

# Repentance – Moving forward through commitment.

## Nehemiah 10:1-39



(Expanded Sermon Notes)

The wall work is done, exiles have returned, and now they must remind themselves of the purposes that God has for them. What is God's primary purpose? Worship and enjoyment of him. Again, we come to the truth that when we wholeheartedly pursue God's glory, we will find our greatest good. But haven't they been engaged in right worship for several chapters now? Yes, they have. But, if they want to continue in right worship and pursuit of God's glory, they will need to keep remembering. The risk that faced them, and faces all of us, is that when we stop intentionally remembering, we begin to forget, and then we forget altogether. They reviewed the law handed down through Moses. We need to routinely review the gospel of grace given through Jesus. We can read this chapter and miss that it really isn't about the laws. It is about relationship. When God's people walk in God's precepts with joy, they do so because they are enjoying God in relationship. Let us keep remembering so that we keep walking on God's path, and as we walk, we will find ourselves in abiding relationship. Yet, we know personally and see in their experience that we will not walk perfectly. And so, we need to engage in repentance. Repentance is the action of admitting that our way isn't the best way. Instead, God's way is far better, and then we are to actively walk in God's way. Regular and routine repentance is the path to change. Regular and routine repentance is how we consistently begin as best we can. Regular and routine repentance is how we let Christ live in us and cooperate with his righteousness. If we want to be faithful people in the future, let us commit to the discipline of regular and routine repentance.

**God's love leads us to a better future through repentance.**

## 1. What is repentance?

- a. Chapter 10 contains an overview of the recommitment to the covenant that their father's had with God. → I.e., They are recommitting to being a faithful people.
  - i. The term *covenant* is not in the text, which uses the word *'āmānâ*, 'a firm (promise)' (cf. 11:23, and comment); but the verb translated 'make' is *kārat*, 'to cut', which has strong associations with covenant-making. The three classes of signatories will divide up the ensuing list of names, though the priests will precede the Levites there.<sup>1</sup>
    1. **Note on the names: All of the names divide up into the following categories.**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 12, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 124–125.

<sup>2</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 12, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 125–126.

2. **vv. 2-8: There are twenty-one priestly names here, of which at least fifteen are names of families.**
  3. **vv. 9-13: Of these seventeen Levite names**, some may indicate family groups of long standing (e.g., the first three names coincide with those Levites in 12:8a who came home with Zerubbabel), but several are of contemporary individuals. **Six of them, possibly seven, were among the teaching group at Ezra's reading of the law** (Neh. 8:7).
  4. **vv. 14-27 - The chiefs of the people** are listed predominantly (perhaps entirely) in terms of the families they represented; in fact the first twenty-one names (Parosh to Magpiash, 14–20a) closely follow the list in Ezra 2:3–30, with a few variants of order and spelling.
- ii. How are they doing that? → **Repentance**
1. **So, what is repentance?**
- b. Repentance permits a person to return to God and seize upon a regenerate life, but provides no license for entering lightly into sin.<sup>3</sup>
- i. **Repentance is godly sorrow for one's sin together with a resolution to turn from it.**<sup>4</sup>
- c. It is based on a feeling of godly sorrow for our sin. In examining repentance and faith, we should remember that they cannot really be separated from one another.<sup>5</sup>
- i. The other major New Testament term for repentance is μετανοέω (*metanoeō*), which literally means **"to think differently about something or to have a change of mind."** The word was characteristic of John the Baptist's preaching: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matt. 3:2).<sup>6</sup>
- d. **An action – Heading in a new direction.**
- i. I was walking on the path of self, doing life my way, and that way failed me at some point. In that failure or disappointment, I realized I needed to go in a new direction.
    1. The new direction is the way of Jesus.
  - ii. Our repentance involves action → It is not just the feeling of momentary guilt and then continuing on our way.
    1. It is having a change of mind that leads to a new direction.
- e. **A process – Gaining victory over the dominion of sin.**
- i. Repentance is also a process and not just a once and done experience.
  - ii. We so often think that when we ask for forgiveness of our sin that we won't struggle with that thing any more. That is not the case.
  - iii. Regular and routine repentance is the path to change.
    1. Regular and routine repentance is how we consistently begin as best we can.
    2. Regular and routine repentance is how we let Christ live in us and cooperate with his righteousness.
    3. If we want to be faithful people in the future, let us commit to the discipline of regular and routine repentance.
    4. **God's love leads us to a better future through repentance.**

<sup>3</sup> David A. deSilva, "Repentance, Second Repentance," ed. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 1011.

<sup>4</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 868.

<sup>5</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 866.

<sup>6</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 867.

- a. I.e., We are willing to commit to regular repentance & confession because we've experienced God's love and the blessings of God's way.

**f. What do we need to repent from? → Sin**

- i. **Actions** – Sin is any evil action or evil motive that is in opposition to God. Simply stated, sin is failure to let God be God and placing something or someone in God's rightful place of supremacy.<sup>7</sup>
- ii. **Dominion** – Sin is a principle of captivity to a power that permeates and contaminates our human reality. *Sin* is the word Christians use to name not simply our failed acts but also our inner and outer captivity.<sup>8</sup>
- iii. **Deficiency** – The desire to overcome our limitations and finitude because of anxiety about our creaturely existence.<sup>9</sup>
  - 1. Each of these definitions gets at the full reality of sin.
    - a. Yes, it involves our wrong or broken actions, but it is more than that. Yes, it is a power that captivates our present reality, but it won't always. Yes, it is part of a dysfunctional identity where we believe that we can overcome our finite limitations.
  - 2. **A helpful question: When we trace or dissect our sin, what deficiency prompted it, or what were we trying to relieve (dominion)?**
- iv. **As we engage in the process of regular repentance, we gain clarity on our spiritual journey with Christ: who we were, who we are, and who we are becoming.**
  - 1. This is precisely what we see in the text in chapter 10.
  - 2. **Again → Neither Old nor New Testament has any place for confessions of faith that leave life-style and practice unaffected.**<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Who they were.

**a. Acted more like the prevailing culture than the people of God.**

- i. **This post-exile community was experiencing many problems, both ethical and religious. The first step toward solving these problems was a commitment by the whole community to submit to the authority of God's revelation as found in the Scriptures.**
  - 1. The same is true for God's people today. This commitment to the authority of Scripture must be applied to present situations, for "true religion cannot be merely general principles" (F.C. Holmgren, *Ezra and Nehemiah*, p 138). The principles must be applied to specific actions and decisions.<sup>11</sup>
- ii. **This passages spells out a few matters where the community is particularly conscious of having lapsed, either through neglect or through having failed to appreciate the full significance of the law's requirements.**<sup>12</sup>
  - 1. How did they come to the awareness of their rebellion and state? → God's Word
  - 2. **It was the result of exegetical work upon previously existing laws.**<sup>13</sup>
    - a. I.e., They read and understood God's Word.

<sup>7</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 513.

<sup>8</sup> Rich Villodas, *The Deeply Formed Life* (Waterbrook, 2020) 99.

<sup>9</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr via Scazzero, Peter. *The Emotionally Healthy Leader. How Transforming Your Inner Life Will Deeply Transform Your Church, Team, and the World*, (2015), 185.

<sup>10</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 340.

<sup>11</sup> Mason, Eric. *Nehemiah For You: Strength to Build for God* (God's Word For You) (p. 165). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

<sup>12</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 333.

<sup>13</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 333.

3. What is identified in this passage as the lapses of God's people?
  - a. **These include principally: → These reforms were needed because of who they had become in exile.**
    - i. Mixed marriages – (10:31 [30]; 13:23–30)
    - ii. Sabbath observance – (10:32 [31]; 13:15–22)
    - iii. The wood offering – (10:35 [34]; 13:31)
    - iv. First-fruits – (10:36–37 [35–36]; 13:31)
    - v. Levitical tithes – (10:38–39 [37–38]; 13:10–14)
    - vi. Neglect of the temple – (10:40 [39]; 13:11).<sup>14</sup>
  - iii. Where else in the story have we seen the resulting impacts of life as exiles?
- b. **Cf. 5:1-19 → Bad loans and manipulation (Hurt people, hurt people.)**
  - i. The reality is that they have been in exile for 100+ years at this point.
    1. 606-536 BC – 70-year Assyrian exile.
    2. 444 BC – the period of the wall construction.
    3. They have been impacted and changed in ways that aren't even present to them over the generations of living in exile.
  - ii. There are three groups of people in chapter 5 that are being pressed for resources.
    1. **The first group** we take to refer to families who owned no land. They were dependent on wages from laboring of whatever sort. Since we have no evidence that Nehemiah paid wages to the builders, the families of these men were becoming destitute. Not unreasonably, they asked for basic sustenance to be provided.<sup>15</sup>
    2. **The second group** are clearly differentiated from the first in that they owned land that they could use as security against a loan to tide them over the period of difficulty. (However, the danger was now looming, we must suppose, that they would not be able to repay these loans because of the added burden imposed by the wall-building. In these circumstances, they would probably choose first to sell their children.
      - a. Harsh as this may seem, they would then still own their means of livelihood, which would enable them to redeem their children. Once their land was forfeit, however, irreversible debt-slavery would soon inevitably follow.<sup>16</sup>
    3. **The situation of the third group** was yet again slightly different: they too were evidently landowners who were falling into debt, but this time because they needed to borrow in order to pay their taxes.<sup>17</sup>
      - a. Since the time of Darius there was a fixed annual land tax assessed "on the basis of an average yield from the land, for each satrapy, taking into account, of course, the kind of cultivation as well as the average amount of the yield."<sup>18</sup>
    4. The loaning of money on pledge and the practice of debt-slavery were not illegal as such; cf. **Exod 21:2–11; 22:24–26 (25–27); Lev 25; Deut 15:1–18; 24:10–13**. The laws, however, are concerned to protect the minimal rights of the very poor. Some of their stipulations were clearly unsuitable for the present emergency. For instance, the "year of release," if it was ever regularly observed, was evidently not sufficiently

<sup>14</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 330–331.

<sup>15</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 237.

<sup>16</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 237.

<sup>17</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 238.

<sup>18</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 238.

soon to offer the prospect of speedy alleviation; such a possibility simply passes without mention.<sup>19</sup>

- c. **You & Me → In what ways do we tend to act / think like the prevailing culture instead of as the people of God?**
  - i. In what ways has my life begun to look more like the prevailing culture than it does the values of the kingdom?
    - 1. Often, we think because we are avoiding the “sins” of the other side, we do not smell of the culture... that is not the same thing as growing to be like Jesus.
    - 2. As spiritual exiles, we should be growing uncomfortable with both sides of the aisle.
  - ii. What is the better vision for my life as informed by the Bible? Am I convinced of it?
    - 1. What ways am I still more convinced of the prevailing culture’s vision for my life?

### 3. Who they are.

- a. Chap 10 → They have become more convinced of God’s preferred way of living and so they are making a commitment to it.
  - i. **This chapter is a first-person account of a one-sided agreement into which the community entered to observe the Law of God.** After the introduction (1) comes a list of those who signed the document (2–28). The rest of the community (29) joins with them in agreeing to observe the law (30). Of this, several particular requirements are singled out for special mention (31–40).<sup>20</sup>
    - 1. It is sobering to reflect on the general nature of this pledge: a broad statement of intent in v 30 (29) is followed by a series of stipulations as detailed and specific as could be imagined.
    - 2. **Neither Old nor New Testament has any place for confessions of faith that leave life-style and practice unaffected.**<sup>21</sup>
  - ii. This commitment they are making isn’t a flexible arrangement. → They are all in and are committing to it in the most real sense via a contract.
    - 1. **The force of the agreement is attested by the fact of its being set in writing and sealed as a guarantee of its authenticity and to preserve against subsequent tampering;** cf. Moscati, *Bib* 30 (1949) 320; the present verse neither demands nor precludes the view that the leaders who added their names did so with seals only rather than signatures.<sup>22</sup>
    - 2. In other words, they put their name on it! → They are standing and will be accounted for on this contract.
      - a. Example: Think of any contract you put your name on. → My aunt co-signed on a loan with me at one point in my life, she was on the hook just as much as I was.
- b. **This is a pinnacle moment in the story and the development of the people.**
  - i. They have gone from those opposed to God to those under the direction of God.
  - ii. They are outlining the terms of what it will mean to be a faithful people.
    - 1. We are finishing the larger 3-chapter section (8,9,10), all centered around the idea of obedience.

<sup>19</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 238.

<sup>20</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 325.

<sup>21</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 340.

<sup>22</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 332.

- iii. Here is how that inner work is ordered over the three chapters:
  - 1. **Chapter 8 – Reading of God’s Word and Feast of Booths**
  - 2. **Chapter 9 – Confession and Repentance**
  - 3. **Chapter 10 – Recommitment to Covenant**
- iv. **Reminder** – The people wept when they heard the Word of God read because it exposed the state of their rebellious nature and situation. (cf. 8:9)
  - 1. <sup>9</sup> **And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law.**
- v. **Key conviction - He (Nehemiah) belong to God** – I.e., His identity is wrapped up in belonging to God’s family.
  - 1. More than anything, this is the ultimate lens that influences Nehemiah’s worldview.
    - a. **I belong to God, and I am to honor God. Therefore, everything that I do must be filtered through that lens.**
- c. **Who are we in Christ?**
  - i. **1 Pet 2:9 - <sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**
  - ii. **Gal. 3:25 - <sup>26</sup>for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.**
  - iii. **2 Cor 5:17 - <sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**
  - iv. **Rom. 6:11 - <sup>11</sup>So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.**
  - v. **Col 1:12-14 - <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup>He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**
  - vi. **Rev. 21:1-4 - Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup>And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. <sup>4</sup>He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”**
    - 1. What we experience in a foretaste now, we will experience in full in the age to come.
    - 2. **This is the story of Nehemiah and the people. Their formation wasn’t just about who they are in the present, but it is also about who they are becoming. The vision for the future only gets better and better.**

## 4. Whom they are becoming.

- a. They are perpetually gaining a better vision for their future that is contrasted by the growing discomfort with the power, rhetoric, and perspectives of this age.
  - i. **They had gained clarity on the way they were to live, that is to honor God, through the reading of God’s Word, and as they continued to step into that preferred vision the discomfort with this age grew and the beauty of the age to come increased exponentially.**

- ii. **Important question – Are we growing more uncomfortable with the rhetoric, power, and perspectives of this age as we follow Christ? Or, do we find ourselves perpetually looking more and more to logic of this age to solve our problems?**
- b. v. 30 – Righteous... “We will not neglect...” → Again, they are committed to God’s better vision for their future.
- c. What were the tangible steps that they took to step into God’s preferred vision and ways?
  - i. **V. 30 - Mixed marriages.** The law had strongly condemned these (not on racial but on religious grounds, Exod. 34:12–16; hence the ready acceptance of Ruth the convert). But the social climb was tempting in these trying days, and marriage offered an attractive ladder. Malachi (2:10–16), Ezra (9:1ff.) and Nehemiah (13:23–29) all encountered the problem, tackling it firmly in their different ways. Finally, lest the Christian should think it no longer a live issue, Paul expounds it with unanswerable logic and passionate intensity in 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1.
  - ii. The Solomon principle... cf. 13:26
    - 1. Nehemiah will reference this to the repeated and habitual sin of the people of Israel later in the book. → I.e., “Haven’t you learned anything yet?!”
    - a. <sup>26</sup> **Did not Solomon king 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.**
    - 2. God has already called the people to this (Exodus 34:11-16). **The reason was this: If you marry unsaved people, it’s going to skew your commitment to me. So they commit themselves and promise that they are not going to give their children in marriage just to anyone. This isn’t just about the marriage itself. It is about the spiritual trajectory that they are setting up for their families.** They want to make sure that their children know God and love him.<sup>23</sup>
  - iii. **V.31 - The sabbath.** The presence of foreign traders opened a loophole in the sabbath law, for one could argue that no-one in the covenant was being put to any work in buying from them. **But the people could now see that the tone and spirit of the day were being threatened. Later, when they went back on their decision, it was soon apparent how serious a threat it posed** (see the vivid report in 13:15–22).<sup>24</sup>
    - 1. **Key - Who they are becoming. → It isn’t just about finding loop holes around the rules of God, but instead walking in the fullness of the purposes of God.**
    - 2. This is not just committing to a day. They are committing themselves to walking by faith. That is what it takes to agree not to work—because not working, in that culture, meant not earning anything.<sup>25</sup>
    - 3. **Once again, this is painfully relevant today. We live in a culture of work. We love to be busy.** We like to think that we are getting stuff done. But “unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1). The Lord “will neither slumber nor sleep” (Psalm 121:4). That means that while you’re resting, God’s working. You don’t need to be afraid.
    - 4. **Our lives should include times where we reflect on the goodness of God. So ask yourself: When was the last time the Lord really spoke to me? When did I last**

<sup>23</sup> Mason, Eric. *Nehemiah For You: Strength to Build for God (God's Word For You)* (pp. 165-166). The Good Book Company.

<sup>24</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 12, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 126–127.

<sup>25</sup> Mason, Eric. *Nehemiah For You: Strength to Build for God (God's Word For You)* (p. 167). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

**pause enough to really listen to him?** In order to walk in biblical commitment to God, we are going to have to pause our lives—to say yes to him and say no to some other stuff. **We need to stop and remember the Lord.**<sup>26</sup>

- iv. **Vv. 32-33 - Temple tax.** In Exodus 30:11–16 everyone over 20 was charged half a shekel as ‘a ransom for himself’, and this money was used ‘for the service of the tent of meeting’. But it was levied only when a census was held, whereas the present passage promises a slightly smaller but annual sum. (In NT times it had become half a shekel: Matt. 17:24.) As Brockington points out, although the decrees of Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes authorized regular grants from public funds for the costs of worship (e.g. Ezra 6:8–10), these could not be expected to continue indefinitely; nor (we may add) would such dependence on foreign patronage have been healthy for Judaism.<sup>27</sup>

1. The fifth clause relates to “the wood offering,” which again is not directly mentioned in the Pentateuch. Lev 6:5–6 (12–13), however, speaks of the requirement that fire should be kept burning continually on the altar and of the consequent need that “the priest shall burn wood on it every morning.” Obviously, the words “as it is written in the Law” refer to this requirement (“to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God”). However, if this was to be accomplished, practical arrangements had to be made. In earlier times, it had been the responsibility of the Gibeonites to provide the wood (cf. Josh 9:27), but Nehemiah had evidently found it necessary to adopt a different approach (13:31).<sup>28</sup>

v. **Vv. 34-39 – First Fruit Offerings (Tithes)**

1. **Regulations regarding first-fruits are found in Exod 23:19 and 34:26. Deut 26:1–11, which is often adduced here, is, strictly speaking, reshith רֵאשִׁית, or “prime-fruit” offering.** Although these passages speak only of bringing them to the sanctuary, Num 18:12–13 makes clear that they were for the benefit of the priests, and that is explicitly reaffirmed here.
  - a. **The quantity involved is not stated, but it was a token amount of that harvested first each year to acknowledge that the whole was from God and properly belonged to him.**<sup>29</sup>
    - i. **Giving is an act of worship. → We praise the one who has supplied our every need.**
- d. The final pledge, *We will not neglect the house of our God* (39), sums up not only the paragraph but much of the concern of the post-exilic prophets, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Before the exile, the Temple had too often been a mere talisman, and its well-patronized activities a sedative for the conscience (see, above all, Jer. 7). Now the temptation was the opposite: to grudge the effort and expense of it all. The mood is captured and castigated in Malachi. **The very different tone of this chapter is some measure of Ezra’s and Nehemiah’s leadership, and of the impact of the Word of God on those who were exposed to it at length and in depth.**<sup>30</sup>
  1. **Do I know who I am, because of whose I am?**
  2. **Am I growing uncomfortable with the dynamics of this age?**
  3. **How am I practicing repentance on a daily or weekly basis so that I continually see God’s more beautiful vision for the future?**

<sup>26</sup> Mason, Eric. *Nehemiah For You: Strength to Build for God (God's Word For You)* (p. 167). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

<sup>27</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 12, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, 127.

<sup>28</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 336.

<sup>29</sup> H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, vol. 16, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1985), 337.

<sup>30</sup> Derek Kidner, *Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 12, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries), 127–128.