**Nehemiah 1 & 2**

Four times in the first two chapters of Nehemiah, it says “its gates are/were burned with fire.” The first portion of the verse varies but it always ends with the same phrase. (Neh 1:3, 2:3, 13, 17). This has to be important, somehow, for it to be mentioned four times (at least, important for me, because it’s been in my spirit.)

**Gate**-“sha’ar”-an entrance, a space inside a gate such as a marketplace, public meeting place; an opening; a door, a port-it also means heaven (!)

Gates in Bible times were meeting places where the city officials met to make decrees/declaration, make judgments, a place where sellers sowed their wares, a place to come in and go out, to fellowship. (Jesus is a gate/door).

During those times, the wall was doubled at the gates and there were rooms in the space between (!) These were used as meeting rooms. 2 Sam 18:24

There were also towers/ramparts at the gates with watchmen.

Gates were the primary target of the enemy when attacking-this is why they were doubled and had watchmen. Gates are for praise and thanksgiving in the spirit-when we are in the Spirit, we are alert at the gate so we can warn. **Ps 100:4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name.**

Ps 145 ws in my daily reading-this is a fitting psalm to proclaim at the gates!

**Ps 145**   
I will extol You, my God, O King; And I will bless Your name forever and ever.  
**2**Every day I will bless You, And I will praise Your name forever and ever.  
**3**Great *is* the Lord, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness *is* [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+145&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-16324b)]unsearchable.

**4**One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.  
**5**I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty, And [[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+145&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-16326d)]on Your wondrous works.  
**6***Men* shall speak of the might of Your awesome acts, And I will declare Your greatness.  
**7**They shall [[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+145&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-16328e)]utter the memory of Your great goodness, And shall sing of Your righteousness.

**8**The Lord *is* gracious and full of compassion, Slow to anger and great in mercy.  
**9**The Lord *is* good to all, And His tender mercies *are* over all His works.

**10**All Your works shall praise You, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You.  
**11**They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power,  
**12**To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.  
**13**Your kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, And Your dominion *endures* throughout all [[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps+145&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-16334f)]generations.

**14**The Lord upholds all who fall, And raises up all *who are* bowed down.  
**15**The eyes of all look expectantly to You, And You give them their food in due season.  
**16**You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**17**The Lord *is* righteous in all His ways, Gracious in all His works.  
**18**The Lord *is* near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth.  
**19**He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them.  
**20**The Lord preserves all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy.  
**21**My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, And all flesh shall bless His holy name  
Forever and ever.

Notice that the Dallas mayor is making a decree at his city gate-his office. This is where city business is conducted, although it’s not a gate in the physical, it surely is in the spiritual.

Cheryl said yesterday that we should “cleanse the gates of our hearts”. What is ruling in our gates (ourselves, our families, our cities, counties, churches, states and country?) What has to go?

**Burned**-“yatsath”-kindled, set on fire, **desolate. (Pastor, you said desolate yesterday when you went to the Upper Room. Desolate means to be in ruin or to lie waste.)** Surely Dallas and the DFW area are desolate as is all the United States. I believe that’s why Jesus has surrounded us with a heart (from yesterday’s word). He’s heartbroken over the desolation caused by the enemy and what we have allowed to reign in our hearts..

**Neh 2:17 Then I said to them, “You see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach.”**

**Distress**-”ra”-**wickedness, evil**, trouble, affliction, adversity. According to one source I read, distress is something of the devil-it doesn’t come from the Lord.

**Reproach**-“cherpah”-scorn, condition of shame, disgrace; **having no real authority and power**. This has to do with how others see the Israelites (or the church). Could it come from our lack of fruit, our idolatry, the shedding of blood in our nation?

**Neh 2:18 And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king’s words that he had spoken to me. So they said, “Let us rise up and build.” Then they settheir hands to *this* good *work.***

**Arise**-“quwm”-raise, maintain, to persist, ratify, erect, build, rouse, stir up, station, to make binding, , establish, stand, perform, confirm, abide, accomplish, to be fixed, valid, proven, fulfilled, to persist, to make binding

We’ve been seeing this word and hearing this word a lot from the Lord!!!! ARISE!!!

**Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *of it,* they laughed at us and despised us, and said, “What *is* this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?”**

When I read this, the first thing I thought of was the **“unholy trinity**” in Revelation-satan, the antichrist, the false prophet. The enemy pulls out all the stops to discourage Nehemiah from building the walls and restoring the gates (government and the church).

**Sanballat**-means “moon god”, “sin gives life”(from the notes in our Bible) and also “strength”. Interesting that the god of Islam is the moon god. Sanballat loosely aligned himself with Yahwehism-in our Bible notes. He was a Horonite-which was part of Moab. Horon means two caverns, and was situated on **the ascent of a hill**. The Moabites hated the Israelites. He was connected by marriage to priestly families (Neh 13:28)

**Tobiah**-“Jehovah is good”-His name is good but he was a pagan and Ammonite (from our Bible.). He was a man of influence and associated with the high priest’s family (Neh 13:4)

**Geshem**-“rain”-can mean a violent rain or heavy shower.

(no pun intended, but these three came to rain on Nehemiah’s parade and discourage him. But Nehemiah didn’t fall for it.)

There’s more here-but what stuck out was the Lord mentioning that the gates were burned with fire 4 times. And that the enemy is hard at work thru his henchmen to keep us from arising and re-establishing the gates. This is just the tip of the iceberg-there are many others who’ve done great studies on Nehemiah, but I’m constantly amazed at how the Lord opens things up to me (us) at just the right time!