OLD TESTAMENT · HISTORY · BOOK 16 OF 66

Nehemiah

The joy of the LORD is your strength (8:10)

13	Nehemiah	445 B.C.	52 Days
Chapters, 406 Verses	Governor of Judah	The Wall Rebuilt	To Finish It

STRUCTURE

The Book in Four Parts

The first half rebuilds the **walls** (1–7); the second rebuilds the **people** around God's word (8–13).



Each bar shows that part's share of the 406 verses.

I · 1–2 · 31 verses

Arrival

Bad news, prayer, the king's favour, and a night ride.

II · 3–7 · 166 verses

The Wall

Every family builds; opposition overcome in 52 days.

III · 8–10 · 95 verses

Renewal

The law read, confession, and a covenant sealed.

IV · 11–13 · 114 verses

Reforms

The city resettled, the wall dedicated, abuses corrected.

DATES B.C.

Nehemiah's Years

The dates follow the years of Artaxerxes given in the book.

1:1–4

Chisleu 445

News from Jerusalem

2:1–8

Nisan 445

Nehemiah asks the king

2:11–15

445

The walls viewed by night

6:15

Elul 445

The wall finished in 52 days

8:2

Tisri 445

Ezra reads the law

9:1; 10:29

Tisri 445

Confession and covenant

13:6

433

Nehemiah returns to the king

13:7–31

c. 432

Back in Jerusalem: reforms

PRAYER IN NEHEMIAH

A Man of Prayer

Nehemiah prayed for months, and he also prayed in a single breath before the king.

1:4–11

Fasting and Confession

"We have sinned against Thee … Remember, I beseech Thee, the word that Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses."

2:4

An Arrow Prayer

"So I prayed to the God of heaven," and then he answered the king.

4:9

Prayer and a Watch

"We made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch."

6:9

Strengthen My Hands

"Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands."

> *"O Lord, I beseech Thee, let now Thine ear be attentive to the prayer of Thy servant."*
>
> Nehemiah 1:11 (KJV)

The Wall and Its Gates

A PLAN OF JERUSALEM

The Wall and Its Gates

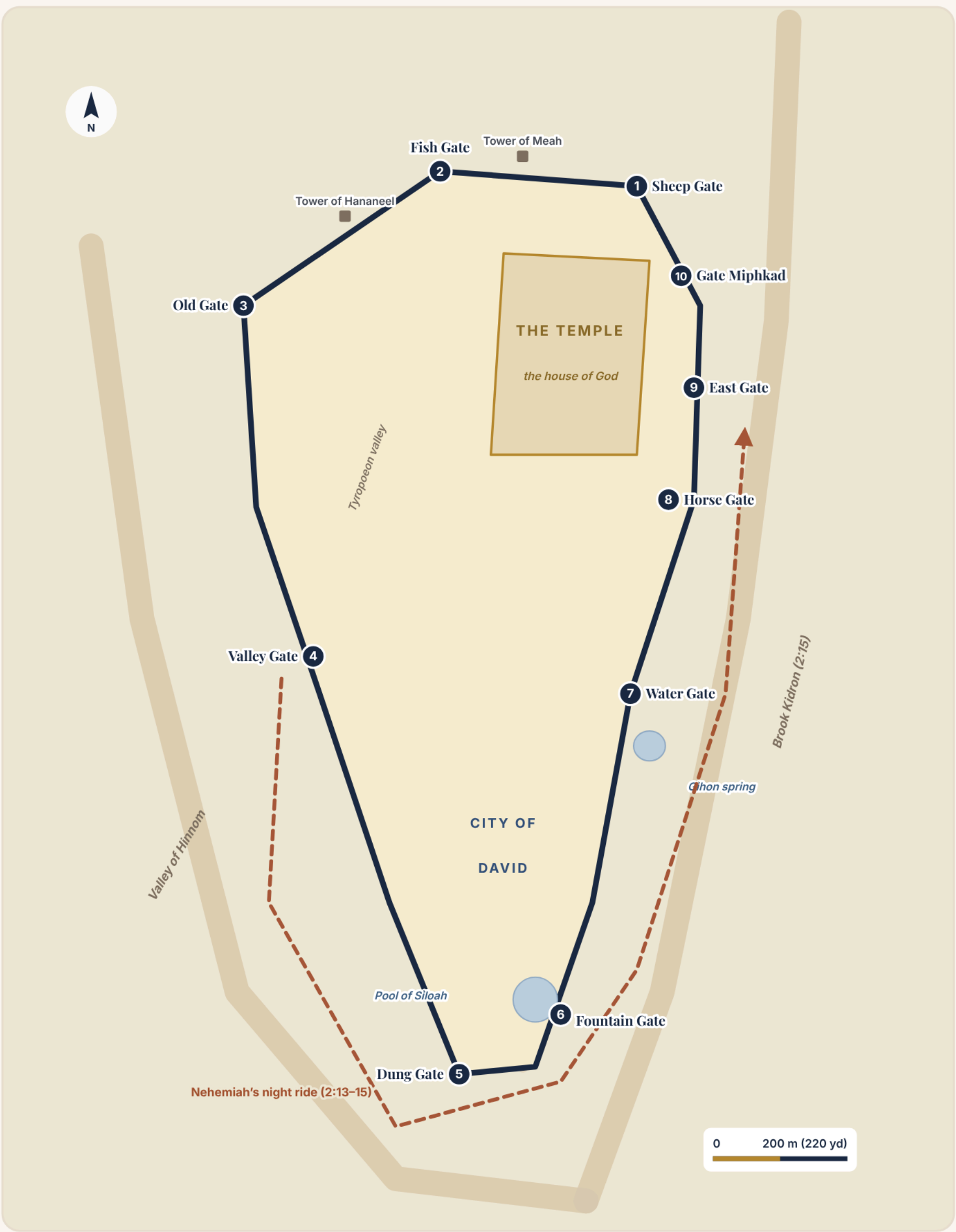
Chapter 3 names the builders gate by gate around the city. The numbers on the plan follow that order and match the cards below.

NEHEMIAH 2–3; 12

The Wall and Its Gates

Jerusalem rebuilt in fifty-two days

445 B.C. · A plan, not to exact scale



The ten gates
In the order of Nehemiah 3

Nehemiah's night ride
He viewed the walls by night (2:13–15)

The rebuilt wall
Finished in fifty-two days (6:15)

The temple courts
The house of God (3:1; 13:11)

"So built we the wall ... for the people had a mind to work."

NEHEMIAH 4:6 (KJV)

The line of the wall and the places of the gates are approximate, following the order of Nehemiah 3.

BibleStudyForAll.com · Map positions approximate · Scripture from the King James Version

1 3:1, 32

Sheep Gate

Built by Eliashib the high priest and the priests; sanctified first.

2 3:3

Fish Gate

The sons of Hassenaah lay its beams and set up its doors.

3 3:6

Old Gate

Repaired by Jehoiada and Meshullam.

4 2:13, 15; 3:13

Valley Gate

Where Nehemiah went out by night; Hanun and Zanoah repair it.

5 2:13; 3:14

Dung Gate

Repaired by Malchiah; it led down to the valley of Hinnom.

6 2:14; 3:15

Fountain Gate

By the pool of Siloah and the stairs of the city of David.

7 3:26; 8:1–3

Water Gate

Ezra reads the law in the street before it.

8 3:28

Horse Gate

Each priest repairs over against his own house.

9 3:29

East Gate

Shemaiah, the keeper of the east gate, repairs.

10 3:31

Gate Miphkad

Malchiah the goldsmith repairs as far as the corner.

NEHEMIAH AT A GLANCE · PART 3 OF 5

Building with Opposition and the Law Read

NEHEMIAH 3–6

Building with Opposition

Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem tried mockery, threats, plots and lies. The people kept building.

THE ENEMY	THE ANSWER
Mockery: “What do these feeble Jews?” 4:2–3	**“Hear, O our God; for we are despised”** 4:4
Threat of attack 4:8, 11	**A sword in one hand and a trowel in the other** 4:17–18
Debt and oppression among the Jews 5:1–5	**“Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God?”** 5:9
Invitations to the plain of Ono 6:2	**“I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down”** 6:3
A false prophet: hide in the temple 6:10	**“Should such a man as I flee?”** 6:11

> *“Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren.”*
>
> Nehemiah 4:14 (KJV)

NEHEMIAH 8

The Law Read at the Water Gate

The wall finished, the people gathered “as one man” to hear the word of God.

1 8:3

Morning to Midday

All the people were attentive to the book of the law.

2 8:5–6

They Stood

They lifted up their hands: “Amen, Amen.”

3 8:8

The Sense

They read distinctly, “and gave the sense.”

4 8:9

They Wept

The people wept when they heard the words of the law.

5 8:10

Rejoice

“The joy of the LORD is your strength.”

6 8:14–17

Booths

The feast of tabernacles kept with very great gladness.

Confession and Covenant, and Christ in Nehemiah

NEHEMIAH 9–10

Confession and Covenant

The Levites led a prayer that recounts the whole story of Israel, from creation to the people's own day.

NEHEMIAH 9:6

Thou Art LORD Alone

"Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein … and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee."

9:17

A God Ready to Pardon

"Gracious and merciful"

9:33

Thou Art Just

"We have done wickedly"

10:29

The Covenant

To walk in God's law

10:39

God's House

"We will not forsake the house of our God"

LOOKING FORWARD

Christ in Nehemiah

Nehemiah's work points to the One who builds a city that can never fall.

2:5 · JOHN 6:38

Sent to Rebuild

Nehemiah left the palace to restore Jerusalem; Christ came down from heaven to do His Father's will.

DANIEL 9:25

The Command to Build

Daniel's weeks are counted "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince."

8:8 · LUKE 24:27

The Sense of Scripture

Ezra gave the sense; Jesus expounded "in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself."

HEBREWS 11:10

A City with Foundations

Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Key Themes and Key Verse

BIG IDEAS

Key Themes

Prayer
Pray first, pray often, pray in the moment.

1:4; 2:4; 4:9

Work Together
The people had a mind to work.

3; 4:6

Courage
Remember the Lord, great and terrible.

4:14

Watch and Work
A sword in one hand, a trowel in the other.

4:17–18

Justice
Walk in the fear of God toward the poor.

5:9–11

God's Word
Read distinctly, understood, obeyed.

8:8

Joy
The joy of the LORD is your strength.

8:10; 12:43

Confession
Thou art just; we have done wickedly.

9:33

Faithfulness
We will not forsake the house of our God.

10:39; 13:11

KEY VERSE

"Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Nehemiah 8:10 (KJV)