

KEY TEXT

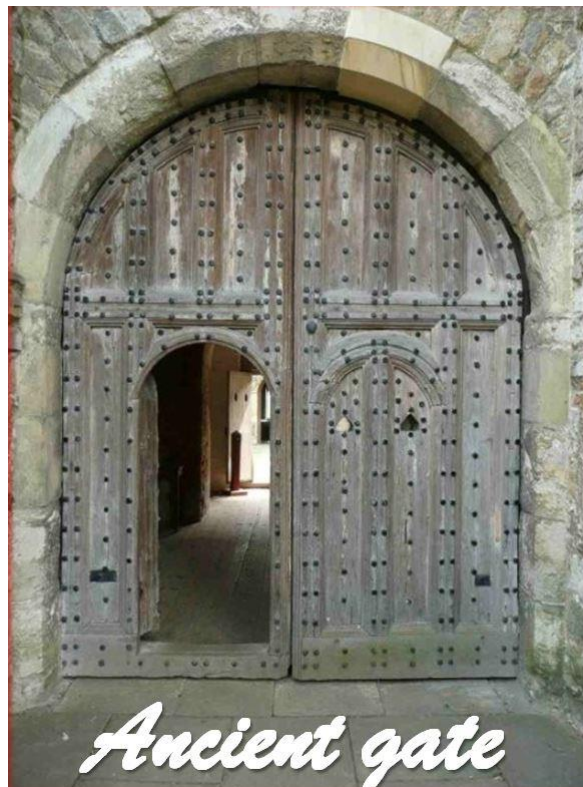
Nehemiah 3:1-32 (ESV)

Verse 1- Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set up its doors; and they consecrated the wall (westward) to the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Hananel.

INTRODUCTION

(1) The ancient gate

In every ancient city, there was a gate.



(2) Significance of gates

A gate is an exit or entry point.

The gates of a city were very significant.

The gates were **SHUT** at nightfall (**Joshua 2:5**) because they were the chief point from which the enemy **ATTACKED** (**Judges 5:8**).

IDOLATROUS ACTS were performed at the gates (**Acts 14:13**).

BATTERING RAMS were set against the gates (**Ezekiel 21:22**).

The gates were **BROKEN DOWN AND BURNED WITH FIRE** (**Nehemiah 1:3**).

(3) Title

‘REBUILDING THE TEN SPIRITUAL GATES’.

The outline:

- Background of our key text
- The ten spiritual gates that need rebuilding
- Rebuilding our broken gates

MAIN POINTS

(I) BACKGROUND OF KEY TEXT

Nehemiah described a number of geographical locations.

He listed ten gates that were repaired along with towers and important structures.

A healthy city needs gates for access and service.

Nehemiah's primary purpose was to document for posterity and the official records the names and accomplishments of the people who worked on the wall.

There are two types of gates – the **PHYSICAL** and the **SPIRITUAL** gate.

Every **physical gate** has a corresponding **spiritual gate**.

The **ten physical gates** mentioned in chapter 3 are equivalent to **ten important aspects of the Christian life**

The **ten spiritual gates** leading to our **spiritual growth**.

Sadly, many of these ten spiritual gates have been broken down and burned down by our enemies.

Consequently, our spiritual life gets daunted and we are not able to become the people God wants us to be because of our broken gates.

(II) THE TEN SPIRITUAL GATES THAT NEED REBUILDING

What are the ten spiritual gates that are broken in our life?

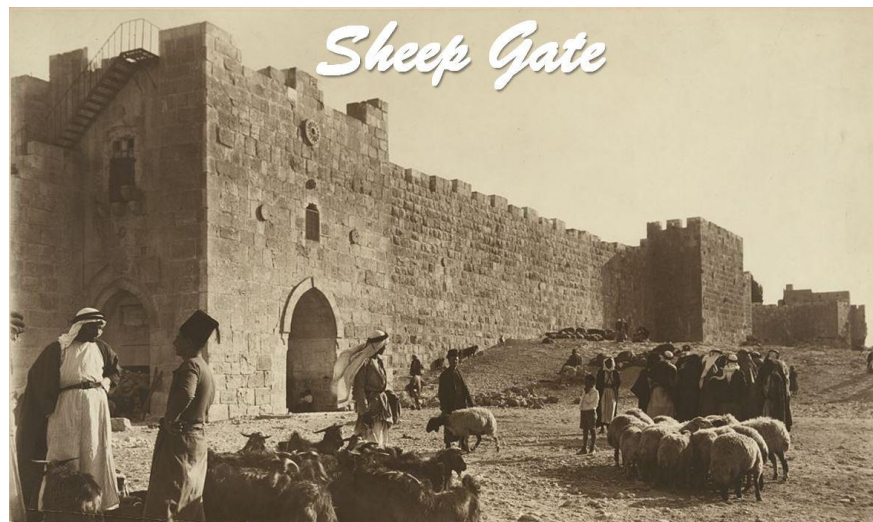
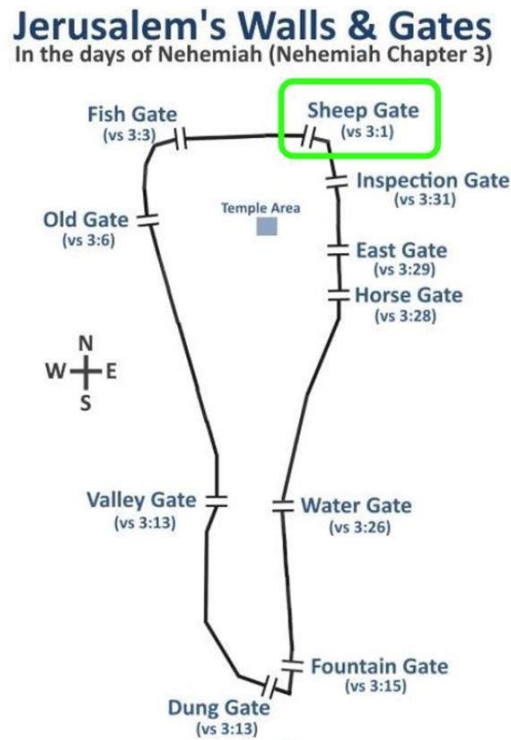
What are the ten spiritual gates that need rebuilding in our life?

1. THE SHEEP GATE

Nehemiah 3:1- Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of Hananel.

Nehemiah 3:32 -And between the upper room at the corner, as far as the Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

This was the gate through which the animals were brought into the city, including the temple sacrifices.



The Scripture says that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission for sins.

The only way to God is through **SACRIFICE**.

This is the only gate which was **CONSECRATED OR SANCTIFIED**, that is, dedicated to God in a special way.

And this is the only gate that was rebuilt by a high priest.

This gate reminds us of **Jesus Christ – the Lamb of God and our Faithful High Priest**.

John 1:29 -The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

This is the gate through which every sinner must enter.

John 10:9- I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

There are not many paths to God, only **ONE. Jesus is the only way.**

Matthew 7:13-14- Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Everyone who desires eternal life must humble themselves.

We must acknowledge our sin and trust in Jesus Christ the Lamb of God who died in our place.

Nothing is said about the gate's *locks and bars*, for the way is never closed to the lost sinner who wants to come to the Savior.

John 6:37 -All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Nehemiah could have begun his record with any of the gates, but he chose to **START** and **END** the report with **the Sheep Gate**.

=Jesus is the beginning and the ending.

Revelation 1:8 -I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

Jesus is the **author and finisher of our salvation.**

Application: *Have you come to Him for cleansing from sin?*

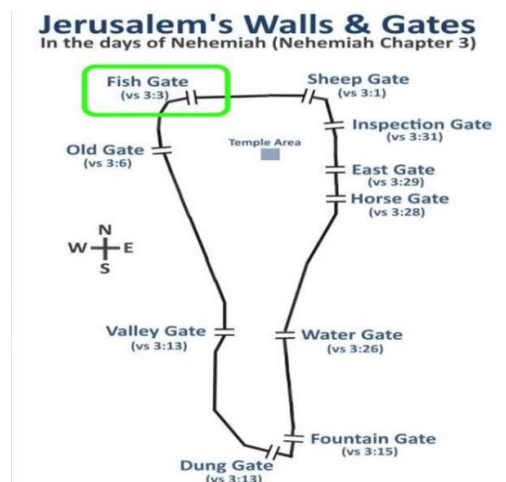
Have you entered in at the Sheep Gate?

Or are you trying to get in another way?

Will you enter in through Him?

2. THE FISH GATE

Nehemiah 3:3 - Also the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.





Merchants used this gate when they brought fish from the Mediterranean Sea, and there may have been a fish market near the gate.

This was a key entrance to the city.

This gate speaks of SERVICE FOR THE PEOPLE.

When Jesus called four of the disciples, he told them that He would make them FISHERS OF MEN.

Matthew 4:18-20 -And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

These verses show how Christ saves our soul to make us **SOUL WINNERS**.

We are saved to serve! God has freed us from sin to **SERVE**Him.

This gate comes **after** the Sheep Gate.

Salvation must come before service.

We cannot save ourselves through service.

Good works are the fruit of salvation NOT the root of it.

Ephesians 2:8-10 - For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Application: *Have you entered the Fish Gate?*

Are you serving your Lord?

Are you a fisher of men?

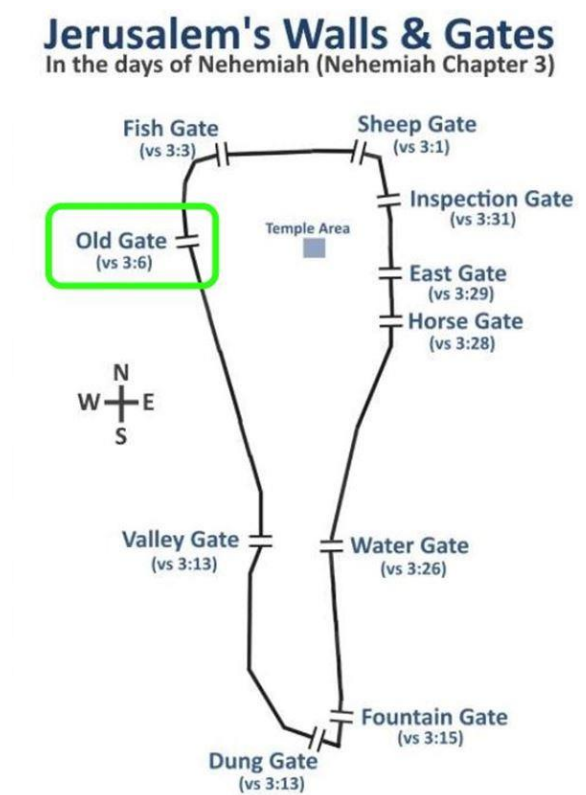
We are saved to serve.

3. THE OLD GATE

Nehemiah 3:6 -Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars.

This gate is probably the Corner Gate located at the northwest corner of the city.

This is the *Mishneh Gate*; the Hebrew word means **second quarter or new quarter**.





In Nehemiah's day, the northwest section of the city was the *mishnehor* **NEW QUARTER**; and this gate led into it.

A paradox: **THE OLD GATE LEADS TO THE NEW QUARTER!**

Jeremiah 6:16 -Thus says the Lord: Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls.

People are always looking for something new, when what is needed is **THE OLD WAYS THAT WORK.**

The illustration of **walking** is used in the Old and New Testaments to describe **GODLY LIVING.**

God has always asked men to **walk by faith** in Him.

“The just shall live by faith.”- If we are to please God, we must walk by faith in Him and obedience to His Word.

God has never changed the old paths.

It has always been **faith and obedience.**

2 Corinthians 5:7 - For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Faith in God and obedience to His Word.

Application: *Have you entered in through the old gate?*

Are you walking in the old paths?

Are you obeying the timeless truths of God's Word?

Are faith and obedience hallmarks of your life?

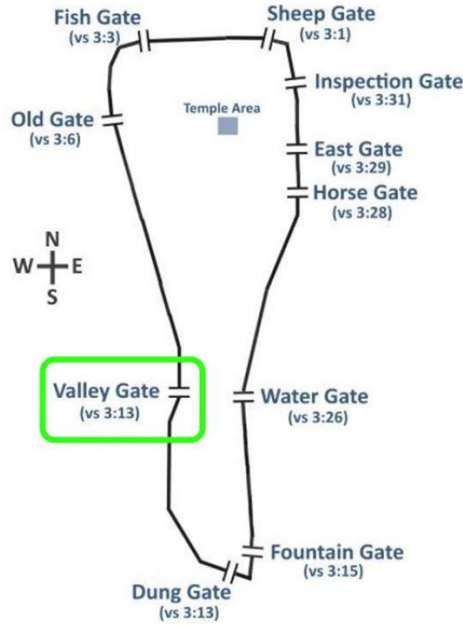
Are you struggling through life or do you have rest in your soul?

4. THE VALLEY GATE

Nehemiah 3:13- Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Refuse Gate.

Jerusalem's Walls & Gates

In the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah Chapter 3)



The Valley Gate is where Nehemiah began his nocturnal investigation of the ruins of the city.

Every Christian needs a **Valley Gate**, for God opposes the proud but gives grace to the **HUMBLE**.

1 Peter 5:5-6- Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

Often God takes us from the mountain top experiences into deep valleys to teach us **GRACE AND HUMILITY**.

It is only as we yield to Christ and serve others that we can truly enter into the fullness of the life He has for us.

Everyone needs to be aware of the dangers of **PRIDE.**

Application: *Have you entered through the valley gate?*

Do you humble yourself before God often?

Are you honest with Him?

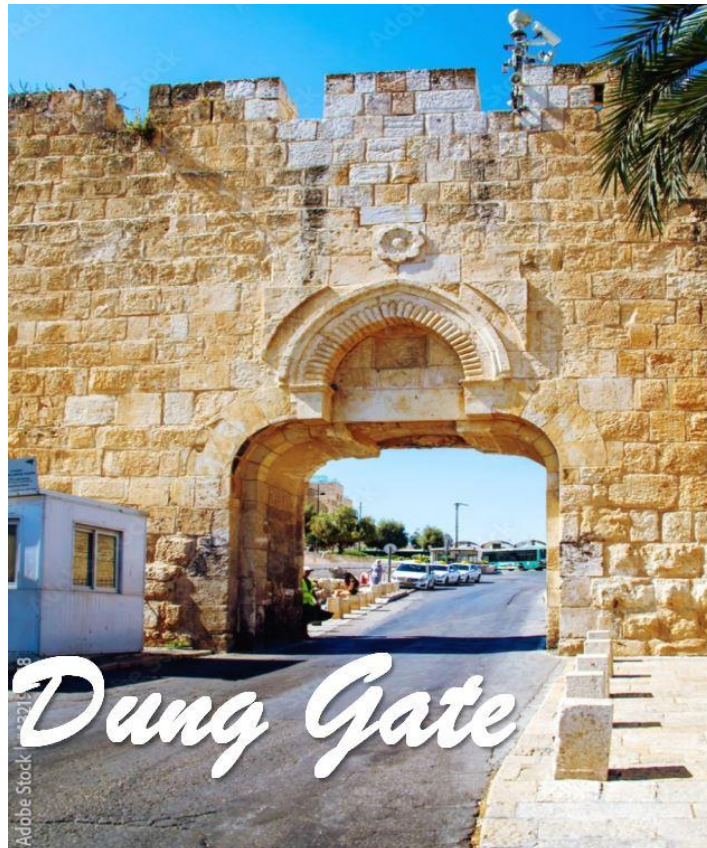
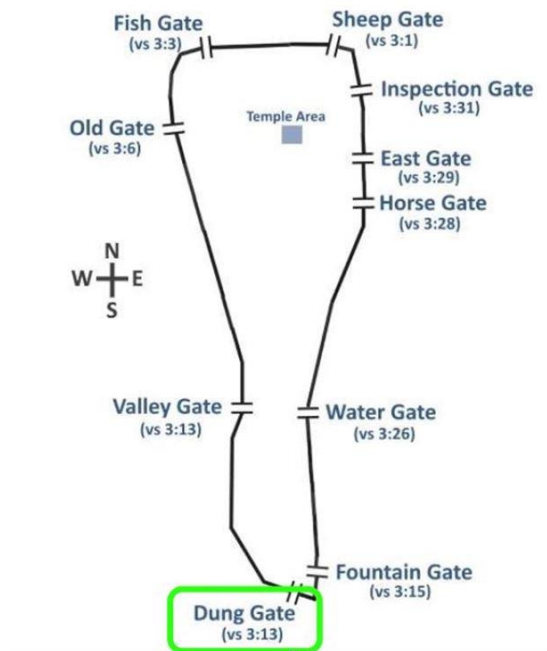
Do you seek His grace for life's trials?

5. THE DUNG GATE

Nehemiah 3:14 -Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.

Jerusalem's Walls & Gates

In the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah Chapter 3)



The Dung Gate was located at the southernmost tip of the city, near the Pool of Siloam.

It was a main exit to the **Valley of Hinnom, where the city disposed of its garbage.**

The sanitary disposal of waste materials is essential to the health of a city.

This gate did not have a beautiful name, but it did perform an important service!

It reminds us that, like the city, each of us individually **must get rid of whatever defiles us, or it may destroy us.**

The Dung Gate symbolizes our daily need for **confession and cleansing.**

2 Corinthians 7:1 -Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

1 John 1:9-If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Application: Every believer has been saved from their sin once and for all.

But we still need **daily cleansing from sin** along the way.

These sins don't affect our salvation, but they do affect our **fellowship with God.**

They also affect our **fellowship with others.**

Do you keep a short account of sin?

Do you seek the Lord's cleansing each day?

6. THE FOUNTAIN GATE

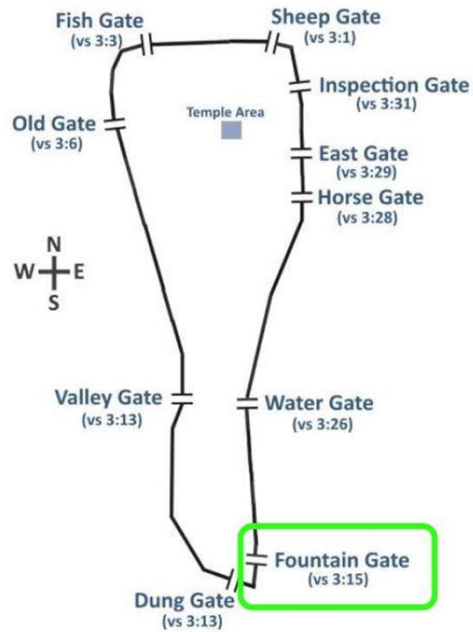
Nehemiah 3:15- Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden.

The Fountain Gate was on the east wall, just north of the Dung Gate, in a very strategic location near the Pool of Siloam.

The Gihon Spring that fed the water system was an important source of water in the city.

In the Bible, water fountains are **a picture of the Spirit.**

Jerusalem's Walls & Gates In the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah Chapter 3)



John 7:37-39 - On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out

of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Only the Holy Spirit can empower the Christian life.

Jesus' command to come and drink is in the *present tense*.

Christ doesn't want us to drink once and then leave.

He wants us to continually drink from His unlimited source.

For without Him we can do nothing.

Ephesians 5:18-19: *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*

Again, the command to be filled is in the *present tense*.

The result is rivers of living water flowing from out of our hearts.

How do you know when these rivers are flowing?

When you speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

When you sing and make melody in your heart to the Lord.

Spiritually speaking, we have moved from the Valley Gate, *humility* to the Dung Gate, *cleansing* to the Fountain Gate *fullness of the Spirit*.

Application: *Have you come to the fountain gate?*

Are you continually drawing living water from Jesus Christ?

Are you filled with His Holy Spirit?

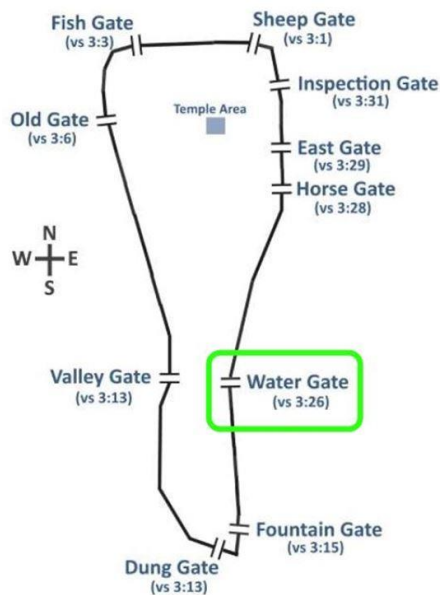
Do you have a song in your heart?

7. THE WATER GATE

Nehemiah 3:26- Moreover the Nethinim who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower.

Jerusalem's Walls & Gates

In the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah Chapter 3)



The Water Gate led from the old City of David to the Gihon Spring, located adjacent to the Kidron Valley.

If the Fountain Gate reminds us of the Spirit of God, the Water Gate reminds us of the **Word of God**.

In fact, it was at the Water Gate that Ezra and the priests conducted a great Bible conference and explained the Scriptures to the people.

That this gate is not said to have been repaired, as were the others, suggests that **THE WORD OF GOD STANDS FOREVER AND WON'T FAIL**.

Psalm 119:89 - Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.

The Bible does not need to be repaired or improved, it's perfect.

Therefore, we must earnestly study it and obey it fully.

Application: *Have you entered the water gate?*

Do you read God's word each day?

Do you seek His will?

8. THE HORSE GATE

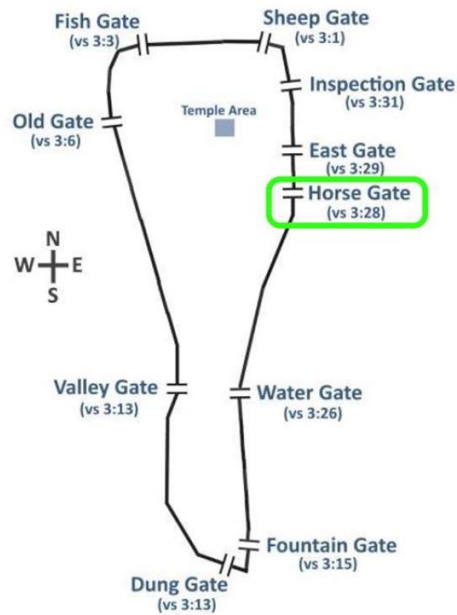
Nehemiah 3:28 - Beyond the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house.

The Horse Gate stood north of the Water Gate, adjacent to the temple area.

Horses had become Israel's **DEFENSE SYSTEM.**

Jerusalem's Walls & Gates

In the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah Chapter 3)



It is significant that **THE PRIESTS** repaired this gate as well as the Sheep Gate.

Both were near the temple area.

The priests offered the sacrifices and were their **spiritual warriors through prayer.**

The Horse Gate reminds us, **there is warfare in the Christian life and that we must always be ready to fight.**

Ephesians 6:10-12- Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Christians are called to fight for their Lord against the adversary.

We do this through

- **prayer**
- **the Word of God**
- **and the armor of God.**

Christian soldiers must be disciplined so that they are always ready to fight.

This is the second gate that only the priests can rebuild, the first being the Sheep Gate.

Only those who are redeemed by our High Priest, Jesus Christ, can be enlisted as His soldiers for without the redeemed blood of Christ on us, we can never win.

To fight and win this spiritual warfare, we need to stand on the victory our High Priest has won for us at the cross and as his priests, we fight **FROM this victory that Christ has secured for us and not **FOR** victory.**

We fight from the victory of Christ and not for the victory of Christ.

And to qualify for this warfare, you must be the priests of Christ – saved, sanctified and set apart for Christ.

2 Timothy 2:3-4 -You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

Application: Have you entered the horse gate?

Are you engaged in spiritual warfare?

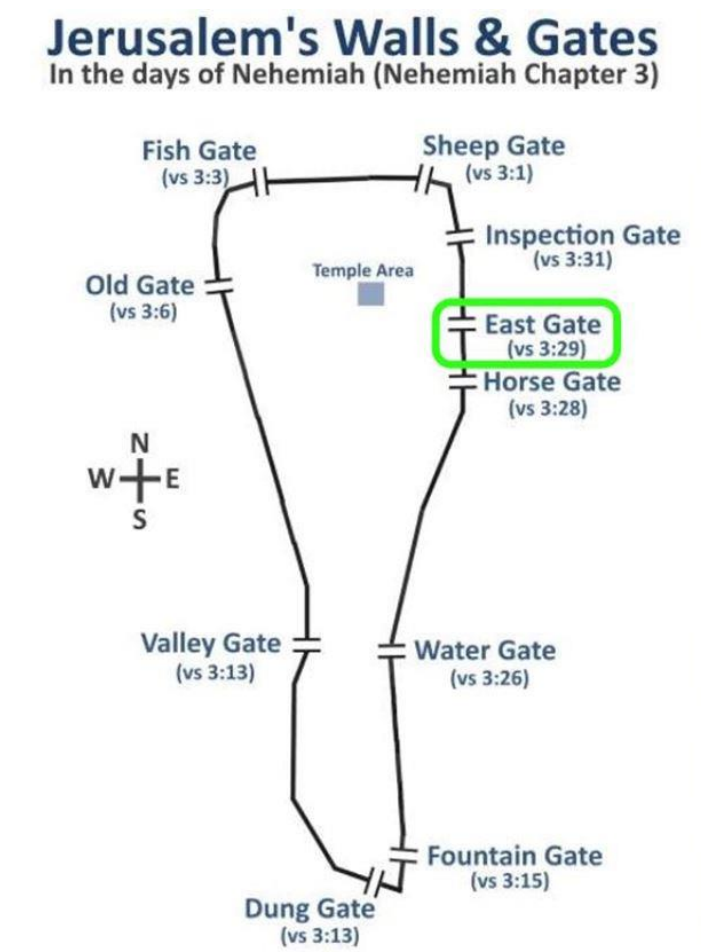
Are you relying on the Lord in prayer?

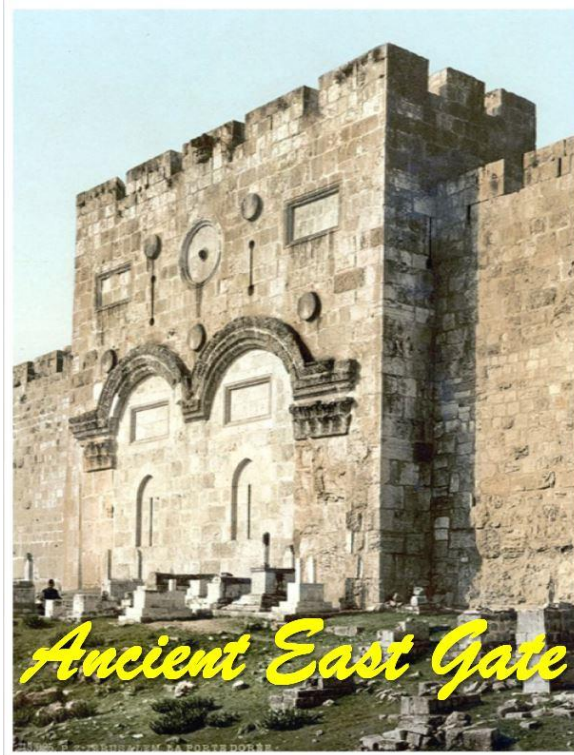
Do you use the Word of God as your sword?

Do you take up the armor each day for protection?

9. THE EAST GATE

Nehemiah 3:29- After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs.





The East Gate led directly to the temple and is probably what we know today as **the Golden Gate**.

Jewish and Christian tradition both connect the Golden Gate with the **coming of the Messiah** to Jerusalem.

This gate is associated with **the coming of the Lord**.

This gate reminds us that **Jesus Christ will return soon**.

Therefore, we must be ready at all times.

1 John 2:28 - And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Application: *Are you watching the east gate?*

Are you looking for Christ's return?

Are you ready or will you be caught unprepared?

Whether you will you be confident or ashamed depends on your personal relationship with Christ?

Are you continually abiding in Him?

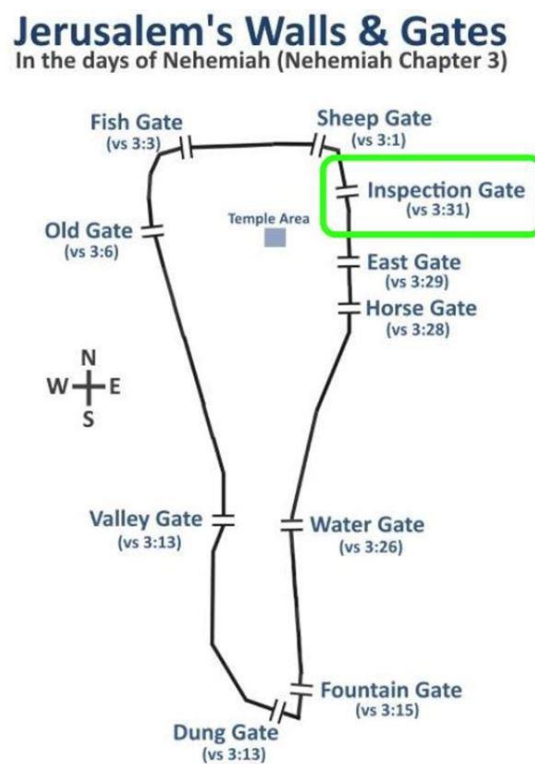
10. THE GATE HAMMIPHKAD

Nehemiah 3:31- After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of the Miphkad Gate, and as far as the upper room at the corner.

The Miphkad Gate was located at the northeast corner of the city.

The Hebrew word has a military connotation and refers to the mustering of the troops for **numbering and inspection.**

Some other bible translations names the Gate Hammiphkad as **the Muster Gate (ESV)** or the **Inspection Gate (NLT).**





When our Lord returns, He will gather His people together and **review their works** in preparation for giving out **rewards for faithful service**.

Romans 14:10-12 -But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.

So, then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

Every believer has the opportunity to serve the Lord. When Jesus comes back, He will review our lives and reward faithful service.

Although believers cannot lose their salvation, they can lose their reward.

This will result in grief and shame for them.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10- Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Application: *Will you receive a reward for faithful service at Christ's judgment?*

Or will you be ashamed?

(III) REBUILDING OUR BROKEN GATES

Our life is like the children of Israel in the city of Jerusalem.

We are supposed to be living a life surrounded by FORTIFIED WALLS AND GATES.

But like the children of Israel, we had been disobeying God and His ways.

So, God exiled all of us just as He did to Israel.

He allowed the enemies to burn down the city, crush the walls and gates of our life.

Today, as we survey our life like Nehemiah, there are so many broken walls and gates which leave us vulnerable to the attacks of the enemies and wrong influences of the world.

Not only are the walls and gates of our life broken down, but our sins have exiled and banished us from a fortified life under the care of God.

We all have been banished to eternal hell with its cruel gates closing down on us once we die without Christ.

No one could make it to the **PEARLY GATE OF HEAVEN by themselves until Christ came 2000 years ago.**

Looking at all our broken walls and gates, He noticed the most important gate – **THE SHEEP GATE- had been severely damaged.**

And He saw us as His sheep who had all gone astray and who had wandered beyond the walls of Jerusalem.

We all were exiled outside our Heavenly Jerusalem.

So, Jesus wanting to save us, became that **BROKEN GATE by letting his body **BE BROKEN** by our sins and disobedience on the cross.**

Our **ULTIMATE EXILE is in the enemy territory called **HELL**.**

So, by taking upon Himself all our sins, wickedness and disobedience, He descended to **HELL on our behalf, broke its gate so that today **THE GATES OF HELL CAN NEVER PREVAIL AGAINST US**.**

Then He ascended, bringing many captives locked in Abraham Bosom, with Him when He was resurrected on the third day.

THE BROKEN DOOR BECAME OUR GATEWAY TO SALVATION that those who believe in His name and are justified by his blood will by no means be cast out by God from the Holy City.

We all can now enter by the door or gate of salvation provided by Jesus.

Jesus is our **DOOR OF SALVATION.**

Only He as our High Priest could rebuild this **SHEEP GATE.**

No one is worthy to build it except Him.

Also, let's us see how Jesus suffered, bled and died **OUTSIDE THE GATE OF JERUSALEM** on Calvary Hill.

Why outside the gate of Jerusalem?

So that **HE COULD BRING US ALL IN** – we the sheep who have gone astray outside the gate.

He became an **OUTSIDER** so that today we can be the **INSIDER** of God's protection and love.

What love and sacrifice!!!

Today, if you are already **BROUGHT IN** through the **SHEEP GATE – THE GATE OF SALVATION** through Jesus' death, then let's not stop at the Sheep Gate.

Let's continue to let that love of Christ motivate us by the power of the Holy Spirit to rebuild the other nine spiritual gates of our life so that one day we all can stand confidently before **THE INSPECTION GATE** – the Bema Judgment seat.

CONCLUSION

Nehemiah under the influence of the Holy Spirit detailed the different gates.

These picture important aspects of the life of believers.

Beginning with **SALVATION** at the *Sheep Gate*, Nehemiah moves on to **SERVICE** at the *Fish Gate*. T

Then *the Old Gate* speaking of **GOD'S WAYS**, followed by **HUMILITY** at the *Valley Gate*.

He then proceeds to the **CLEANSING** of the *Dung Gate* on to the **RENEWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** at the *Fountain Gate*.

Then on to the *Water Gate* speaking of **GOD'S WORD**.

The Horse Gate reminds us of the **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** believers must engage in.

The East Gate speaks of **CHRIST'S COMING** while *the Mikphad Gate* speaks of the **JUDGMENT** that will follow.

In light of this let us arise and go to the wall for God!

Will you cooperate with the Holy Spirit to rebuild these walls, standing on your **ULTIMATE REBUILDER – JESUS CHRIST?**

End