

## ***Nehemiah Chapter 3***

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- This description of the various families, the priests, Levites, Nethinims, etc. who all built the wall all at the same time.
- They didn't start at one point and work their way around the city, they all began simultaneously and built it all at once, describing who took what portion of the wall or a specific gate.
- You can go to Jerusalem today and see the excavations of Nehemiah's wall - they've uncovered large portions of it and you can see it with your own eyes.

Nehemiah was a participant and fellow builder:

**Nehemiah 4:6** "So we built the wall;..." 1<sup>st</sup> chart / details....

- Pastor Chuck / rampart walk:

V: 1-2 The High Priest and his brothers built the "sheep gate." And they sanctified it.

- The High Priest, the priests set the example, they got their hands dirty and did the work.
- This will be the 1<sup>st</sup> of 10 gates.
- The sheep gate is where this chapter begins, and it is where our Christian walk begins when we realize that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away our sins.

**Isaiah 53:6** "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

**John 10:9** "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

- Nothing is said of lock or bars for the way is never closed to the lost sinner who wants to come to the Savior.
- Whether it's the first time or the 25<sup>th</sup> time, the rebuilding process always begins with a renewed focus on the Lamb, and a greater love for Jesus.

V: 3-5 The "fish gate."

- The people of Tekoah worked in two different places on the walls of Jerusalem. They lived about 12 miles away, yet they wanted God to be glorified so they went out of their way, even if their leaders wouldn't.

- Once we've seen the Lamb and come through the sheep gate, when we're committed to Him, the next thing we're called to do is serve Him and speak, testify of Him.
- We're called to a new vocation of sorts.

Jesus said:

**Matthew 4:19** "... Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

#### V: 6-12 The "old gate"

- We're doing God's will, sharing the Gospel, fishing for men - naturally questions are going to arise. The answers to those questions are found at the old gate, the solid teaching and doctrine found only in the Word of God.

**2 Peter 1:3** "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

**Psalms 119:105** "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** "<sup>16</sup>All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

#### V: 13 The Valley Gate.

- After being driven back to the study of God's Word - comes the trials, moving from the mountain top experience to the valley below.
- The sun shines on the mountain tops, but the fruit always grows in the valleys.
- Testing seemingly always follows teaching.

**1 Peter 4:12** "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:"

James echoes the same thought:

**James 1:2-4** "<sup>1</sup>My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; <sup>3</sup>knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup>But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

#### V: 14 The Dung Gate.

- The dung gate is where the trash was transported out of the city, those things that were to be discarded, those things that defiled were removed through the dung gate.

- Invariably as we pass through the “Old Gate” of God’s word, and through the Valley Gate of testing - we’re going to discover more about ourselves, more of the things to be repented of and discarded.

**Psalm 139:23-24** “<sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: <sup>24</sup>And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

**Romans 13:12** “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

V: 15-25 The **Fountain Gate**.

V: 20 Baruch is the only one who is commended for working “earnestly” / “zealously” - some work harder than others.

**Colossians 3:23** “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.”

- There comes a point when we say, “I need more of His power in my life.”
- The fountain gate speaks of this place.

**John 7:37-38** “<sup>37</sup>In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. <sup>38</sup>He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

- The feast Jesus spoke of was the feast Tabernacles / Booths / Succoth.
- During the first 7 days of the 8 day feast, the Temple priests would march in procession down from the temple through the East Gate into the Kidron Valley with large water jugs to the “Fountain Gate” into the pool of Siloam. There they would fill their jugs and make a solemn procession back up the steps and into the temple courtyard where thousands of people would be gathered to worship God.
- As the priests entered the courtyard, the people would break forth in singing the Hallel Psalms – the songs that begin and end with Hallelujah (“praise God”).
- As the people sang and worshipped God, the priests poured out the water on the pavement.
- As the water splashed on the big stones, everyone was reminded of how God provided water for the children of Israel by having Moses strike the rock, and water gushed forth bringing water out of the rock when they were dying of thirst, thus providing for their need and sustaining them in the wilderness.

- On the last day of the feast however, the priests did not make their procession down to the pool of Siloam, nor did they pour out water on the pavement.
- The priests would take the empty silver pitchers and hold them upside down, pouring them out so to speak, demonstrating that they were indeed empty.
- It was at just this moment, when the water had stopped flowing so to speak, in the midst of a hushed silence, given the importance and significance of the moment, that Jesus stepped forward and cried to the thousands of worshippers in the courtyard: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.”
- We know that Jesus wasn't speaking of physical thirst or even man's emotional need for love, for security, or to be needed. He was talking about the human thirst for God. Deep down in the soul of every man resides an unquenchable need for God that only Jesus can fill.
- The priests were unwittingly through their tradition demonstrating that their “religion” was empty and unable to fulfill the deepest need of the human soul, which is to have a fulfilling, a living, loving personal relationship with their creator.
- At that moment the priests had nothing to offer, and that is when Jesus stepped in and said “if you're thirsty come to Me and drink...”

**Isaiah 44:3** “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

V: 26-27 The **Water Gate**. The fountain gate reminds us of the Spirit of God, and the water gate reminds us of the Word of God.

**Nehemiah 8:1** “And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the “water gate”; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.”

- Nehemiah brings the Word of God at the Water Gate where we too are invited to drink deeply.

**Revelation 22:17** “And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

V: 28 The **Horse Gate**. The Horse Gate speaks of the return of Jesus, His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

**Revelation 19:11-16** “<sup>11</sup>And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth

judge and make war. <sup>12</sup>His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. <sup>13</sup>And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup>And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup>And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup>And He hath on his vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

- This describes the return of Jesus. And where does He go?

#### V: 29 The **East Gate**. (Picture)

- It is the east gate through which Jesus will enter into at His Second Coming.
- The current walls around Jerusalem were built and rebuilt from 1100 - 1500's a.d., in 1538 AD when the Turks heard the east gate was the gate Jesus would enter, they walled it up and sealed it shut. Then they placed a muslim cemetery in front of it.
- In the 1969 James Flemming, an archaeologist was inspecting the outside of the current eastern gate just after a severe rain storm. As he stepped onto one patch of ground it caved in under his feet and he fell into a 6' hole full of bones. As he began to figure out what had happened he notices 6 large wedge shaped stone that formed a very large arch - evidence of the original Eastern Gate directly below the the present one.
- When the muslims blocked up the entrance to the Eastern Gate they inadvertently fulfilled Bible prophecy:

Describing Ezekiel's vision:

**Ezekiel 43:1, 4** “<sup>1</sup>Afterward He brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:” - “<sup>4</sup>And the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate who prospect is toward the east.”

**Ezekiel 44:1-3** “<sup>1</sup>Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. <sup>2</sup>Then said the Lord unto me; this gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. <sup>3</sup>It is for the prince; the prince, He shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord; He shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same.”

#### V: 30-31 The **gate Miphkad**. Also known as the “inspection” gate.

- Miphkad literally means “judgment.” When Jesus returns He will bring judgment with Him.
- Our sins have already been judged on Calvary, but the sins of the non-believing world will be dealt with. (**Revelation 20:11-15**)

V: 32 Back to the Sheep Gate - The Beginning and the End, the Alpha & Omega.

- All of this begins and ends with the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

**Hebrews 10:7** “Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of Me, to do thy will, O God.”

- One of the gates was overlooked or ignored, the "Corner Gate." The corner gate is not mentioned because it represents the "Cornerstone" that was rejected.