And I strove with the free children of Judah, and said to them, "What *is* this evil thing which you do, and profane the Sabbath day? ¹⁸ Did not your fathers *commit* this same *trespass*, and our God brought upon them and upon us and upon this city all these evils? And do you bring additional wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath?"

¹⁹ And it came to pass, when the gates were set up in Jerusalem, before the Sabbath, that I spoke, and they shut the gates; and I gave orders that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath. And I set *some* of my servants at the gates, that none should bring *in* burdens on the Sabbath day. ²⁰ So all *the merchants* lodged, and carried on traffic outside of Jerusalem once or twice. ²¹

Then I testified against them, and said to them, "Why do you lodge in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will stretch out my hand upon you." From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath. ²² And I told the Levites who were purifying themselves, and came and kept the gates, that they should sanctify the Sabbath day. Remember me, O God, for these things, and spare me according to the abundance of Your mercy.

²³ And in those days I saw the Jews who had married women of Ashdod, of Ammon, *and* of Moab. ²⁴ And their children spoke half in the language of Ashdod, and did not know how to speak in the Jewish language. ²⁵ And I strove with them and cursed them; and I struck some of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, *saying*, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, and you shall not take of their daughters to your sons. ²⁶ Did not Solomon king of Israel sin thus? Yet there was no king like him among many nations, and he was beloved of God, and God made him king over all Israel; yet strange women turned him aside. ²⁷ So we will not hearken to you to do all this evil, to break covenant with our God, to marry strange wives."

²⁸ And Elishub the high priest, *one* of the sons of Joiada, son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, I chased away from me.

²⁹ Remember them, O God, for their *false* connection with the priesthood, and *the breaking* the covenant of the priesthood, and *for defiling* the Levites.

³⁰ So I purged them from all foreign connection, and established courses for the priests and the Levites, *every* man according to his work. ³¹ And the offering of the wood-bearers *was* at certain set times, and in the *times of the* firstfruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.