

- A. We should hear a reading of God’s Word & endeavor to live according to what God says.
1. God’s design is that there should be exposition (explanation) & application so that those who hear it can understand & apply it to their lives. That is preaching. In Neh 8:8, Ezra & the Levites, “**read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.**”
 2. Today’s text is different from what we read in Neh 13:3: “**when they heard the law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel;**” vv26-27 use a historical illustration to bring it home.
- B. After serving the region of Judah for over 33 years, matters are still lacking among the people of God— especially in the area of marriage & family.

God calls you to flee Solomon’s sin of marrying unbelievers.	I. THE SIN OF MARRYING UNBELIEVERS II. FLEE THIS SIN THAT RUINED EVEN SOLOMON
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I. THE SIN OF MARRYING UNBELIEVERS → vv23-24

- A. This was a sin according to what they read in Neh 13:1-2. → Look back there.
1. This reading came from Deut 23:3 which, speaking of the Ammonite or Moabite, said “**none... even to the 10th generation, shall ever enter the assembly of the Lord.**”
 2. There is the example of Ruth the Moabitess who became a devout Jew & married Boaz the kinsman redeemer. Both became ancestors of King David & the Lord Jesus (Mat 1:5).
 - a. Ruth disavowed her own people while vowing to live as an Israelite when she promised Naomi, “**where you go, I will go,... your people shall be my people, & your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, & there I will be buried**” (Ruth 1:16-17).
 - b. As we get to Neh 13:23f, the women from Ashdod, Ammon & Moab had not made the clear commitment to worship the God of Israel. That was seen in their offspring.
 - 1) They couldn’t speak the language of Scripture because they weren’t taught it.
 - 2) They were more the products of Ashdod, Ammon, & Moab rather than showing fruit of the God of the Bible & the faith of His people.
- B. These Jews sinned by marrying pagan unbelievers who were clearly not devout proselytes. → Look at Nehemiah’s reaction in v25.
1. Nehemiah’s stern treatment here was because he was both a religious leader & governor of the region during a time of theocratic government.
 2. When dealing with this very same sin, Ezra the scribe wrote: “**I tore my garment & my robe, & pulled some of the hair from my head & my beard, & sat down appalled**” (Ezra 9:3).
 3. The differing reactions to the same sin was due to the offices each man held before God.
- C. More Christian parents should take the firm commitment encouraged by Nehemiah in v25: “[we] **shall not give [our] daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for [our] sons.**”
1. For that to work, Biblical courtship with the guidance of Christian parents is the model God gives us rather than the failing dating practice of our day.
 2. Parents & church Sessions should do everything they can to see that church members keep 2 Cor 6:14-15: “**Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness & lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?**”

II. FLEE THIS SIN THAT RUINED EVEN SOLOMON → v26

A. Regarding v26, the NKJV gives us a practical translation that we are to apply today: “...**Nevertheless pagan women caused even him [Solomon] to sin.**”

1. Marrying someone from any foreign nation is permissible as long as they are a member in good standing in a Bible believing church. According to our Standards, they cannot be “infidels, papists, or other idolaters;” nor can they be “notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies” (WCF 24, sec 3).
2. Solomon’s wicked sin of compromise was by marrying pagan women who did not hold to the faith of Israel. → 1 Kings 11:1-13

B. Aside from Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God who took on flesh, Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived. “**He... spoke 3,000 proverbs, & his songs were 1,005... men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom**”¹

1. Nehemiah pointed out, “**pagan women caused even him to sin.**”
2. You may know your Bible exceptionally well & be committed to Christ now; however, if you compromise by committing this great evil by marrying an unbeliever, a pagan spouse can cause even you to sin. He or she could even turn you away from following Christ. Heed this warning & flee Solomon’s sin!

C. Nehemiah gave a final rebuke to those who sinned like Solomon. → vv27-29

1. If someone listening to this message has knowingly married an unbeliever, you have committed a “**great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God.**”
2. Even though this sin has terrible & even soul-threatening consequences, it is not the unforgivable sin. 1 Jn 1:9 says, “**If we confess our sins, He is faithful & righteous to forgive us our sins & to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**”

Review, further application, & conclusion:

¹ 1 Ki 4:32-34