

Nehemiah 4:1 Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he mocked the Jews. ² He said in the presence of his associates and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore things? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish -- and burned ones at that?" ³ Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "That stone wall they are building -- any fox going up on it would break it down!" ⁴ Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their taunt back on their own heads, and give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. ⁵ Do not cover their guilt, and do not let their sin be blotted out from your sight; for they have hurled insults in the face of the builders. ⁶ So we rebuilt the wall, and all the wall was joined together to half its height; for the people had a mind to work. ⁷ But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and the gaps were beginning to be closed, they were very angry, ⁸ and all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. ⁹ So we prayed to our God, and set a guard as a protection against them day and night. ¹⁰ But Judah said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, and there is too much rubbish so that we are unable to work on the wall." ¹¹ And our enemies said, "They will not know or see anything before we come upon them and kill them and stop the work." ¹² When the Jews who lived near them came, they said to us ten times, "From all the places where they live¹ they will come up against us."² ¹³ So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people according to their families,¹ with their swords, their spears, and their bows. ¹⁴ After I looked these things over, I stood up and said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the LORD, who is great and awesome, and fight for your kin, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes." ¹⁵ When our enemies heard that their plot was known to us, and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. ¹⁶ From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and body-armor; and the leaders posted themselves behind the whole house of Judah, ¹⁷ who were building the wall. The burden bearers carried their loads in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and with the other held a weapon. ¹⁸ And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. ¹⁹ And I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread out, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. ²⁰ Rally to us wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet. Our God will fight for us." ²¹ So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from break of dawn until the stars came out. ²² I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night inside Jerusalem, so that they may be a guard for us by night and may labor by day." ²³ So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me ever took off our clothes; each kept his weapon in his right hand.

Nehemiah 13:1 On that day they read from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, ² because they did not meet the Israelites with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them -- yet our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³ When the people heard the law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent. ⁴ Now before this, the priest Eliashib, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah, ⁵ prepared for Tobiah a large room where they had previously put the grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, which were given by

commandment to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests.⁶ While this was taking place I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon I went to the king. After some time I asked leave of the king⁷ and returned to Jerusalem. I then discovered the wrong that Eliashib had done on behalf of Tobiah, preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God.⁸ And I was very angry, and I threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the room.⁹ Then I gave orders and they cleansed the chambers, and I brought back the vessels of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.¹⁰ I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them; so that the Levites and the singers, who had conducted the service, had gone back to their fields.¹¹ So I remonstrated with the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together and set them in their stations.¹² Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses.¹³ And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses the priest Shelemiah, the scribe Zadok, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as their assistant Hanan son of Zaccur son of Mattaniah, for they were considered faithful; and their duty was to distribute to their associates.¹⁴ Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service.¹⁵ In those days I saw in Judah people treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys; and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day; and I warned them at that time against selling food.¹⁶ Tyrians also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all kinds of merchandise and sold them on the sabbath to the people of Judah, and in Jerusalem.¹⁷ Then I remonstrated with the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the sabbath day?¹⁸ Did not your ancestors act in this way, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring more wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath."¹⁹ When it began to be dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the sabbath. And I set some of my servants over the gates, to prevent any burden from being brought in on the sabbath day.²⁰ Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice.²¹ But I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you." From that time on they did not come on the sabbath.²² And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favor, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your steadfast love.²³ In those days also I saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;²⁴ and half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke the language of various peoples.²⁵ And I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves."²⁶ Did not King Solomon of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin.²⁷ Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?"²⁸ And one of the sons of Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I chased him away from me.²⁹ Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, the covenant of the priests and the Levites.³⁰ Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and

I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; ³¹ and I provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

Ezra 9:1 After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. ² For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness the officials and leaders have led the way." ³ When I heard this, I tore my garment and my mantle, and pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat appalled. ⁴ Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice. ⁵ At the evening sacrifice I got up from my fasting, with my garments and my mantle torn, and fell on my knees, spread out my hands to the LORD my God, ⁶ and said, "O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens. ⁷ From the days of our ancestors to this day we have been deep in guilt, and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as is now the case. ⁸ But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the LORD our God, who has left us a remnant, and given us a stake in his holy place, in order that he¹ may brighten our eyes and grant us a little sustenance in our slavery. ⁹ For we are slaves; yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to give us new life to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem. ¹⁰ "And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, ¹¹ which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land that you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the pollutions of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations. They have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. ¹² Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, so that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' ¹³ After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this, ¹⁴ shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you destroy us without remnant or survivor? ¹⁵ O LORD, God of Israel, you are just, but we have escaped as a remnant, as is now the case. Here we are before you in our guilt, though no one can face you because of this."

Ezra 10:1 While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him out of Israel; the people also wept bitterly. ² Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the descendants of Elam, addressed Ezra, saying, "We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. ³ So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be

done according to the law. ⁴ Take action, for it is your duty, and we are with you; be strong, and do it." ⁵ Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as had been said. So they swore. ⁶ Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God, and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he spent the night. ¹ He did not eat bread or drink water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles. ⁷ They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem, ⁸ and that if any did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all their property should be forfeited, and they themselves banned from the congregation of the exiles. ⁹ Then all the people of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days; it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain. ¹⁰ Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have trespassed and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. ¹¹ Now make confession to the LORD the God of your ancestors, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." ¹² Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, "It is so; we must do as you have said. ¹³ But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for many of us have transgressed in this matter. ¹⁴ Let our officials represent the whole assembly, and let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every town, until the fierce wrath of our God on this account is averted from us." ¹⁵ Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them. ¹⁶ Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men, ¹ heads of families, according to their families, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter. ¹⁷ By the first day of the first month they had come to the end of all the men who had married foreign women. ¹⁸ There were found of the descendants of the priests who had married foreign women, of the descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. ¹⁹ They pledged themselves to send away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the flock for their guilt. ²⁰ Of the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. ²¹ Of the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziyah. ²² Of the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasa. ²³ Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. ²⁴ Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri. ²⁵ And of Israel: of the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah, ¹ and Benaiah. ²⁶ Of the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. ²⁷ Of the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. ²⁸ Of the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. ²⁹ Of the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiyah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth. ³⁰ Of the descendants of Pahathmoab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. ³¹ Of the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, ³² Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. ³³ Of the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. ³⁴ Of the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, ³⁵ Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, ³⁶ Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, ³⁷ Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu. ³⁸ Of the descendants of Binnui: ¹ Shimei, ³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiyah, ⁴⁰ Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, ⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, ⁴² Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. ⁴³ Of the

descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. ⁴⁴ All these had married foreign women, and they se