

Dedication

Nehemiah 10



Agreement of the People

- ❑ Nehemiah 9 records the peoples' confession of their sins. What happened next?
- ❑ Read Nehemiah 9:38. Nehemiah 10:1-27 records a list of names¹ of those who "sealed" (solemnly assented to) the written agreement, though the commitment was not limited to those who signed but was shared by the whole community.² Read Nehemiah 10:28-29.³

To Obey the Law of God

- ❑ The people agreed to "follow the Law of God given through Moses"⁴ and "obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our God" (10:29). While they committed to obey "all the commands," particular commitments are mentioned in verses 30-39.⁵

Their Commitment & Our Commitment

- ❑ In Nehemiah's day, the people agreed to obey God's will as given in His written revelation. In *our* day, *we* should agree to obey God's will as given in His written revelation – the Bible. However, since we live in the New Testament era (following the first coming of Christ), we apply the Old Testament commands differently from the Israelites in Nehemiah's day.⁶
- ❑ Read Nehemiah 10:30.

1. Why was this regulation given to the Israelites? How does it apply to Christians today?

- 📖 "Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods..." (*Deuteronomy 7:3-4a, NIV*)
- 📖 "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers." (*2 Corinthians 6:14*)⁷

- ❑ Read Nehemiah 10:31. The Sabbath will be discussed in Lesson 12 (Nehemiah 13:15-22).

¹ The list includes both individual names and family names, and includes leaders, priests, Levites (responsible for care of the temple) and 'the leaders of the people' (mostly family representatives).

² 'the rest of the people...together with their wives and sons and daughters' (10:28).

³ 'separated' – as a distinct people with a special relationship with God, fully devoted to His values and will.

⁴ This probably refers to the 'Pentateuch' – the first five books of the Bible

⁵ These regulations are probably emphasized due to the peoples' failure to observe them (Neh. 13:10-30). While all the regulations are based on the Pentateuch, some of them add new details as they are applied in specific ways.

⁶ The Law was given to Moses and Israel at a specific time in the history of God's people, and is part of the *Old Covenant*. When Christ came, he fulfilled the Law and inaugurated the *New Covenant* (New Testament). As Christians, we live under the *New Covenant*. Theologians disagree on exactly how the Law relates to Christians today. See the book *Five Views on Law and Gospel*. In any case, the moral will of God is reflected in the Law of Moses, and God's moral will transcends the written Law. Thus while we are not under the binding authority of the Old Testament Law, the moral principles that underlie the Law apply to our lives today.

⁷ This verse is often quoted in relation to marriage, but the principle is not limited to marriage. Elsewhere Paul says a Christian widow 'is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord' (*1 Corinthians 7:39*). While a believer should not marry a nonbeliever, one person in a couple may become a believer after marriage. If you are a believer married to a nonbeliever, consider reading *Surviving a Spiritual Mismatch in Marriage* (ICF library).

