

## Nehemiah 3:1-32 (ESV)

And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, "Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the good work. Nehemiah 2:18 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the **Sheep Gate**. They consecrated it and set its doors. They consecrated it as far as the **Tower of the Hundred**, as far as the **Tower of Hananel**. <sup>2</sup> And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built. <sup>3</sup> The sons of Hassenaah built the **Fish Gate**. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

<sup>4</sup> And next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired. And next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel repaired. And next to them Zadok the son of Baana repaired.

<sup>5</sup> And next to them the *Tekoites* repaired, but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord. <sup>6</sup> Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the **Gate of Yeshanah**. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. <sup>7</sup> And next to them repaired Melatiah the

Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, the seat of the governor of the province Beyond the River. <sup>8</sup> Next to them Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths, repaired. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, repaired, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the **Broad Wall**.

<sup>9</sup> Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. <sup>10</sup> Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired. <sup>11</sup> Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son

of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the **Tower of the Ovens**. <sup>12</sup> Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters. <sup>13</sup> Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the **Valley Gate**. They rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, as far as the **Dung Gate**.

<sup>14</sup> Malchijah the son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the **Dung Gate**. He rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. <sup>15</sup> And Shallum the son of Colhozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the **Fountain Gate**. He rebuilt it and covered it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David.

(Map from ESV Study Bible)

<sup>16</sup> After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool, and as far as the house of the mighty men. <sup>17</sup> After him the Levites repaired: Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, repaired for his district.

<sup>18</sup> After him their brothers repaired: Bavvai the son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah.

<sup>19</sup> Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress. <sup>20</sup> After him Baruch the son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. <sup>21</sup> After him Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. <sup>22</sup> After him the priests, the men of the

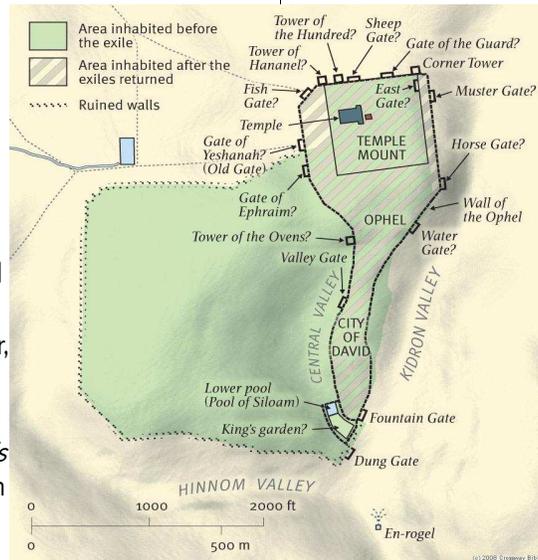
surrounding area, repaired. <sup>23</sup> After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah repaired beside his own house. <sup>24</sup> After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress <sup>25</sup> and to the corner. Palal the son of Uzai repaired opposite the buttress and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh <sup>26</sup> and the temple servants living on Ophel repaired to a point opposite the **Water Gate** on the east and the projecting

tower. <sup>27</sup> After him the *Tekoites* repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

<sup>28</sup> Above the **Horse Gate** the priests repaired, each one opposite his own house. <sup>29</sup> After them Zadok the son of Immer repaired opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the **East Gate**, repaired.

<sup>30</sup> After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired opposite his chamber.

<sup>31</sup> After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the **Muster Gate**, and to the upper chamber of the corner. <sup>32</sup> And between the upper chamber of the corner and the **Sheep Gate** the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired.



Nehemiah is a book with insights for us into restoration, renewal, leadership, and God's faithfulness.

**Read Nehemiah 2:18; 3:1-32  
(Questions for later personal reflection)**

8. Reviewing Nehemiah 3, what observations can you make concerning who was involved in building the wall and how they were organized?

9. Taking note of the italicized portions of the text, what other observations can you make?

For some unknown reason the ESV left out a word found in the NASV, NIV and the original text – it has been added in the text above. Can you find it?

This passage is one of a number of “lists” in Ezra-Nehemiah and is probably not part of Nehemiah's personal journal. These were likely official documents incorporated into the text.

Nehemiah's wall system apparently incorporated walls from previous ages. It was not strongly built, and it reflects Jerusalem's diminutive size at the time. An ambitious project nonetheless, it was completed in only 52 days, providing Jerusalem with some measure of protection from its enemies. There is ample archaeological evidence, both positive and negative, to show that only the Eastern Hill of Jerusalem was fortified at that time and that the eastern wall of the city was built higher up the slope of the Kidron Valley than the previous wall, so that the city was smaller than that of Solomon.

The precise line of the walls followed by Nehemiah cannot be completely reconstructed. Regarding many of the features mentioned, little is known. Excavations on the Ophel hill of Jerusalem have uncovered some remains of Nehemiah's wall system. Most evidence has been obliterated by later construction, especially by the Hasmoneans and Herod, or the destruction by the Romans, or is inaccessible due to the currently occupied city.

Each section was denoted by specific public landmarks such as existing gates and other known structures, however, On the eastern side of the city, Nehemiah had to build a new line of wall, rather than simply repair the old one, because the pre-exilic wall was so badly destroyed here. The line of the new wall is described in relation to a variety of features of

the city, most of which can no longer be certainly located. Many of The landmarks in the eastern wall were private homes. True, the city became smaller this way (some of the old residential areas were now outside the city wall), but there were also fewer people living in the city, so there was no need for a big city.

The work is sometimes “building” and sometimes “repairing,” suggesting that the parts of the walls were in various states of dilapidation. “Build” is a generic word. The word “repair” in the original language means “to make firm, strong, or strengthen.”

Nehemiah was able to accomplish this feat by assigning different sections of the wall's rebuilding to various groups such as families, people from specific settlements, craftsman's guilds and having them work on portions close to their homes, or employments. Seventy-five individuals are mentioned by name, as well as numerous groups. A cooperative effort, everyone worked side by side and together with a few exceptions.

“The rulers” mentioned were probably administrators of smaller districts within the Province of Yehud – the current Provincial administration had been re-located at Mizpah – where the Persian Governor of Beyond the River (which included everything west of the Euphrates including Syria and Samaria. Etc.) would reside when visiting Yehud.

Some notes from The ESV Study Bible and the Biblical Archaeological Review