

EPISODE NO. 211

Neh. 13:1-12

Nehemiah Enforced the Law of Moses

1 At that time, they read aloud the Book of Moses to the people. They found the place where it was written: “No Ammonite or Moabite must ever be permitted among the people of the one true God.” 2 Why? Because the Ammonites and the Moabites had NOT welcomed the Israelites with food and water. Instead, they opposed the Hebrews. They hired Balaam to put a curse on Israel. (Nevertheless, our God turned the curse into a blessing!) 3 The people obeyed the law of Moses. They separated out from Israel all the foreigners.

4 Before that happened, Eliashib the high priest had supervised the storerooms of the temple of our God. He was too friendly with Tobiah. 5 Eliashib had permitted Tobiah to use one of the large storerooms in his own way! That large room had been used for the grain-offerings, the incense, and the other things for God’s temple. It had also been used for the 10-percent offerings of grain, the new wine, and the fresh olive oil, which belonged to the Levites, the singers, and the gatekeepers. It had also been used for gifts for the priests.

6 I, Nehemiah, was NOT present in Jerusalem when all this occurred. I had already gone back to Artaxerxes, the Persian king of Babylon. I went back in the 32nd year that Artaxerxes was king. Eventually, I asked the king to allow me to return to Jerusalem. 7 I came back to Jerusalem. Then I found out about the evil thing that Eliashib had done. He had permitted Tobiah to have a room near the courtyards of the temple of the one true God! 8 I was very upset about this! So, I threw out all of Tobiah’s stuff from that room. 9 I ordered the rooms to be purified. And, I restored the objects of the temple of the one true God, along with the grain-offerings, and the incense. 10 Later, I discovered that the people were NOT sharing with the Levites. So, the Levites and the singers who ministered had abandoned the temple services to go raise crops in their own fields. 11 Therefore, I argued with the officers. I said, “Why have you neglected the temple of the one true God?” Then I assembled the Levites and the singers and I restored them to their proper places.

12 Then all the people of Judah brought the tithe of what they had gained in the grain, the new wine, and the fresh olive oil. And they brought it to the storerooms.