

Nehemiah 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

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

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. 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 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Nehemiah 3:14 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

וַיָּבֹא	בֶּן	מַלְכִּיָּה	הַחֲזִיק	הָאֶשָּׁפֹת	שַׁעַר	וַיָּאֵת
H853						
	the son	Malchiah	repaired	But the dung	gate	
	H1121	H4441	H2388	H830	H8179	
וַיַּעֲמִיד	וַיְבִנֵהוּ	הוּא	הַבֶּקֶרֶם	בֵּית	פֶּלֶךְ	שַׁר
	he built	H1931	of Bethhacerem	H0	of part	the ruler
	H1129		H1021		H6418	H8269
וַיִּבְרִיחֵיו:	מִנְעָלָיו	וַדְלֹתָיו				
	thereof and the bars	the doors	thereof the locks			
	H1280	H1817	H4514			

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 6:1 (Parallel theme): O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-hacerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

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.