

Nehemiah 10:30-39

A people dedicated to the Lord worship Him, find their rest in Him, and give their best to Him; all made possible by the atonement of their sins.

1. The People's Vow to Stay Holy (Set Apart)

This is essentially an oath to stop their intermarriage with other nations. This was not an issue of race, but an issue of holiness and relationship to God.

v30: *We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.*

King Solomon is the prime example - his wives led him to idol worship.

Application for us:

We are to remain separate from the world, unstained by the world. Because Christ lives in us, we should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers, who will pull us from our relationship to the Lord. (2 Cor 6:14-17)

Christians must not marry unbelievers (*Remember King Solomon!*)

We also agree to do this together as a body!

Member Covenant: *We also purpose to maintain family and private devotion to the Lord; to train our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our family and neighbors, to walk carefully in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to abstain from all activities, habits, and lifestyles that dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ, cause stumbling to a fellow believer, or hinder the gospel witness; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior, and to give Him preeminence in all things.*

2. The People's Dedication to Resume Sabbath Rest

v31 *"And if the peoples of the land bring in goods or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day..."*

God mandated times of rest so that His people could worship, praising Him for His great deeds and deliverance of His people. (For further study: Genesis 2:2, Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

Jesus says in Mat 11:28-29: *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Jesus taught that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. **God intended it to be for the benefit of people, not a burden laid on people.**

Application for us:

Intentionally set aside times, days, and seasons to nurture our relationship with God. Sunday family meetings, regular daily catechism and bible study, Friday night "shabbat" dinners, having coffee with fellow believers, hospitality - having each other over to your homes for dinner and fellowship...

(For further study: Matthew 12:8, Mark 2:27, Colossians 2:16, Hebrews 4:9-10)

3. The People's Dedication to Provide for the Temple

In v32-39, the Israelites make an oath to donate their money, firewood, and other resources, so that they could resume worship and atonement of sin.

Application for us:

Like the people did in their firm covenant, we should make a point to worship the Lord with all of our resources.

There's no investment that pays you back as much as God's Word. Supporting the house of the Lord (the church) helps enable the Word to go out into people, which changes their lives.

Not only must we attend a church, we must attend to our church.

The church is the Body of Christ. Dedicating ourselves to this body is essential because **it is our greatest and our primary identity.**

Member Covenant: *We purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and love; to promote its fruitfulness and spirituality; to attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, and doctrines; to submit to its discipline and the authority of its officers; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, to the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.*

(For further study: Matthew 22:21, Romans 12:1, Phillipians 4:15-18)