

A close-up photograph of two hands reaching towards each other against a light, textured background. The hands are positioned on the left and right sides of the frame, with fingers slightly curled as if about to grasp each other. The lighting is soft and directional, highlighting the skin texture and the contours of the hands. The overall mood is one of tension or anticipation.

# Not a happy ending (but an important one)

NEHEMIAH 13



## Four Vows

1. Submit to God's Word
2. Live separate from the world
3. Support God's work
4. Keep the sabbath



# That was then...

## Oath: Submit to God's Word

“all these now join their fellow Israelites the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the Lord our Lord.” Nehemiah 10:29



## This is now

“On that day the Book of Moses was read aloud in the hearing of the people and there it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever be admitted into the assembly of God” (13:1)

“As soon as the people heard the law they separated from Israel **all** those of foreign decent.” (13:3)



## Going to Extremes

They went from one extreme to the other, from ignoring God's word to blindly obeying God's word, which led them from tolerating their enemies, to excluding all foreigners.



That was then...

**Oath: Live separate from the world**

“We promise not to give our daughters to marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.”

Nehemiah 10:30





## This is now

Eliashib, a high priest prepares a guest room for Tobiah the Ammonite in the temple! Also, Eliashib's relative was married to Sanballat's daughter.

(13:4-9)

A black and white photograph of two hands reaching towards each other, one from the top left and one from the bottom right, with the text 'Syncretism is just as dangerous as legalism.' centered between them.

Syncretism is just as dangerous as legalism.





# That was then...

## Oath: Support God's Work

“The people of Israel, including the Levites, are to bring their contributions of grain, new wine and olive oil to the storerooms, where the articles for the sanctuary and for the ministering priests, the gatekeepers and the musicians are also kept. We will not neglect the house of our God.” (10:39)



## This is now

“I also learned that the portions assigned to the Levites had not been given to them, and that all the Levites and musicians responsible for the service had gone back to their own fields. So I rebuked the officials and asked them, “Why is the house of God neglected?” Then I called them together and stationed them at their posts.” (13:10)



## This is now

“The temple store rooms were empty because people had stopped bringing their tithes and offerings.” (13:11)



## That was then...

### Oath: Keep the Sabbath

“When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts.” (10:31)



## This is now

The Israelites are ignoring the Sabbath, buying and selling on the Sabbath, and treating it like any other day (13:15-18)