

BUILDING THE STRONGHOLD – ABC (L40)

QUESTION

NEHEMIAH REPAIRED THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM – HE BUILT THE STRONGHOLD. USING THE GATES AS PICTURES, EXPLAIN HOW THE PRINCIPLES ILLUSTRATED BY THE GATES CAN DEVELOP POSITIVE STRONGHOLDS IN A BELIEVER'S LIFE

SHEEP GATE

Neh 3:1

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They built as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and consecrated it, then as far as the Tower of Hananel.(NKJ)

FISH GATE

Neh 3:3

Also the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.(NKJ)

OLD GATE

Neh 3:6

Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors, with its bolts and bars.(NKJ)

VALLEY GATE

Neh 3:13

Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Refuse Gate.(NKJ)

REFUSE GATE

Neh 3:14

Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.(NKJ)

FOUNTAIN GATE

Neh 3:15

Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David.(NKJ)

WATER GATE

Neh 3:26

Moreover the Nethinim who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the east, and on the projecting tower.(NKJ)

HORSE GATE

Neh 3:28

Beyond the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house.(NKJ)

EAST GATE

Neh 3:29

After them Zadok the son of Immer made repairs in front of his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs.(NKJ)

MIPHKAD GATE

Neh 3:31

After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the Nethinim and of the merchants, in front of the Miphkad Gate, and as far as the upper room at the corner.(NKJ)

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ANSWERS

The Israelites returned under 3 batches:

Under Zerubbabel and Joshua

Under Ezra who was concerned about the sanctification of God's people.

Under Nehemiah who was concerned about the protection of God's people.

Nehemiah, a Jew, was the Persian king's cup-bearer. He had a high level of responsibility for the king's personal well-being. Despite his prestigious job, Nehemiah was concerned about God's chosen people.'

He learns from Hanani that:

The walls are broken

The people are afflicted and a reproach

The gates are burned with fire

Nehemiah recognizes that the condition of Jerusalem is due to disobedience.

He weeps and fasts.

With support from Artaxexes, Nehemiah goes back to Jerusalem. He spies the broken wall at night and calls the people together the next day.

From this arose the commission "let us rise up and build" (Neh.2:18)

The broken walls caused mixing and contamination of God's people – weakening their defences against the enemy.

Nehemiah built the gates to protect the people of God.

Personal responsibility was exercised in building the gates and fortifying Jerusalem's position.

The gates symbolize access points in a believer's life that need to be fortified and guarded to prevent demonic invasion.

Eccl 10:8

He who digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent(NKJ)

When the gate is broken the wall is interrupted, allowing the serpent to enter.

I Jn 5:18

We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.(NKJ)

The believer keeps himself by maintaining the integrity of the gates.

Ps 87:2

The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.(NKJ)

SHEEP GATE

The sheep gate was the entrance to the temple. It was here that the lamb without spot or blemish was chosen.

John 10:7

Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
(NKJ)

This gate is a symbol of Jesus as THE WAY.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.(NKJ)

He is the way to the temple - the Church of God.

Building the sheep gate is to understand the pivotal role of Jesus in your salvation.

Acts 4:10-12

10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'

12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."(NKJ)

1 Tim 2:5

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,
(NKJ)

This was the first gate mentioned – signifying the supremacy and lordship of Jesus Christ in the life of a believer.

Phil 2:10-11

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
(NKJ)

Where this gate is destroyed the believer is a easy prey to cults.

This is a good time to revise:

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST – IS HE LORD OF YOUR LIFE?

REGENERATION(NEW BIRTH) – WHAT AND HOW?

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE SAVED(REGENERATED)?

FISH GATE

Here the fishermen of Tyre sold their catch to the Israelites.

Matt 4:19

Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men (NKJ)

Someone said "if you are not fishing, then you are not following".

We are called to fish.

This is the purpose of our choosing.

John 15:16

"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.(NKJ)

This is part of the commission.

Matt 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.(NKJ)

This is what we are empowered to do.

Acts 1:8

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.(NKJ)

BEING A WITNESS OF JESUS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTS OF OBEDIENCE.

Mark 16:20

And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.(NKJ)

As the disciples obeyed the commission to fish, the Lord worked with them with signs following. When a believer loses his witness, he loses his joy.

OLD GATE

This gate stood between the old and the new Jerusalem.

The old gate leads to the past.
A past focus will hinder your migration into the current purposes of God.

Phil 3:13-14

13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,
14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
(NKJ)

We live through the proceeding word, not the preceding word.

Matt 4:4

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'(NKJ)

Examples of people with a past focus:

Samuel mourning for Saul, ten spies who projected the Egyptian taskmasters onto the giants in Canaan, Elijah declaring that he was not better than his fathers, the prophets of Elijah looking for the body of Elijah whilst Elisha emerged with a double portion of the anointing.

VALLEY GATE

The valley is symbolic of trials and tribulations.

Ps 23:4

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.(NKJ)

It is also symbolic of hopelessness – remember Ezekiel's valley of dry bones.

The valley is part of our defence to make us overcomers – it is training ground for reigning. Valley experiences are ordered so that we can meet the LILY OF THE VALLEY.

A restored valley gate, means you have the key to the valley – when you go in , you know how to come out.

1 Sam 30:6

Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.(NKJ)

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES:

Ps 37:23

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way.(NKJ)

Phil 1:29

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,(NKJ)

2 Tim 3:12

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.(NKJ)

1 Pet 1:7

that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,(NKJ)

James 1:2-3

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,
3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.(NKJ)

REVISE THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSE TO TRIALS AND THE PURPOSES OF TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS.

REFUSE GATE(DUNG GATE)

This gate led to the Valley of Hinnon.

Garbage was collected and passed through this gate to the valley where it was burned daily. This gate is symbolic of the flesh.

Gal 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,
20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,
21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.(NKJ)

Prov 25:28

Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.(NKJ)

PAUL BURNED THE FLESH DAILY.

1 Cor 15:31

I affirm, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
(NKJ)

Restoring the refuse gate means overcoming the flesh.

The flesh demands "let my will be done".

Jesus:

Matt 26:42

Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."(NKJ)

REVISE THE BIBLICAL METHODS TO OVERCOME THE FLESH.

FOUNTAIN GATE

The fountain gate led to the king's palace.

It is symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

Zech 4:6

So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.(NKJ)

A believer deficient in the Holy Spirit is vulnerable to demonic attacks.

REVISE:

THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
THE 3 ANOINTINGS AS PICTURED IN THE LIFE OF DAVID.

WATER GATE

This gate is symbolic of the WORD OF GOD.
Water is a consistent picture of the Word of God.

To come out of the wilderness you have to pass through the waters of Jordan.
To pass from wilderness wandering to promised land accuracy you have to pass through the Word.
To come out of Egypt you must pass through the waters of the Red sea.
To come from the darkness of Egypt to the purposes of God you have to pass through the WORD.
The frequent miscarriages in the city of Jericho was due to polluted water.

II Ki 2:19

Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the ground barren."(NKJ)
The end result of polluted WORD is barrenness.
The triumph over the Moabites was due to discolouration of the water.

II Ki 3:22-24

22 Then they rose up early in the morning, and the sun was shining on the water; and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood.
23 And they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely struck swords and have killed one another; now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"
24 So when they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they entered their land, killing the Moabites.(NKJ)

The WORD will help you to defeat your enemies.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.(NKJ)

REVISE THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S WORD.

HORSE GATE

The horse is a symbol of strength and warfare. It pictures a warrior mentality.

Eph 6:10-18

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.
13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--

(NKJ)

A RESTORED HORSE GATE IS A PICTURE OF A BELIEVER WHO IS WELL – ARMoured.

EAST GATE

Ezek 43:1-4

1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east.

2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.

3 It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw-- like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face.

4 And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east.
(NKJ)

The east gate is symbolic of the second coming of the Lord.

It is the blessed hope of the believer.

Titus 2:13

looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,(NKJ)

The hope of His coming has a purifying effect on the believer.

I Jn 3:3

And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

(NKJ)

2 Tim 4:8

Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.(NKJ)

Rom 5:2

through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.(NKJ)

Rom 15:13

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.(NKJ)

1Thes 4:13-14

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.(NKJ)

1 Tim 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,(NKJ)

MIPHKAD GATE

Miphkad means apportionment.
This was the place of judgement.

It is symbolic of the judgement seat of Christ for rewards.

2 Cor 5:10-11

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.(NKJ)

1 Pet 4:17

17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?(NKJ)

Because we are going to be judged, we are urged to redeem the time.

Eph 5:15-16

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.(NKJ)

THE FIRE WILL TRY EVERYONE'S WORK

1 Cor 3:12-15

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.(NKJ)

THOSE WHO DO NOT LIVE IN ANTICIPATION OF JUDGMENT LIVE LOOSE, CARELESS LIVES THAT OPEN THE GATE TO DEMONIC OPPRESSION.