

Restoring the Gates (Part 2 of #7)

Nehemiah 3: 1-32

We are once again in Chapter 3 this evening and I hope to conclude this insightful study that has dealt with the workmen on the wall, the work they put forth in an effort to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and the gates themselves. Last week we spent some time considering the individual gates and how they relate to our lives today. It is amazing how the gates of an ancient city have application for our modern world. This third chapter of Nehemiah is a prime example concerning the treasure of God's Word. A casual reading of this chapter would overlook the vast truth that we have been able to consider and apply to our lives. This is yet another confirmation of [2 Tim. 3:16 – All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness](#): God's Word has much to say if we will put forth the time and effort to seek out His wisdom and guidance.

We have quite a bit to get through this evening, so I want to jump right in to our study as we continue to consider the [attributes](#) associated with: [Restoring the Gates](#). Last week we considered:

I. The Gates of the City – I am not going to review each of those, but if you desire a copy of that message I will be happy to print one for you. As we continue to consider the thought of [Restoring the Gates](#) we also need to consider:

II. The Towers of the City – Just as there were many gates within the city wall, there were several towers overlooking the city. These too have great application for our lives. First let's consider the towers themselves.

- **Tower of Meah (1)** – This tower was located on the north side of the city wall, near to the sheep gate. The name literally means "*hundred*." Apparently there was something within the tower associated with one hundred.

- **Tower of Hananeel (1)** – This tower was also located on the north side of the city, west of the Tower of Meah, between the sheep gate and the fish gate. Its name means "*God has favored*" and was likely erected as a memorial to the goodness and favor of God on Jerusalem.

- **Tower of Furnaces (11)** – The tower of furnaces was located on the west side of the city along the lengthy portion of the wall between the old gate and the valley gate. Apparently it housed furnaces or ovens for the use of the city.
- **The Great Tower (27)** – This is the last tower mentioned within the city wall and it was located on the east side near the king's house, between the water gate and the horse gate. It was also situated with a view of the eastern gate. It would appear that the great tower was the primary tower of defense and security for the city.
- Quickly I want to consider the significance of the towers within the city wall.

A. A Place of Vision – Each of these towers would have been constructed in such a way as to maximize their view of the city and its surroundings. Soldiers and watchmen were stationed within the towers to keep watch over the city and sound an alarm for impending danger or attack.

- Clearly our lives and churches need places of vision in our day as well. We must be constantly looking and watching for the advance of the enemy. We need to be ready to sound the alarm at a moment's notice.
- It would also stand to reason that the towers had a “bird's eye” view of the activity within the city. We need to be a people of vision, seeking to meet our goals, and constantly aware of our present activity. We must continually evaluate where we are and seek ways to improve and advance for the glory of God.

B. A Place of Protection – As I mentioned the soldiers and watchmen kept their places within the towers of the city. There was a constant watch and military presence within the towers. This served as the first line of defense for the city. It would have been filled with the greatest arches of the kingdom. When they saw the enemy advancing, they could strike before the enemy got too close to the city walls.

- As I consider the lives we live in this difficult day and the battles we face, I am reminded that we need a place of defense from the enemy. We need a shelter from the battle that is raging around us. We must ensure that our lives are pure before the Lord so that we can have His hand of protection upon our lives. This church needs to be viewed as a haven of safety and security for those who seek shelter and escape. The world isn't offering that and if society doesn't find it within the church, there is no hope for them. I want us to be viewed as a haven from the battle and a place to find shelter, rest, and strength in the battle.

C. A Place of Provision – The towers were also used in that day as a means of storage and provision. When the crops were gathered in they were often stored within the towers. When times were hard or in the winter months, provisions were stored up to meet the needs of the people.

- Do you see the parallel to our day? The church desperately needs to be that place of provision. We must ensure that this continues to be a place where the hungry are fed. We have the Word of God, the Bread of life for the hungry soul. We must not keep it locked away, but be willing to share it freely with all who enter our gates.

I. The Gates of the City

II. The Towers of the City

III. The Landmarks of the City – Nehemiah also records several landmarks in and around the city of Jerusalem. These too have application for our lives. Consider:

A. The Throne of the Governor (7) – The throne was located in the northwest corner of the city, near the fish gate and the old gate. This was the place from which the foreign authority ruled. Because of sin God's glory had departed from Judah. They had been invaded and held captive to the rule of foreign authority. This stood as a reminder of the devastating effects of sin in their lives. (Illustrate for our day.)

B. The Pool of Siloah (15) – The pool of Siloah was located near the southern tip of the city wall, between the dung gate and the fountain gate. It was referred to as the pool of Siloam in the New Testament. *Jn.9:7 – And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.* I can't speculate to the significance of the pool in Nehemiah's day, but it is clearly a picture of obedience in Jesus' day. You will have to agree that we need to rediscover our obedience to the Lord. The pool of obedience needs to be cleaned out and made ready for use!

C. The Stairs of the City (15) – The stairs leading into the city were located near the pool of Siloah near the fountain gate. Jerusalem was situated on a hill and those who

visited had to ascend up into the city. The Temple was located within the city. This reminds us of the holiness of God. His ways are much higher than ours. We need to seek His high and holy ways. When we depart from God we will always be going downward instead of upward.

D. The King's Garden (15) – The king's garden was located on the southeast side of the city, within the city wall, just north of the pool of Siloah. These were areas adorned with beautiful trees and flowers for the enjoyment of the residents. We can always find peace and joy when we are near the Lord.

- It wasn't the king's garden but one similar to it that our Lord prayed in agony just prior to the crucifixion. On the surface it was a place of beauty, but within it was a place of agony for our Lord. The Garden of Eden was a place of beauty as well, but even there sin entered. We need more than a beautiful life; we need the redemption of our Lord. Many are trying to live a life that is pleasing and acceptable, but apart from a new birth, they will never achieve the peace and beauty they need.

E. The Sepulchres of David (16) – The place of burial for David and many other Jews was located north of the king's garden. This was a place of pride for many of the Jews. They sought acceptance through their heritage and lineage as God's chosen people. We need to realize that it is not our association or works that are pleasing to God, but a right relationship with His Son. Jesus was not buried in the sepulchre of David; He was buried in a borrowed tomb, but praise His name He is no longer there. We serve One who rose from the dead victorious to secure our redemption and eternal life.

F. The Pool of Hezekiah (16) – This pool was located just north of the sepulchres of David. Hezekiah created this pool in order to store water in times of seizure by the enemy. The people of Jerusalem depended on the pool to store the water needed to sustain them. Water is often a picture of the Word of God and we need to go to great lengths if necessary to ensure the Word is prevalent in our lives. We will not survive spiritually without it!

G. The House of the Mighty (16) – This is where the barracks for the mightiest of David's men were believed to be housed, north of Hezekiah's pool. Those of high rank and valor were housed in special barracks. Oh how we need a house for the mighty in our day. We need those who will stand boldly for the Lord in the face of adversity!

H. The Armory (19) – Naturally the armory was located north of the house of the mighty, near to them for quick and easy access. This is where the weapons of war were stored for times of need. I fear that the armories of the modern church are in a state of disarray. We have abandoned the armor of God for the faulty armor of the world. Satan has deceived many to abandon the armor that God provides for the counterfeit that he has sold. We will never defeat the enemy when we seek to stand in armor that he has provided. We must put on the whole armor of God. There needs to be a place where our children can access that armor as well. The church needs to stand as a mighty fortress, a great armory for the believer in our day!

I. The King's House (25) – North of the armory and near the great tower was the king's house. As one might expect, this is thought to refer to the house where David dwelt in the glorious days of Israel. God had used Him to conquer their enemies and bring peace and prosperity to the city. Now, the king's house lay in ruin as Judah had been reduced to a province of Persia. It pictures the devastation of sin. Sin will mar the beauty that God intended. It will bring devastation and heart ache to our lives. When the king's house is in disarray, the people will be as well. May we seek to keep the King's house a place of honor and prosperity for His people!

J. The Court of the Prison (25) – Near to the king's house was located the prison. This was common in that day. Quite often a prison would be constructed near to the king's dwelling. This housed those who had committed crimes or were found guilty of insurrection against the kingdom. This too is a picture of the devastation of sin. Prior to their captivity the people indulged in sin and rebellion against God. They thought they were enjoying a new found freedom, but in the end it only brought bondage.

- We need to be reminded of the danger of sin. Sin never offers freedom, only slavery and bondage. This too is a reminder that all men are not free in the Lord. Many remain bound by their sin, locked away in Satan's prison. We need to warn all we can to avoid the bondage of sin and point them to the Deliverer of men's souls.

Our study on this great chapter has challenged my heart greatly. As we compare our spiritual lives to the great city of Jerusalem what do we see? I am sure that we would all have to admit that there is much that needs repair. Our society has deteriorated and we need to rebuild that which has been torn down. May we seek the Lord to provide the help we need to restore our lives so that they are pleasing to Him!