

Nehemiah 3:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

This verse within Nehemiah 3 addresses themes of community, cooperation, diligence, stewardship. The detailed listing of builders demonstrates organized community effort where each person contributes according to ability and opportunity. The construction work (banah, בָּנָה) symbolizes restoring what sin and judgment destroyed. Jerusalem's wall (chomah, חֹמָה) 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. The 52-day wall completion represents remarkable achievement given opposition and limited resources. Excavations have confirmed portions of Nehemiah's wall and various gates mentioned in the text. 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Nehemiah 3:13 deepen your understanding of God's character and His work in human history?
2. What specific action or attitude change does this verse call you to make in your walk with God?
3. How can the principles demonstrated in this passage inform your response to current challenges in your life or church?

Interlinear Text

זָנוּחַ	וְיֹשְׁבֵי יְ	חֲנוּן	קִרְיָהּ יִקְ	הַגַּיָּא	שַׁעַר אֶת	
of Zanoah	and the inhabitants	Hanun	repaired	The valley	gate	
H2182	H3427	H2586	H2388	H1516	H8179	H853
וּבְרִיחַ יוֹ	מִנְעָלָיו	וּבְלֹתָיו	וַעֲמֵ יָדוֹ	בָּנוּ וְהוּ	הָמָה	
thereof and the bars	thereof the locks	the doors	it and set up	they built		
H1280	H4514	H1817	H5975	H1129	H1992	
הַשָּׂפוֹת:	שַׁעַר עַד	בְּחוֹמָה	אַמָּה	וְאֶלָּף		
unto the dung	gate	on the wall	cubits	thereof and a thousand		
H830	H8179	H2346	H520	H505		

Additional Cross-References

Nehemiah 2:13 (Parallel theme): And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

Joshua 15:34 (Parallel theme): And Zanoah, and En-gannim, Tappuah, and Enam,