

Nehemiah 03 - Rebuilding the Wall

I. Rebuilding of the wall (Neh 1:1—7:73)

(2) Nehemiah rebuilds the wall despite much opposition (Neh 3:1—6:19)

(A) Each family builds a section of the wall (3:1-32)

- (a) Sheep gate (3:1-2)
- (b) Fish gate (3:3-5)
- (c) Old gate (3:6-12)
- (d) Valley gate (3:13)
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A task as enormous as rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, especially under adverse conditions, called for unusual organizational effort. The uniqueness of Nehemiah's plan is evident in this chapter. Several aspects of his delegation of the work are evident. He assigned everyone a specific place to work. This coordination stands out in the phrases "next to him," "next to them," "next to that," "the next section," "beside him," and "beyond them," which occur 28x in this chapter. Assignments were made near people's houses (v21,23-24,26,28-30).

Commuters also had a part. Men whose homes were outside of Jerusalem—in Jericho (v2), Tekoa (v5,27), Gibeon (v7), and Mizpah (v7)—were assigned to sections of the wall where there were few homes. Assignments were also made by vocation. For example, the high priest and his fellow priests were assigned to rebuild the Sheep Gate (v1). This was of particular interest to them, because animals were brought through that gate to the temple for sacrifice. Other priests are mentioned in v22,28. Other workers whose vocations are listed include goldsmiths (v8,31-32), perfume-makers (v8), district and half-district rulers (v9-12,14-19), Levites (v17), and merchants (v31-32). Even one man's daughters were involved (v12).

Nehemiah 3

(2) Nehemiah rebuilds the wall despite much opposition (Neh 3:1—6:19)

(A) Each family builds a section of the wall (3:1-32)

(a) Sheep gate (3:1-2)

1 Then Eliashib the high priest arose with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and installed its doors. They consecrated the wall to the Tower of the Hundred *and* the Tower of Hananel.

1 Then Eliashib the high priest arose with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They consecrated the wall to the Tower of the Hundred *and* the Tower of Hananel.

1 So Eliashib the high priest came forward, along with his fellow priests, and reconstructed the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and installed its doors. They also consecrated the wall as far as the Tower of the Hundred and the Tower of Hananel.

1 Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

- Nehemiah's account of the repairs begins with the Sheep Gate at the northeast of the wall, and proceeds counterclockwise

— The Sheep Gate is known to have been in that location because it was near the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:2), which archeologists have located in that area

- "...Eliashib the high priest" - grandson of Jeshua (12:10), the high priest in Zerubbabel's day (Ezra 3:2)

— Eliashib and other priests (Cf. 3:22) repaired and dedicated the Sheep Gate, then repaired the walls to the Tower of the Meah ("Hundred") and the Tower of Hananel (also mentioned in 12:39; Jer 31:38; Zech 14:10). These towers were between the Sheep Gate and the Fish Gate.

2 And next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

2 Next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

2 Men from Jericho did repairs next to him, and Imri's son Zaccur did repairs next to them.

2 And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

(b) Fish gate (3:3-5)

3 Now the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and installed its doors with its bolts and bars.

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

3 The Fish Gate was repaired by Hassenaah's sons. They built its framework and installed its doors, including locks and security bars,

3 But the fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

- The Fish Gate may have been the gate through which the people of Tyre brought fish they sold (13:16)

4 Next to them **Meremoth** the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. And next to him Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. And next to him Zadok the son of Baana *also* made repairs.

4 Next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. And next to him Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. And next to him Zadok the son of Baana *also* made repairs.

4 with Uriah's son Meremoth (who was also a grandson of Hakkoz) next to them, Berechiah's son Meshullam (who was also a grandson of Meshezabel) next to them, and next to him Baana's son Zadok.

4 And next unto them repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel.

- "...Meremoth" - a priest's son (Cf. Ezra 8:33), also worked on a second section (v21), as did Meshullam (v30), whose daughter was married to Tobiah's son (6:18)

5 Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.

5 Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.

5 Next to them the Tekoites worked valiantly, even though their leading officials weren't fully dedicated to the work of their lord.

5 And next unto them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.

- The men of Tekoa (Tekoites), Amos' hometown (Amos 1:1), about 12 miles south of Jerusalem, repaired a section

— Though the nobles of Tekoa did not help in the project, others from Tekoa took on another section, on the east wall (v27)

(c) Old gate (3:6-12)

6 Now Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Ancient Gate; they laid its beams and installed its doors with its bolts and its bars.

6 Joiada 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 its bars.

6 Paseah's son Joiada and Besodeiah's son Meshullam repaired the Old Gate. They built its framework and installed its doors, including locks and security bars.

6 Moreover the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

7 Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, also made repairs for the official seat of the governor *of the province* beyond the *Euphrates* River.

7 Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, also made repairs for the official seat of the governor *of the province* beyond the River.

7 Next to them, Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite were working with men from Gibeon and men from Mizpah under the Trans-Euphrates regional governor.

7 And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the river.

- Gibeon and Mizpah were a few miles northwest of Jerusalem

— Somewhat surprisingly, those towns were under the governor of Trans-Euphrates (Cf. 2:9)

— The exact sites of those gates and of the Tower of the Ovens (3:11) is not known, but the tower may have been near the ovens in the street of the bakers (Jer 37:21)

8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths made repairs. And next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths made repairs. And next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

8 Nearby, Harhaiah's son Uzziel the goldsmith was carrying on repairs, and next to him Hananiah, a perfume-maker, rebuilt Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

8 Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries, and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.

- A goldsmith and a perfume-maker took on a different line of work when they went into construction labor

9 And next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs.

9 Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs.

9 Next to him, Hur's son Rephaiah, ruling official for half of the Jerusalem district, did repairs.

9 And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem.

10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs.

10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs.

10 Then next to them, Harumaph's son Jedaiah did repairs opposite his house, and next to him Hashabneiah's son Hattush carried on repairs.

10 And next unto them repaired Jedaiah the son of Harumaph, even over against his house. And next unto him repaired Hattush the son of Hashabneiah.

11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of Furnaces.

11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of Furnaces.

11 Harim's son Malchijah and Pahath-moab's son Hasshub repaired another section, along with the Tower of the Ovens,

11 Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahathmoab, repaired the other piece, and the tower of the furnaces.

12 Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.

12 Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.

12 and next to him Hallohesh's son Shallum, ruling official for the other⁶ half of the Jerusalem district, did repairs, as did his daughters.

12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, he and his daughters.

- Even rulers of Jerusalem's districts and half-districts (v9,12; Cf. v14-15) took up tools for the building project

(d) Valley gate (3:13)

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and installed its doors with its bolts and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall to the Dung Gate.

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall to the Refuse Gate.

13 Hanun and the residents of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate, reconstructing it and installing its doors, including locks and security bars. They also rebuilt 1,000 cubits of the wall as far as the Dung Gate.

13 The valley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate.

(e) Refuse gate (3:14)

14 And Malchijah the son of Rechab, the official of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Dung Gate. He built it and installed its doors with its bolts and its bars.

14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, the official of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Refuse Gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.

14 Rechab's descendant Malchijah, ruling official of the Beth-haccherem district, repaired the Dung Gate, reconstructing it, installing its doors, its locks, and its security bars.

14 But the dung gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Bethhaccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

- The Valley Gate was where Nehemiah's nighttime inspection tour began and ended (Cf. 2:13,15)

- The Dung Gate was so named because it led to the Hinnom Valley south of the city where refuse was dumped

(f) Fountain gate (3:15-25)

15 Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the official of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, made a roof for it, and installed its doors with its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the steps that descend from the city of David.

15 Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the official of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, covered it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the steps that descend from the city of David.

15 Colhozeh's son Shallum, ruling official of the Mizpah district, repaired the Fountain Gate, reconstructing it, installing its doors, its locks, and its security bars, as well as the

Pool of Shelach near the royal garden as far as the stairway that descends from the City of David.

15 But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallun the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.

- The Fountain Gate was on the east wall, north of the Dung Gate

- The Pool of Shelah (Siloam) was near the King's Garden, near which Zedekiah, Judah's last king, had gone in his attempt to escape from Jerusalem while the Babylonians were conquering the city (Cf. Jer 39:4)

16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, official of half the district of Beth-zur, made repairs as far as *a point* opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the artificial pool and the house of the mighty men.

16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, official of half the district of Beth-zur, made repairs as far as *a point* opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the artificial pool and the house of the mighty men.

16 Next to him Azbuk's son Nehemiah, ruling official of half of the Beth-zur district, carried on repairs as far as the tombs of David, then to the artificial pool that had been installed there, and then as far as the military barracks.

16 After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Bethzur, unto the place over against the sepulchres of David, and to the pool that was made, and unto the house of the mighty.

- The tombs of David refer to those of David and his descendants, the kings of Judah

- David was buried in this area, "the city of David" (1 Kings 2:10)

- The artificial pool may be the King's Pool (Neh 2:14) or perhaps the "lower pool" (Is 22:9)

- The house of the mighty men may have been the barracks of David's select soldiers, or "mighty men" (2 Sam 23:8)

17 After him the Levites carried out repairs *under* Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, the official of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.

17 After him the Levites carried out repairs *under* Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, the official of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.

17 Next to him the descendants of Levi, led by Bani's son Rehum, carried on repairs. Next to him Hashabiah, ruling official for half of the Keilah district, did repairs for his district.

17 After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah, in his part.

18 After him their brothers carried out repairs *under* Bavvai the son of Henadad, official of *the other* half of the district of Keilah.

18 After him their brothers carried out repairs *under* Bavvai the son of Henadad, official of *the other* half of the district of Keilah.

18 Next to him their brothers, led by Henadad's son Bavvai, ruling official for the other half of the Keilah district, carried on repairs.

18 After him repaired their brethren, Bavai the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah.

19 And next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the official of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the ascent of the armory at the Angle.

19 Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the official of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the ascent of the armory at the Angle.

19 Next to him Jeshua's son Ezer, ruling official of Mizpah, repaired another section near the ascent to the armory at the Angle.

19 And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to the armoury at the turning of the wall.

- The armory is another point near the eastern wall. The angle was apparently some turn in the wall. Another angle is mentioned in v24-25.

20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the Angle to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the Angle to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

20 Next to him Zabbai's son Baruch worked valiantly on another section from the angle of the wall as far as the door to the house belonging to Eliashib the high priest.

20 After him Baruch the son of Zabbai earnestly repaired the other piece, from the turning of the wall unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

21 After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the doorway of Eliashib's house even as far as the end of his house.

21 After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the doorway of Eliashib's house even as far as the end of his house.

21 Then next to him Uriah's son Meremoth, grandson of Hakkoz, repaired another section from the door of Eliashib's house as far as the rear of the property,

21 After him repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah the son of Koz another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib.

- Meremoth (v21) repaired two sections (Cf. v4), as did the Tekoites (v5,27)

- Priests (v22; Cf. v1) and Levites (v17) were involved in the repair work, closer to the temple than to other parts of the wall

22 And after him the priests, the men of the vicinity, carried out repairs.

22 After him the priests, the men of the valley, carried out repairs.

22 Next to him the priests, men from the plain, carried on repairs.

22 And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain.

23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub carried out repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, carried out repairs beside his house.

23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub carried out repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, carried out repairs beside his house.

23 Next to them Benjamin and Hasshub carried on repairs near their house, followed by Maaseiah's son Azariah, grandson of Ananiah, who worked beside his own house.

23 After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house. After him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah by his house.

24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah as far as the Angle and as far as the corner.

24 After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah as far as the Angle and as far as the corner.

24 Following him, Henadad's son Binnui repaired another section from Azariah's house to the angle of the wall, and then to the corner.

24 After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad another piece, from the house of Azariah unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner.

25 Palal the son of Uzai *made repairs* in front of the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king, which is by the courtyard of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh *made repairs*.

25 Palal the son of Uzai *made repairs* in front of the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh *made repairs*.

25 Uzai's son Palal carried on repairs over against the angle of the wall at the tower that stands out from the king's upper palace, which is located by the royal guard's court. Next to him, Parosh's son Pedaiah carried on repairs.

25 Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that was by the court of the prison. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh.

- The tower was near the palace, presumably the palace built by Solomon (1 Kings 7:1-8)
- The court of the guard may have been part of Solomon's great courtyard near his palace (1 Kings 7:9-12)
- The hill of Ophel (Neh 3:26) was the area between the city of David and the temple mount. Understandably the temple servants lived near the temple area.

(g) Water gate (3:26-27)

26 Now the temple servants living in Ophel *made repairs* as far as the front of the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower.

26 The temple servants living in Ophel *made repairs* as far as the front of the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower.

26 (Now the Temple Servants were living on the Ophel as far as the Water Gate that faces eastward with its prominent tower.)

26 Moreover the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the place over against the water gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section in front of the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.

27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section in front of the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.

27 Next to Pedaiah, the Tekoites repaired another section from the prominent tower as far as the wall of the Ophel.

27 After them the Tekoites repaired another piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel.

- Private houses were some of the points of reference: the house of Eliashib the high priest (v20-21; Cf. v1), Benjamin and Hasshub's house (v23), and Azariah's house (v23-24).

— Other houses were mentioned later including the priests' houses (v28), Zadok's house (v29), Meshullam's house (v30), and "the house of the temple servants and the merchants" (v31)

(h) Horse gate (3:28)

28 Above the Horse Gate the priests carried out repairs, each in front of his house.

28 Above the Horse Gate the priests carried out repairs, each in front of his house.

28 The priests carried on repairs from above the Horse Gate as far as their own houses.

28 From above the horse gate repaired the priests, every one over against his house.

- The Horse Gate on the east wall may have been where horses entered the palace area

(i) East gate (3:29-30)

29 After them Zadok the son of Immer carried out repairs in front of his house. And after him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, carried out repairs.

29 After them Zadok the son of Immer carried out repairs in front of his house. And after him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, carried out repairs.

29 Then next to them, Immer's son Zadok did repairs as far as his own house. Next to him, Shecaniah's son Shemaiah, custodian of the East Gate, carried on repairs.

29 After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate.

- The East Gate (v29) was directly east of the temple area

30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah carried out repairs in front of his own quarters.

30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah carried out repairs in front of his own quarters.

30 Next to him, Shelemiah's son Hananiah and Zalaph's sixth son Hanun repaired another section. Next to him, Berechiah's son Meshullam carried on repairs up to his chamber.

30 After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece. After him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber.

(j) Inspection gate (3:31-32)

31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried out repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, in front of the Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room of the corner.

31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried out repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, in front of the Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room of the corner.

31 Next to him, Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried on repairs up to the house of the Temple Servants and the merchants, up to the Muster Gate as far as the ascent to the corner.

31 After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner.

- Malkijah is the third man by this name in this chapter (see v11,14)

— His wall repairs extended south to the house of the temple servants, who are mentioned in v26 as living on the hill of Ophel. Merchants also lived in that area near the temple servants.

- The Inspection Gate was at the northeast corner of the wall (Cf. the corner in v24)

32 And between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants carried out repairs.

32 Between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants carried out repairs.

32 Between the ascent of the corner and the Sheep Gate, the goldsmiths and merchants carried on repairs.

32 And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

- The room above the corner was a room on the wall whose purpose is not known
- The Sheep Gate brings the reader back to the starting point (v1)