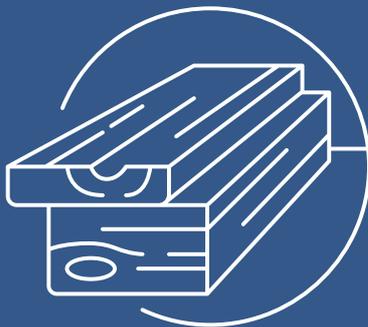


# Organized to Orchestrate

Nehemiah 3



Week Four

## inTro



Read This Week's Passage:  
Nehemiah 3

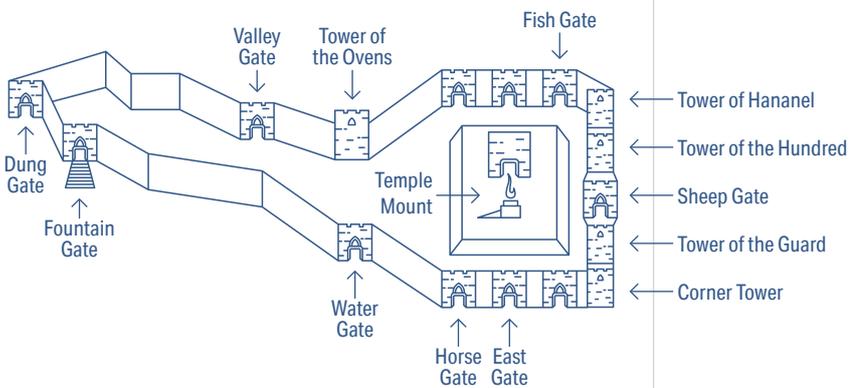
### BRICK AFTER BRICK

Warning: this chapter can be categorized as one of the lackluster chapters in the Bible. Just like building a wall, brick after brick, chapter 3 of Nehemiah details the people involved, verse after verse. Even so, many principles of biblical leadership can be gleaned from this seemingly monotonous passage. Even before you scribe the passage, there are some preliminary lessons to be learned:

1. Persevere through the “boring” parts of the Bible.  
It may be that we are not ready for some particular grain of truth at some specific stage of our spiritual experience. But precious gems of truth await if we will patiently wade through and endure the reading
2. Readers do not always have to get something out of the Bible. Sometimes these details are background information or a setup for another story. As with all relationships, one does not have to get something out of everything.
3. In the “me-centeredness” of our culture, we fail to realize that it’s not always about God squeezing into our narrative, but about us squeezing into His plan to save the world. Some parts of the Bible have seemingly obscure names and details, but they are recorded in the Bible, the inspired Word of God!
4. Though there is nothing special about each brick, an amazing structure emerges when one is done laying them down to build a wall. May we read this chapter with Nehemiah’s patience and diligence.



Write out Nehemiah 3 from the translation of your choice. If you're pressed for time, write out Nehemiah 3:1-5. You may also re write the passage in your own words, outline it, or mind map the chapter. Follow the graphic to visualize the city walls.





Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you



Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases



Memorize your favorite verse. Write it out multiple times to help memorization.

What type of builder are you?  
How does your work ethic impact others?



Read more at [www.inverseible.org/neh4-3](http://www.inverseible.org/neh4-3)

**THE FIRST, THE GOOD, AND THE BAD**

In eliciting the cooperation and coordination of the people, Nehemiah first engaged the high priest and priests to be involved. Though they had priestly duties, they were the first to be assigned to build. Nehemiah ensured that all levels of Jerusalem’s society were to be involved in the work.

As a principle of leadership, it is best to find and influence the influencers. Since the priests were the spiritual leaders of the city, they were solicited to be an example to and an influence on the public. These spiritual leaders may be those in position while others are those of experience, character, or perception.

Nehemiah 3:5 also mentions the Tekoites. After diligently reading the entire chapter, the reader will also find them in verse 27, which shows they had a double portion of the work. Meshullam the son of Berechiah does one job in verse 4, and later we find him in verse 30, fixing the wall near his house—he repairs not only the section that is assigned to him but another that is near his house. No detail is withheld from Nehemiah’s eye.

Does the chapter only witness the positive? Unfortunately, the second half of verse 5 mentions the nobles of Tekoa who “did not put their shoulders to the work.” Large projects might see people who are lazy, indifferent, and inactive. In this case, the Bible says that they didn’t go “all out” for the work of the Lord. Sacred projects ordained by God should not be taken lightly.

Just as the records of Nehemiah remember the laziness of the Tekoite nobles as well as the diligence of Meshullam, there is also a record in heaven that remembers all deeds and motivations of those in the Lord’s work. As these biblical records show the extra work of the Tekoites, so also will the heavenly records reflect our thoroughness and attentiveness.

## “WALLTOGETHER” NOW

What is so amazing about Nehemiah 3 is that they are implementing what the Adventist Church calls Total Member Involvement. It seems that whenever the Lord moves, He involves everyone. For example, people from far regions such as Jericho are mentioned in verse 7, the tradespeople such as goldsmiths and perfumers are mentioned in verse 8, and the daughters of Shallum are mentioned in verse 12. Regardless of geography, profession, or gender, the rebuilding of Jerusalem incorporated everyone.

Nehemiah, when designating sections of the wall, did not assign the sections randomly. In verse 26, the Nethinims (temple servants) built near the temple, the place where they worked. In verses 1, 10, 23, and 28–30, the groups were building near their houses. This gave the groups less anxiety, more convenience, less time wasted, and a form of ownership of the project, for they had to see it every day. Their respective families would then be involved, and the work would be more synergistic as well as efficient.

The work was thoroughly organized. Every person knew where they were in relation to the whole project. In complete harmony and teamwork, the city reflected an orchestra. Sometimes all the instruments played in unison, while sometimes only some, and at other times only one. This concerted action was directed under the guidance of the conductor.

In the case of God’s work, the leader conducts under the Holy Spirit, who organizes the orchestra to play the music of God’s will. When all are in tune and cooperative, the music is beautiful.



**inTerpret**

After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks overall seem to point to?



What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?



Read more at  
[www.inverseible.org/neh4-4](http://www.inverseible.org/neh4-4)

Organized to Orchestrate



What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Prov. 22:29

1 Cor. 12:12–26

Gal. 3:28



What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Nehemiah 3?

Review your memorized verse from Nehemiah 3.

## THE ORGANIZED GOD

“I’m against organized religion.”

“Why?”

“Why?! Because religion does all these bad things in the name of religion.”

“Then that abuse is indeed bad. But a religion should be judged on the merits of its ideal teachings, not its abuses, don’t you think?”

“I think I just don’t like the concept of organized anything.”

“Well, aren’t corporations organized? Governments? The local sports team?!”

No, God doesn’t have all of heaven organized into containers all labeled in corresponding colors with alphabetical and chronological legends. But He is indeed an organized God. One need only read the Pentateuch, the genealogies, and chapters like Nehemiah 3 to see that God loves lists, records, and registries. But they do not exist merely for order’s sake as though God had an organizational disorder. Rather, all things are organized for a purpose. Just as corporate organizations are arranged in an organized manner for some objective, namely profit, spiritual organizations are also organized for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission. Sure, organizations have neglected their original purpose and abused their organizational structure, but while this should never happen, it is not unique to church organizations.

The true church of the Bible, as identified in Revelation 12, keeps the Ten Commandments and has the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 12:17; 19:10); it is also a global organization (Revelation 14:6). And who is the CEO of this organization? Jesus Christ Himself.

“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. . . . Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40).



**inVite**

Meditate on Nehemiah 3 again and look for Jesus in the passage.



Based on John 5:39, what does the fact that Nehemiah 3 is part of Scripture reveal about Jesus?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?



Read more at  
[www.inverseible.org/neh4-6](http://www.inverseible.org/neh4-6)



Review your memory verse.  
How does it apply to your  
life this week?

—————→  
As you have studied this  
week, what personal  
applications have you been  
convicted of in your life?

What are practical applications  
you must make in your school,  
family, workplace, and church?



Read more inSight from the  
Spirit of Prophecy at  
[www.inverseible.org/neh4-7](http://www.inverseible.org/neh4-7)

**ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS**

“Among the first to catch Nehemiah’s spirit of zeal and earnestness were the priests of Israel. From the position of influence which they occupied, these men could do much to hinder or advance the work. Their ready co-operation at the very outset contributed not a little to its success. Thus should it be in every holy enterprise. Those who occupy positions of influence and responsibility in the church, should be foremost in the work of God. If they move reluctantly, others will not move at all. But “their zeal will provoke very many.” When their light burns brightly, a thousand torches will be kindled at the flame.

“A majority of the nobles and rulers of Israel also came nobly up to their duty; but there were a few, the Tekoite nobles, who ‘put not their necks to the work of their Lord.’ While the faithful builders have honorable mention in the book of God, the memory of these slothful servants is branded with shame, and handed down as a warning to all future generations.

“In every religious movement there are some who, while they can not deny that it is the work of God, will keep themselves aloof, refusing to make any effort to advance it. But in enterprises to promote their selfish interests, these men are often the most active and energetic workers. It were well to remember that record kept on high, the book of God, in which all our motives and our works are written—that book in which there are no omissions, no mistakes, and out of which we are to be judged. There every neglected opportunity to do service for God will be faithfully reported, and every deed of faith and love, however humble, will be held in everlasting remembrance. . . . Men of ability and influence organized the various classes of citizens into companies, each leader making himself responsible for the erection of a certain portion of the wall. It was a sight well pleasing to God and angels to see the busy companies, working harmoniously upon the broken-down walls of Jerusalem, and it was a joyous sound to hear, the noise of instruments of labor from the earliest dawn ‘till the stars appeared.’

“Nehemiah’s zeal and energy did not abate, now that the work was actually begun. He did not fold his hands, feeling that he might let fall the burden. With tireless vigilance he constantly superintended the work, directing the workmen, noting every hindrance, and providing for every emergency. His influence was constantly felt along the whole extent of those three miles of wall. With timely words he encouraged the fearful, approved the diligent, or aroused the laggard. . . . While the eye of every worker is often directed to Nehemiah, ready to heed the slightest signal, his eye and heart are uplifted to God, the great Overseer of the whole work, the One who put it into the heart of his servant to build. And as faith and courage strengthen in his own heart, Nehemiah exclaims, and his words, repeated and re-echoed, thrill the hearts of the workers all along the line, ‘The God of heaven, he will prosper us!’ ”<sup>1</sup>

1. (Ellen G. White, “Zealous of Good Works” Southern Watchman, April 5, 1904.)



Share insights from this week's memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.



**What are some tips to help read through the more difficult parts of Scripture?**

**Are you a Tekoite or a Tekoite noble?**

**Why do people seek recognition? Is it wrong to seek recognition? Is there a biblical way to do it?**

**How can our secular work interface with our spiritual work?**

**Is being organized a character trait or a learned skill? Why?**

**How can you tap into Nehemiah's enthusiasm?**

**Why and how does God use organizations?**

**Are being organized and being controlling the same thing?**

**Is being disorganized a vice? Why?**

**How do you fit into the larger picture of what God is trying to do?**  
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