

Nehemiah 12:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.

Analysis

And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.

This verse within Nehemiah 12 addresses themes of worship, dedication, celebration, generational continuity. The wall dedication features joyful worship and thanksgiving, celebrating God's faithfulness in enabling the work's completion. Jerusalem's wall (chomah, חומָה) provided security, dignity, and testimony to God's faithfulness. City gates were strategic both defensively and administratively, controlling access and serving as centers of commerce and justice. This passage demonstrates biblical principles applicable across both testaments—God's sovereignty combined with human responsibility, faith expressed through obedient action, and the necessity of both individual and corporate commitment to covenant faithfulness. Nehemiah models leadership that combines vision, prayer, courage, integrity, and perseverance amid sustained opposition.

Historical Context

Nehemiah's account occurs during Persian imperial dominance (539-331 BC), specifically 445-433 BC under Artaxerxes I. Nehemiah's final reforms address

recurring covenant violations, demonstrating the ongoing challenge of maintaining spiritual commitment across generations. The Persian period was crucial transitional time when Jewish identity shifted from monarchical nationalism to Torah-centered covenantal community. Without political independence, the people's cohesion depended on shared scripture, temple worship, and covenant obedience. This established patterns persisting through the Second Temple period into New Testament times. Understanding this context illuminates Jesus's ministry among a people shaped by these reforms and challenges.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does regular engagement with Scripture transform understanding of God and His will for your life?
2. What specific commitments do you need to make (or renew) regarding Bible reading, worship, and obedience?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

Interlinear Text

שׁ עַר וְעַל	בְּעֵד יְהוָה	וְיָצַת מִן־
H5921 gate	And at the fountain	H5048
H8179	H5869	
עַל	עַל	עַל מִעְלֹות
which was over against them they went up	H5921 by the stairs	H4609 of the city
H5927		H5892
עַל	עַל	עַל מִעְלֹות
at the going up	of the wall	above the house
H4608	H2346	H1004
עַל	לְבַיִת	לְבַיִת
gate	of David	of David
H8179	H1732	H5704
מִרְחָבֶן:	בְּמִזְרָחָה:	מִזְרָחָה:
even unto the water	eastward	eastward
H4325	H4217	

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 2:14 (Parallel theme): Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass.

Nehemiah 3:26 (Parallel theme): Moreover the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the place over against the water gate toward the east, and the tower that lieth out.

Nehemiah 8:1 (Parallel theme): 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 8:16 (Parallel theme): So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

Nehemiah 8:3 (Parallel theme): And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the

women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

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