Jerusalem's GATES

Illustrating the Christian Life

IAN TAYLOR

ECS MINISTRIES
The Word to the World

Jerusalem's Gates
Ian Taylor

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FORWARD

There is a great need today for training in how to live the Christian life. Many of us look for suitable devotional material to hand to new believers to ground them in the essentials necessary for growth. Ian Taylor's spiritual insights into Nehemiah's reconstruction of Jerusalem's gates provide the kind of material we need.

The tour around Jerusalem with a stop at each gate provides an illustration of Christian living. The Sheep Gate reminds us that Jesus is the Lamb of God. The Fish Gate reminds of that we need to be fishers of men. The Old Gate reminds us that there is much value in the old paths. The Valley Gate can form a picture of our need to develop humility. The Dung Gate reminds us of our need for spiritual purity. The Fountain Gate can speak of the filling of the Spirit. The Water Gate represents the importance of the Word of God. The Horse Gate can illustrate Christian warfare. The East Gate symbolizes the hope of Messiah's return. And the Inspection Gate reminds us of the coming judgment.

Each chapter is suitable for a day's devotional study. It is written in an easily understood style. The best approach would be to give this book to a new Christian disciple, suggest he read it a chapter at a time, and then meet to discuss the subject introduced in the reading. Plan to answer questions and delve more deeply into some of the passages suggested. May the Lord use this book to help us teach disciples how to follow Christ.

Ken Daughters
President, Emmaus Bible College
Dubuque, Iowa

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

Introduction

Setting the Scene

The book of Nehemiah transports us back to a fascinating time in Jewish history. About 150 years before the events chronicled by Nehemiah, the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar crushed the troublesome little kingdom of Judah and carried off most of its survivors to Babylon.

The years of captivity in Babylon were the result of the Jews' disobedience to God and their constant rejection of his laws, especially those concerning idolatry (Jeremiah 25:1-13). The Jews had been pulled into idolatrous worship of the gods of the pagan nations surrounding them.

God had determined that the Jewish captivity would last seventy years. At the appointed time, Cyrus (king of Persia at that time) fulfilled the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, decreeing in 538 BC that the Jews were free to return to Jerusalem (see 2 Chronicles 36:22; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1, 13; Jeremiah 25:11-13). It would take many decades, however, to reestablish the Jewish nation in their homeland. Just over 40,000 Jews returned with Cyrus's written command to rebuild the temple (Ezra 2:64). They encountered fierce opposition from the Samaritans, who hindered the rebuilding of the temple for a number of years. With God's encouragement through his prophetic messengers Haggai ("Build My temple!") and Zechariah ("Don't be afraid, you are My people!"), the temple was finally rebuilt.

About fifty years after this second temple was completed, Ezra, a godly priest and scribe, set out from Persia with a group of about 5,000 Jews, including many priests and Levites, to facilitate the

temple service (Ezra 8). At this time the Jews began to reestablish themselves as a nation. With the temple rebuilt and the priests functioning in their roles, the fullness of Jewish religious life was finally reestablished. The people, however, were still vulnerable to enemy attacks, due to the fact that the city walls stood in ruins. In order to provide security and protection for its citizens, the walls of Jerusalem needed to be rebuilt.

Nehemiah—The King's Cupbearer and God's Building Supervisor

From the first chapter of the book of Nehemiah, we begin to understand the type of man whom God would use to remedy Jerusalem's vulnerability. We see that Nehemiah was trustworthy; he was the cupbearer to the king, and the one whom the king trusted daily with his life. He knew the Scriptures and was a man of prayer. It is a profitable exercise to read through the book, taking special note of the many times Nehemiah prayed.

One day, while in the fortress city of Susa, Nehemiah's brother Hanani brought troubling news from Jerusalem that the newly reestablished nation was in peril for lack of defenses. He told Nehemiah about Jerusalem's ruined walls and of the people's fear. Nehemiah began to pray day and night, reminding God of his covenant to bless and care for his people, who now sought to obey and worship him.

Later, while Nehemiah was serving the king wine, the king noticed Nehemiah's distressed state and asked what was troubling him. Nehemiah told of his worry for his people in Jerusalem. "What is it you want?" asked the king. Nehemiah quickly prayed and then set forth his request: "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it" (Nehemiah 2:5).

This wish was granted, and Nehemiah set off for Jerusalem with a clear understanding of his mission in God's service.

On his arrival, Nehemiah took the opportunity to ride around the wall alone one evening to personally gather information about its deteriorated condition. He then felt free to inform the Jews of the nature of his visit. He began to organize his fellow Jews for the work. During the huge construction project, Nehemiah stood firm despite the many obstacles and opponents that came his way. He did not allow himself to become discouraged, acting instead with much wisdom and decisiveness—even when the Samaritans sought to take his life.

Viewing the Gates and Walls of Jerusalem through Spiritual Eyes

The third chapter of Nehemiah describes the construction of the wall and its ten gates. God's Word records the eternal testimonies of those who helped and those who did not. The chapter details the rebuilding of each gate in order, starting at the northeast corner and moving counter-clockwise, describing each gate by name. As with everything in God's Word, careful inspection of seemingly insignificant details—like the names of Jerusalem's ancient gates—yields a treasure trove of insight. Seen through spiritual eyes, the gates of Jerusalem present a picture of the progressive development of a believer and of the church as a whole. The gates serve to remind us of how we are to live our Christian lives.

In God's fascinating spiritual picture in Nehemiah 3, the city represents the church, and the walls represent the separation between the church (i.e. all believers) and the world. *The wall does not represent divisions that separate Christians from Christians.* All Christians are included in the "city." Only those who could prove that they were truly Jews had the right to work on the wall's construction, and only those who are truly born-again believers, children of God, live in Christ and belong to his church. The gates are useful for entering and leaving, and they show that we are *in* the world even though we are not *of* it (John 17:16). We must not isolate ourselves from the world; rather, we should *use* the "gates" as we grow and mature as believers.

What is the significance of the number of ancient Jerusalem's gates? Some see that, in the Bible, the number *ten* pictures responsibility. There were Ten Commandments on the two stone tablets, showing man's responsibility and duty toward God and his fellow man. The Jews were responsible to support the priests and Levites and the worship of God in the temple, and their gifts and offerings were counted in increments of 10% (tithes). The ten virgins in the parable the Lord Jesus taught in Matthew chapter 25 were responsible to keep their lamps trimmed in anticipation of the bridegroom's arrival.

We will find responsibilities—Christian duties—that correspond to each of the ten gates. They also speak of our responsibility to be separated from the world. The gates were opened and closed at specified times, and we, likewise, have both the responsibility and the privilege of using their spiritual counterparts as we live out our lives each day. Again, this is not a question of leaving a particular church fellowship to find a place that suits us better; rather, it relates to our daily commerce and contact with the world. Remember the Lord's own personal petition to his Father: "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one" (John 17:15).

Surviving (and even Thriving) in a Hostile Environment

The submarine provides a ready illustration for describing the truth that we are to be in the world but not of it. Water is not the natural habitat of human beings; we were not made to live under water—only fish and other aquatic creatures were. But when someone gets onboard a submarine, he can survive underwater because he has taken *his* environment—the air—with him. He is safe as long as he remains inside the submarine. If there is a hole in the submarine's outer structure, he is in great danger until the hole is repaired.

Christians are also in a foreign environment. We have become citizens of heaven, though we still live in a place where the "prince of this world" wants to smother us and take control of our lives

(Philippians 3:20; 1 Peter 5:8-9). Christ is our submarine. Because we are in Christ, we can safely live in the world, even though we are now aliens in relation to it. If a believer lets the world come into his life, he is like a submarine with a hole in it; he is in great danger—not of losing his salvation (because eternal life cannot be lost) but of regressing spiritually. We must, therefore, walk by the Spirit and not "gratify the desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16, RSV).

Exploring Jerusalem's gates will help us to see how we can find the holes in the hull—those areas where the flesh rules—and patch and prevent them while we serve the Lord in the world. Although it can be easy to forget that we are visitors ill-suited to our environment, a constant consciousness of that fact will help us maintain close fellowship with the Lord.

As we examine what each gate represents and begin to apply these principles to our lives, we will mature into Christ's likeness and live more effectively for him.

Jerusalem's GATES

EXAM BOOKLET

AK '05 (1 UNIT) 1 UNIT

_____

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

_____

ADDRESS

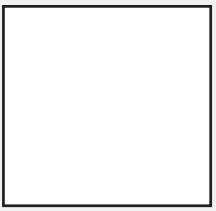
_____

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

_____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

Multiple Choice

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

A. blue C. yellow
B. green D. orange **B**

What Do You Say?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

Course Components

This exam booklet should be used in conjunction with the book *Jerusalem's Gates* by Ian Taylor, published by ECS Ministries © 2005.

How to Study

There are ten exams and each exam relates to one chapter of the book *Jerusalem's Gates*. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapters through at least twice, once to get a general idea of the contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one exam per week.

Returning the Exam

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exams for grading.

CHAPTER 1 EXAM

THE SHEEP GATE

_____
EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. The Sheep Gate was one of the closest gates to
   A. the Mount of Olives
   B. the temple
   C. the Pool of Siloam
   D. the palace _____

2. Jews would commonly enter the Sheep Gate to
   A. visit the king
   B. sell their livestock
   C. find a priest
   D. purchase a sheep for sacrifice _____

3. The Jews had to make a sacrifice for their sins in order to
   A. approach God
   B. enter the city
   C. see the king
   D. live in Jerusalem _____

4. In Genesis 22, God provided a _____ for Issac.
   A. job C. substitute
   B. wife D. house _____

5. In Exodus 12, the firstborn child was spared in the households that
   A. sprinkled the blood of a lamb on the door posts and lintel
   B. paid a lot of money
   C. sold all they had
   D. gave to the poor _____

6. John said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who
   A. forgives the sin of the world"
   B. takes away the sin of the world"
   C. hates the sin of the world"
   D. washes away the sin of the world" _____

7. John 1:12-13 tells us that to become a child of God,
   A. we need to receive Christ
   B. we need to believe on Christ's name
   C. we need to be born of God
   D. all of the above _____

8. Believing in the Lord Jesus is the only way to
   A. be saved
   B. receive eternal life
   C. enter into the abundant life
   D. all of the above _____

9. In John 10:9-10 Jesus said, "I am
   A. the Bread of Life"
   B. the Good Shepherd"
   C. the Gate"
   D. the Light of the World" _____

10. The Lord healed _____ near the Sheep Gate.
    A. the dying child
    B. the paralyzed man
    C. the demon possessed man
    D. the leper _____

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What is your attitude toward the Lamb of God?

_____

_____

_____

_____

RETURNING THE EXAM BOOKLET FOR GRADING

- ✓ After completing the exam, check it carefully.
- ✓ Make sure you have followed the directions.
- ✓ Be sure you have written your correct name and address on all material you will send to the School.
- ✓ Return all the exams at one time instead of separating and mailing each individual exam.
- ✓ Return only this exam booklet, not the course book. If you have used the single page Answer Sheet, return only that sheet.
- ✓ Address the envelope correctly.
- ✓ Put the correct postage on the envelope.
- ✓ If you are studying this course through an Associate Instructor or associated ministry or organization, send the exams to the individual or organization from which you obtained the course. Otherwise, send them to the address below.

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