

# Nehemiah 10 - Sealing the Covenant

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### (C) Covenant renewal (10:1-39)

#### (a) Signatories (10:1-27)

(i) Nehemiah the governor (10:1a)

(ii) Zedekiah (10:1b)

**1** Now on the sealed *document* were *the names of*: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah,

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**1** Here is a list of those who signed: Hacaliah's son Nehemiah the governor, Zedekiah,

**1** Now those that sealed were, Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,

- The list begins with Nehemiah, who again set an excellent example for the people. Many of the 24 names in v1-8 are listed in 12:12-21, names of heads of families. These were

priests (10:8). Ezra is not listed, but he was a descendant of Seraiah (v2).

(iii) 21 priests (10:2-8)

2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,  
2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,  
2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,  
2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah,  
3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah,  
3 Pashur, Amariah, Malchijah,  
3 Pashur, Amariah, Malchijah,

4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,  
4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,  
4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,  
4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,  
5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,  
5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,  
5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,  
6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,  
6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,  
6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,  
7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,  
7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,  
7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,

8 Maaziah, Bilgai, *and* Shemaiah. These *were* the priests.  
8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah. These *were* the priests.  
8 Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah—these are the priests.  
8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah: these were the priests.

(iv) 17 Levites (10:9-13)

9 And the Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, *and* Kadmiel;

9 And the Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;

9 These were the descendants of Levi: Azaniah's son Jeshua, Binnui from the descendants of Henadad, Kadmiel,

9 And the Levites: both Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;

10 also their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

10 also their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

10 also their relatives Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

10 And their brethren, Shebaniah, Hodijah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

11 Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

13 Hodiah, Bani, *and* Beninu.

13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.

13 Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

13 Hodijah, Bani, Beninu.

After the priests, 17 Levites were listed, six of whom were involved in reading the Law (8:7).

The other group of signers of the agreement were 44 leaders, that is, heads of families.

Some of them are listed in 7:8-25.

(v) 44 leaders (10:14-27)

14 The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

14 The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

14 The leaders of the people included Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

14 The chief of the people; Parosh, Pahathmoab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,  
15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,  
15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,  
15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,  
16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,  
16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,  
16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,  
17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,  
17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,  
17 Ater, Hizkijah, Azzur,

18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,  
18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,  
18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,  
18 Hodijah, Hashum, Bezai,

19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,  
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,  
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,  
19 Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,

20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,  
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,  
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,  
20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,

21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,  
21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,  
21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,  
21 Meshezabeel, Zadok, Jaddua,

22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,  
22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,  
22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hashub,

24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,

24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,

24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,

24 Hallohesh, Pileha, Shobek,

25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,

26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,

26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,

26 And Ahijah, Hanan, Anan,

27 Malluch, Harim, *and* Baanah.

27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

27 Malluch, Harim, and Baanah.

27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

(b) Terms (10:28-39)

(i) Israel's general promises to walk in God's law or suffer a divine curse

(10:28-29)

**28** Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding,

**28** Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons and their daughters, all those who had knowledge and understanding,

**28** The rest of the people, the priests, the descendants of Levi, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Temple Servants, and everyone who had separated themselves from the nations of the surrounding<sup>3</sup> lands for the Law of God—their wives, their sons, their daughters, and all who had knowledge and understanding—

**28** And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding;

29 are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's Law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to comply with all the commandments of GOD our Lord, and His ordinances and statutes;

29 are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of God our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes;

29 joined with their relatives and their leaders. They entered into an oath—enforced by a curse—to walk in God's Law that was given through God's servant Moses, and to be careful to obey all of the commands of the LORD, our Lord, as well as his regulations and statutes:

29 They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;

The rest of the people did not place their seals to the written agreement, but they did join in binding themselves to follow God's Law. Gatekeepers, singers, and temple servants were listed in 7:44-60. All others are included under the rubric all who separated themselves from foreign peoples (Cf. 9:2). Their commitment, though not indicated by seals, was evidenced by a curse (that called down calamity if they failed to carry through on their agreement) and an oath. The curse may refer to the cursings God stated in the Deuteronomic Covenant (Deut 28:15-68).

(ii) Specifics (10:30-39)

(a) Intermarriage (10:30)

30 and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.

30 and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.

30 "We will not give our daughters in marriage to the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons.

30 And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons:

(b) Sabbath observance despite the cost (10:31)

31 As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on *any* holy day; and we will forgo *the crops of* the seventh year and every debt.

31 As for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forego *the crops* the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

31 As for the people of the land who bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. We will forego planting crops, and we will cancel debts during every seventh year."

31 And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day: and that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.

(c) Provision for the Temple (10:32-39)

(1) Annual support (10:32-33)

**32** We also imposed on ourselves the obligation to contribute yearly a third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:

**32** We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:

**32** We also obligated ourselves to contribute annually a third of a shekel<sup>6</sup> for services relating to the Temple of our God—

**32** Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God;

The stipulations they spelled out in the agreement include:

1. Avoidance of intermarriages (v30; Cf. Ex 34:16; Deut 7:3-4)
2. Keeping the Sabbath and the sabbatical year (Neh 10:31; Cf. Ex 20:8-11; 23:11-12; 31:15-17; Lev 25:2-7; Deut 15:1-3), and
3. Supporting the temple service by giving a third of a shekel (about one-eighth of an ounce) annually (Neh 10:32-33).

According to Ex 30:11-16, the temple gift was to be one-half a shekel annually, but here it was valued lightly.

33 for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the Sabbaths, the new moons, for the appointed times, for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.

33 for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.

33 for the bread set out on the table, for the daily grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, for the Sabbath offerings, for the New Moon festivals, for the appointed festivals, for the holy offerings, for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the service of the Temple of our God.

33 For the shewbread, and for the continual meat offering, and for the continual burnt offering, of the sabbaths, of the new moons, for the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.

- These temple offerings gave the priests and Levites money for maintaining the bread on the table of the Presence (Ex 35:13; 39:36; Num 4:7), for making various offerings, for celebrating monthly and annual festivals, and carrying out other duties. (Cf. 13:10-11 regarding the people's failure to keep this commitment.)

## (2) Wood (10:34)

**34** Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites, and the people so that they could bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at set times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law;

34 Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites and the people so that they might bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at fixed times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law;

34 We—the priests, the descendants of Levi, and the people—cast lots to determine when to bring the wood offering into the Temple of our God, just as our ancestors' families were appointed annually to maintain the altar fire of the LORD our God, as recorded in the Law.

34 And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law:

## (3) First fruits offerings and tithes (10:35-39)



35 and so that they could bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the LORD annually,

35 and that they might bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all the fruit of every tree to the house of the LORD annually,

35 We also cast lots to determine when to bring the first fruits of our land and the annual first fruits of all fruit of every tree to the Temple of the LORD,

**35** And to bring the firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the LORD:

36 and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the Law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God.

36 and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God.

36 as well as the firstborn of our sons and our cattle, as recorded in the Law, along with the firstlings of our herds and our flocks, to present to the Temple of our God for the priests that minister in the Temple of our God.

36 Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God:

37 We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine, and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns.

37 We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns.

37 We also determined to present the first fruits of our ground grain, our offerings, the fruit of all kinds of trees, wines, and oil to the priests, to the chambers of the Temple of our God, and the tithes of our land to the descendants of Levi, so those descendants of Levi could collect the tithes in all the towns where we worked:

37 And that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage.

Other responsibilities to which the leaders and people pledged themselves were:

4. Contributing wood for the fire on the altar of burnt offering, which was to burn continually (Lev 6:12-13),
5. Giving the first fruits of their crops (Ex 23:19; Deut 26:1-3) and their firstborn sons and animals (Num 18:15-17; Deut 12:6) to the Lord, and
6. Paying annual tithes (Lev 27:30; Num 18:21-24). The Levites were to tithe the tithes they received (Neh 10:38-39; Cf. Num 18:26) to help provide for the priests' needs.

38 And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.

38 The priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.

38 "And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, will be with the descendants of Levi when the descendants of Levi receive tithes, and the descendants of Levi will bring the tithe of the tithes into the store rooms of the Temple of our God.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.

39 For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine, and the oil to the chambers; the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers, and the singers are there. So **we will not neglect the house of our God.**

39 For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers. Thus we will not neglect the house of our God.

39 For the Israelis and the descendants of Levi will bring the grain offering, the wine, and the oil into the chambers where the vessels of the sanctuary are, along with the ministering priests, the porters, and the singers. We will not neglect the Temple of our God."

**39** For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we will not forsake the house of our God.

- "...we will not neglect the house of our God" - the final statement of the agreement summarizes obligations (3) through (5). Under Ezra's and Nehemiah's leadership the people had been led to place a higher priority on spiritual things, including the care of the restored temple. This was even more important than restoring the city's walls.