

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - August 11, 2022

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Ten Steps to Spiritual Renewal

Part V - Step 5

Title: "Becoming Accountable for Your Conduct"

Scripture Reference: Nehemiah 9:38 - 10:31

I. Outline

A. God created a race of people call Jews. They were to be a "peculiar" people - distinct from all others in their character and conduct. In this lesson we will discover what it means to make a commitment to uniqueness.

B. Nehemiah called the remnant from Babylon to reaffirm their commitment to "peculiarity" by renewing their obedience and accountability to God's covenant.

C. Here is the outline for this study lesson:

I. The People Who Signed the Covenant

II. The Promises They Made in The Covenant

A. They Vowed to Separate Themselves from the World

B. They Vowed to be Subject to The Word of God

C. They Vowed to Set Apart the Sabbath

III. Summary

II. Overview

A. The Jews have what no other race of people on earth has ever had: a covenant with Almighty God.

B. In the Old Testament, when Israel followed God's covenant, they were successful in everything they did. They were looked

upon as odd by the surrounding nations, but that was part of their strength. It was their relationship with God that made them different and gave them their advantage.

C. After coming into the Promised Land, the people decided they did not like being a peculiar people; they wanted to be like their neighbors.

D. They demanded of Samuel the prophet that he should pick a king for them like the other nations had. Samuel tried to warn them about replacing God with a human king to rule over them, but they wouldn't listen. So, they were given a king, Saul, who turned out to be a disadvantage instead of an advantage.

E. Throughout the Old Testament, whenever the Jews diluted their distinctiveness by becoming more like their neighbors, they lost more of their blessings.

F. After living in Babylon for seventy years and returning to Jerusalem to rebuild their city and temple, the people had a lot of work to do to regain their distinctive, covenant relationship with God.

G. The second half of the book of Nehemiah is about Israel's efforts to recover her uniqueness as God's chosen nation.

H. In Nehemiah 9:38, we find the Jews making a "Sure Covenant," signed and sealed by the leaders, Levites, and priests. They made themselves publicly accountable for keeping God's standards, a return to being God's unique people by keeping His Covenant requirements.

III. The People Who Signed the Covenant

A. First in the list of those agreeing to the covenant is Nehemiah, followed by eighty-three others: twenty-two priests, seventeen Levites, and forty-four others who are called "leaders."

B. More important than all the names that are given are two things stated in Chapter 10, verse 28: They were people who had "separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law

of God:" and "every one having knowledge, and having understanding."

C. In other words, they were making a conscious, informed decision about turning from the world back to their God. This was not an emotional meeting based on crowd dynamics. Every person who signed the covenant did so with "knowledge and understanding." (Nehemiah 10:28)

D. Also notice this in verse 28: It was not only the men who are named who were involved, but also their "wives, their sons, and their daughters" joined in the commitment as well.

E. Therefore, it was everyone from Nehemiah to the priests and Levites, to the leaders and their wives and children who committed themselves to become accountable for their conduct before God. //You might say - It was a family affair!!//

IV. The Promises They Made in The Covenant

The Covenant stipulations to which they committed themselves can be examined under three headings: (1) Separation from The World, (2) Subjection to The Word of God, and (3) Setting Apart The Sabbath.

A. They vowed to "walk in God's Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes" (v 29).

B. That commitment was to have an immediate expression: not intermarrying with their pagan neighbors (v 30).

C. Intermarrying itself was not the problem, but it was the ultimate spiritual process of blending religion and customs that resulted in idolatry and immorality.

D. The Jews who intermarried would leave the true God's commands and start worshipping the false gods of those they married.

E. This is not just an Old Testament problem, and not just a prohibition for the Jews. Why? It is very difficult for a New

Testament Christian to marry someone who does not love Christ and for the Christian to expect to continue to mature in the faith.

F. It is for that reason that the New Testament is explicit about the danger of being "unequally yoked" (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

V. They Vowed to Be Subject to The Word of God (Vv 28-29)

A. Here is the important thing to note: They were not just committing themselves to become better students of God's Word (important as that is), but they were committing to "walk [in]," observe," and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord" (v29).

Point: The purpose of Bible Study is not just to know the Bible, but to do the Bible - to put into practice what God has stipulated for us to walk in.

Comment: The Bible really comes alive when we treat it as a Book to fulfill rather than a book to know.

VI. The Vowed to Set Apart the Sabbath

A. The third commitment of the Jews doesn't apply directly to the Christian Church since we do not celebrate the Sabbath.

Comment: I know right here you might be wondering about the Seventh Day Adventist Church who observe the Sabbath on Saturdays. Here is what the Bible lays out: The Sabbath was a Jewish ordinance that, along with the rest of the Jewish laws, is not carried forth in direct application to the Church in this Dispensation of Grace.

B. The early Church began to meet for worship on the day of Christ's resurrection, the day following the Sabbath, the day we now call Sunday. It is for that reason that we meet for corporate worship on Sundays.

C. In Nehemiah's day, the Sabbath was the rule of God for His People. Today in Israel, the Sabbath (known by the Jewish people as "Shabbat") is observed from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. The typical greeting as you meet someone in Israel

during Shabbat is "Shabbat Shalom" (translated - Sabbath Peace).

VII. Summary

A. As the Jewish people committed themselves to the Lord, they committed to being accountable for their conduct. We too must be committed because there will be a day when we will have to give an account before Almighty God.

It is once again interactive time. Please complete the biblical passages that follow by filling in the blank spaces. Each passage has been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"Behold, I set before you this day a _____ and a _____; A _____, if ye _____ the commandments of the Lord your God, which I _____ you this day."

[Deuteronomy 11:26,27]

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great _____ in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in _____ the voice of the Lord? Behold, to _____ is better than _____, and to _____ than the fat of rams."

[1 Samuel 15:22]

"All the _____ of the Lord are _____ and _____ unto such as keep his _____ and his testimonies."

[Psalm 25:10]

"But ye are a _____, a royal _____, an holy nation, a _____ people; that ye should shew forth the _____ of him who hath called you out of _____ into his _____ light:"

[1 Peter 2:9]

"For this is the _____ that I will make with the _____ of _____ after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my _____ into their _____, and write them in their _____; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a _____:

[Hebrews 8:10]

"For ye were sometimes _____, but now are ye _____ in the Lord: _____ as children of _____: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all _____ and _____ and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the _____."

[Ephesians 5:8-10]

I do trust that you have been blessed from taking the journey through this lesson. As such, let us remember, that we are accountable for our conduct.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin