

Nehemiah 12:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.

Analysis

And from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.

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. 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

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

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

וּמֵעַל H5921	בִּשְׁעַר H8179	אֶפְרַיִם H669	וּמֵעַל H5921	בִּשְׁעַר H8179
	And from above the gate	of Ephraim		And from above the gate
וְהִשָּׁן הָ H3465	וּמֵעַל H5921	בִּשְׁעַר H8179	הַדָּג יָם H1709	וּמִגֹּדֶל H4026
and above the old	And from above the gate		and above the fish	and the tower
חֲנַנְיָאֵל H2606	וּמִגֹּדֶל לְ H4026	הַמֶּאָה H3968	וּמֵעַל H5704	בִּשְׁעַר H8179
of Hananeel	and the tower	of Meah	And from above the gate	
הַצֹּאֵן H6629	וַיֵּצֵא מָדוּ H5975	בִּשְׁעַר H8179	הַמִּטְכָּה: H4307	
even unto the sheep	and they stood still	And from above the gate	in the prison	

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 3:1 (Parallel theme): 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 3:6 (Parallel theme): 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.

Nehemiah 3:3 (Parallel theme): 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.

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 3:25 (Parallel theme): 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.

2 Kings 14:13 (Parallel theme): And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.

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