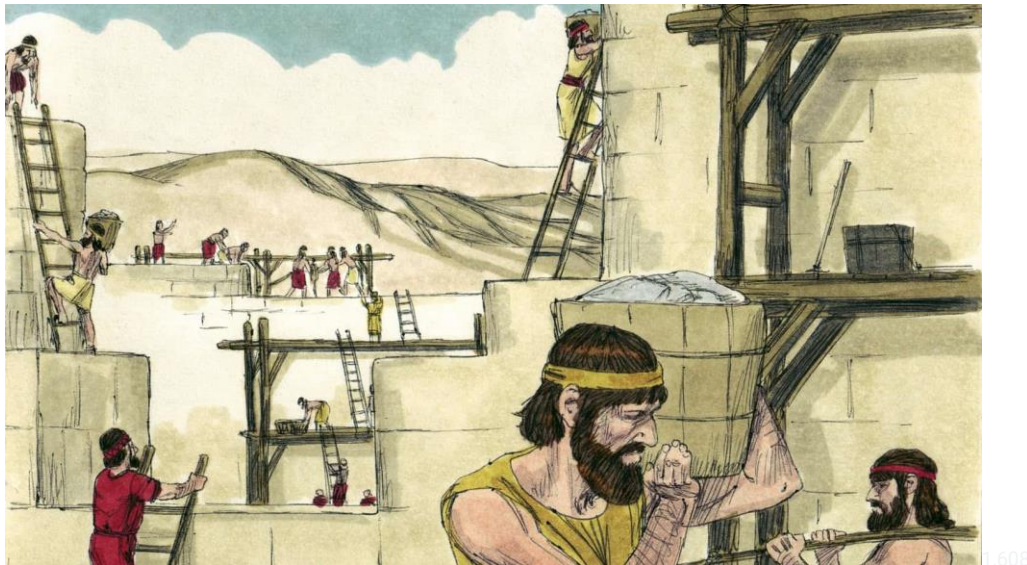

EZRA-NECHEMIAH NECHEMIAH CHAPTER 3: BUILDING THE WALLS

R' Yair Lichtman

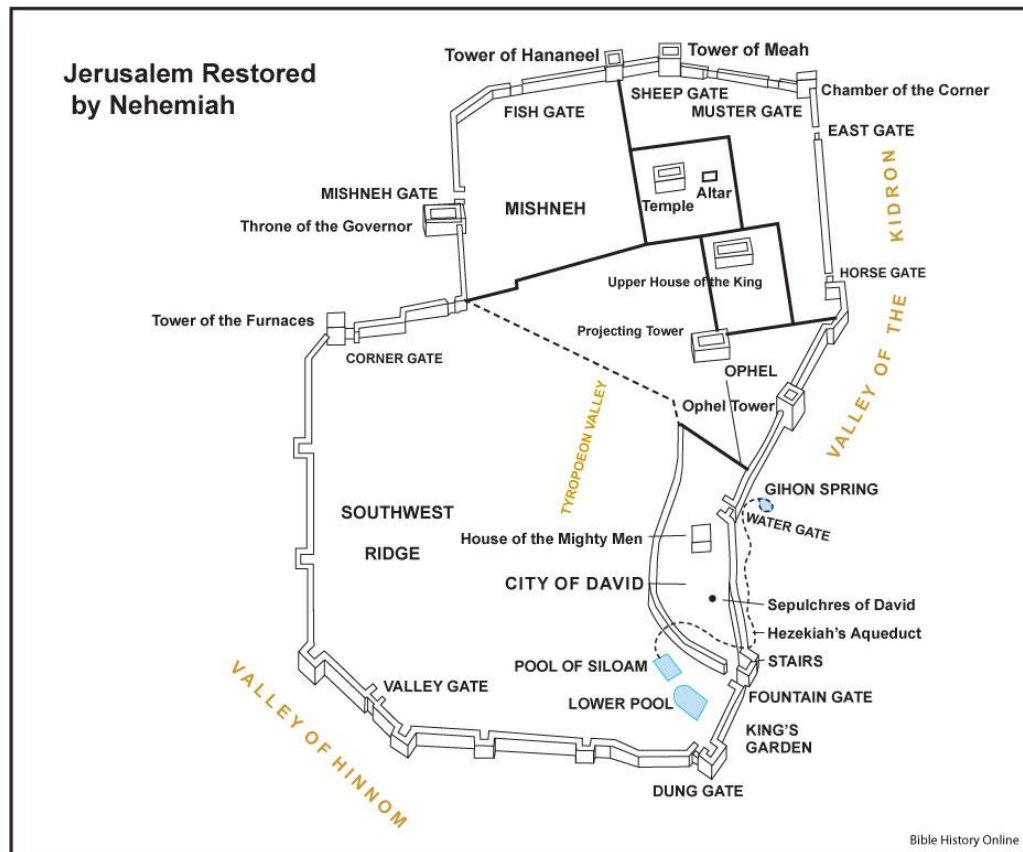


APRIL 10, 2024
CONGREGATION OR TORAH

פרשת תזריע תשפ"ד

THE NEW WALLS

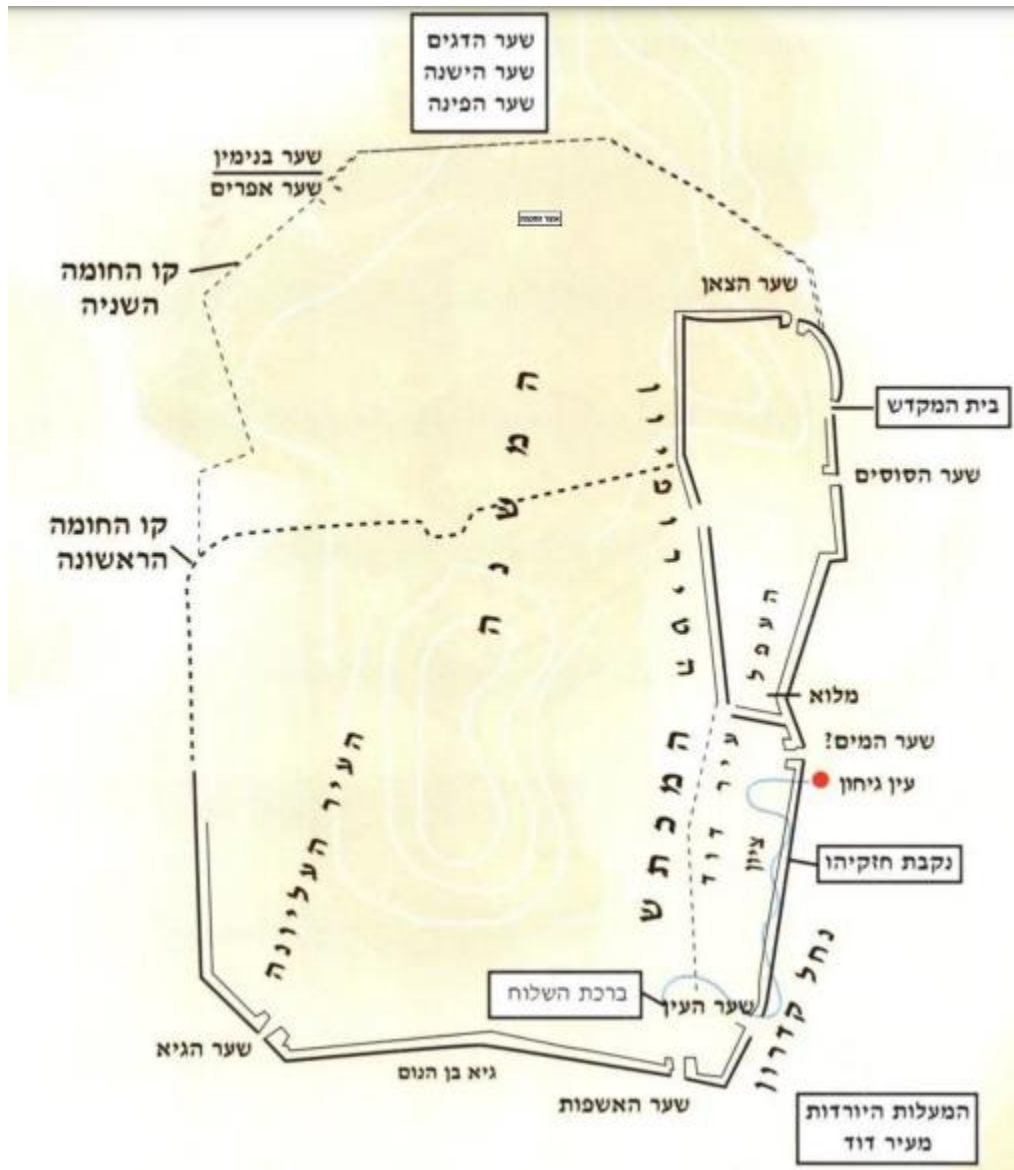
(1) THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM (BIBLE HISTORY ONLINE)



(2) DESCRIPTION OF THE WALLS, BASED ON DA'AT MIKRA (CRED: R' MORDECHAI TORCZYNER)

- 3:1-2 - Shaar haTzon - Northeast corner of the original wall, near the Beit haMikdash
- 3:3-5 - Shaar haDagim - Northeast corner of the new wall of the expanded city
- 3:6-12 - Shaar haYeshanah - Northwest corner of the old wall
- 3:13 - Shaar haGai - Southwest corner
- 3:14 - Shaar ha'Ashpot - Southeast corner
- 3:15-25 - Shaar ha'Ayin - Eastern wall (southern portion)
- 3:26-27 - Shaar haMayim - Eastern wall (central portion)
- 3:28-32 - Shaar haSusim - Eastern wall (northern portion, near the Beit haMikdash)

(3) DA'AT MIKRA ATLAS, P. 317



(4) SHEVUOT 16A

אבא שאול אומר שני ביצעין היו בקר המשקה תחתונה ועליונה תחתונה נתקדשה בכל אלו עליונה לא נתקדשה בכל אלו אלא בעולי גולה שלא במקל ושלא באורים ותומים...

Abba Shaul says: There were two ponds [*bitzin*] on the Mount of Olives [*Har HaMishha*], a lower pond and an upper pond. The lower pond was consecrated during the time of the First Temple with all the procedures mentioned in the mishna, and it has the sanctity of Jerusalem for all purposes. By contrast, the upper pond was not consecrated with all these procedures, but rather it was

consecrated by those who returned from the exile in Babylonia, without a king and without the *Urim VeTummim*...

למה הכניסוה מפני שתורפה של ירושלים היתה ונזקה היא ליכבש משם.

Given that they could not consecrate the upper pond, **why did they bring it within** the walls of the city? The Gemara answers: **Because it was a weak point [turpa] of Jerusalem and it would have been easy to conquer** the city **from there**, it became necessary to include it within the wall.

(5) R' HAYYIM ANGEL, "THE LITERARY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NAME LISTS IN EZRA-NEHEMIAH," JBL 35:3 (2007), P 148

Perhaps the people enumerated are the foremen of the various sections of the walls; one need not conclude that so few actually participated in the construction works. However, it appears more likely that the list gives the impression of fullness (like Ezra 2 and 10), but in fact demonstrates that one could count the small number of participants. Consistent with his line of interpretation of Ezra 10 (noted above), Mordechai Zer-Kavod (on Neh. 3:38) concludes from this list that most Jews did not participate in the rebuilding of the walls. This is why several volunteers were forced to build two sections of the wall – there were not enough participants to cover every section.

(6) R' TZVI SINENSKY, "BUILDING AND SECURING JERUSALEM'S WALLS"

Despite Nechemia's overall success, there appears to have been a degree of internal opposition to the construction within the community. Few of the families that had made *aliya* (i.e., those listed in *Ezra* chapter 2 and *Nechemia* chapter 7) are included among those who worked on the walls. This raises the possibility that many of the non-Jerusalem families saw the wall as none of their business, even objectionable. After all, the project was likely to generate additional resentment among the Jews' foes, who, for instance, might no longer engage in commerce with the Jewish community (see *Nechemia* 10:32).

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

(7) NECHEMIAH 3:1-32

(1) Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up its doors; even to the tower of Hammeah they sanctified it, to the tower of Hananel. (2) Next to him the men of Jericho built. Next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built. (3) The fish gate the sons of Hassenaah built; they laid its beams, and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. (4) Next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz repaired. Next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel repaired. Next to them Zadok the son of Baana repaired. (5) Next to them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles didn't put their necks to the work of their lord. (6) Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the old gate; they laid its beams, and set up its doors, and its bolts, and its bars. (7) Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah repaired that which appertained to the throne of the governor beyond the River. (8) Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths, repaired. Next to him Hananiah one of the perfumers repaired, and they fortified Jerusalem even to the broad wall. (9) Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. (10) Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired over against his house. Next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired. (11) Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hasshub the son of Pahathmoab, repaired another portion, and the tower of the furnaces. (12) Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters. (13) Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the valley gate; they built it, and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and one thousand cubits of the wall to the dung gate. (14) Malchijah the son of Rechab, the ruler of the district of Beth Haccherem repaired the dung gate; he built it, and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. (15) Shallun the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of the district of Mizpah repaired the spring gate; he built it, and covered it, and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and the wall of the pool of Shelah by the king's garden, even to the stairs that go down from the city of David. (16) After him Nechemyah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of half the district of Beth Zur, repaired to the place over against the tombs of David, and to the pool that was made, and to the house of the mighty men. (17) After him the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani repaired. Next to him Hashabiah, the ruler of half the district of Keilah,

(א) וַיָּקָם אֱלִישִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל וְאָחָיו הַכֹּהֲנִים וַיִּבְנוּ אֶת שַׁעַר הַצֹּאן הַמָּה קִדְשׁוּהוּ וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְלֹתָתָיו וְעַד מִגְדַּל הַמָּאָה קִדְשׁוּהוּ עַד מִגְדַּל חֲנַנְאֵל. (ב) וְעַל יָדוֹ בָּנוּ אַנְשֵׁי יֶרֶחוֹ וְעַל יָדוֹ בָּנָה זַכּוּר בֶּן אִמְרִי. (ג) וְאֵת שַׁעַר הַדְּגִים בָּנוּ בְנֵי הַסְּנָאָה הַמָּה קְרוּיָהוּ וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְלֹתָתָיו מִנְעוּלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו. (ד) וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק מְרֻמוֹת בֶּן אוּרִיָּה בֶן הַקּוֹז וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק מְשָׁלִם בֶּן בְּרַכְיָה בֶן מִשְׁזִיבְאֵל וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק צְדוֹק בֶּן בַּעֲנָא. (ה) וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיקוּ הַתְּקוּעִים וְאֲדִירָיָהם לֹא הִבִּיאוּ צַנְרָם בַּעֲבַדַּת אֲדִנְיָהֶם. (ו) וְאֵת שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה הִחְזִיקוּ יוֹיָדָע בֶּן פֶּסֶח וּמְשָׁלִם בֶּן בְּסוּדְיָה הַמָּה קְרוּיָהוּ וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְלֹתָתָיו וּמִנְעָלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו. (ז) וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק מְלִטְיָה הַגִּבְעֹנִי וַיְדוֹן הַמְּרֻנְתֵי אַנְשֵׁי גִבְעוֹן וְהַמְצַפָּה לְכֶסֶף פֶּסַח עֶבֶר הַנְּהַר. (ח) עַל יָדוֹ הִחְזִיק עֲזִיָּאֵל בֶּן חֲרֻמָּה צוּרְפִים וְעַל יָדוֹ הִחְזִיק חֲנַנְיָה בֶּן הַרְקָחִים וַיַּעֲזְבוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם עַד הַחוֹמָה הַרְחֻבָּה. (ט) וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק רִפְיָה בֶן חוּר שֵׁר חֲצִי פֶלֶךְ יְרוּשָׁלָם. (י) וְעַל יָדָם הִחְזִיק יְדִיָּה בֶן חֲרוּמָּה וַנִּגְדַּת בֵּיתוֹ וְעַל יָדוֹ הִחְזִיק חֲטוּשׁ בֶּן חֲשַׁבְנְיָה. (יא) מֵדָה שְׁנֵי הִחְזִיק מְלִכְיָה בֶּן חֶרֶם וְחֲשׁוּב בֶּן פֶּסַח מוֹאֵב וְאֵת מִגְדַּל הַתַּנּוּרִים. (יב) וְעַל יָדוֹ הִחְזִיק שְׁלוּם בֶּן הַלּוּחֵשׁ שֵׁר חֲצִי פֶלֶךְ יְרוּשָׁלָם הוּא וּבָנוּתָיו. (יג) אֵת שַׁעַר הַגֵּיאַ הִחְזִיק חֲנָנוּ וְיִשְׁבִי זְנוּחַ הַמָּה בָּנוּיָהוּ וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְלֹתָתָיו מִנְעָלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו וְאֶלֶף אַמָּה בַּחוּמָה עַד שַׁעַר הַשְּׁפוֹת. (יד) וְאֵת שַׁעַר הָאֲשׁוּפוֹת הִחְזִיק מְלִכְיָה בֶּן רַכָּב שֵׁר פֶּלֶךְ בֵּית הַפָּרָם הוּא וּבָנוּ וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְלֹתָתָיו מִנְעָלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו. (טו) וְאֵת שַׁעַר הַעֵיִן הִחְזִיק שְׁלוֹן בֶּן כָּל חֲזָה שֵׁר פֶּלֶךְ הַמְצַפָּה הוּא וּבָנוּ וַיַּטְלִיבוּ [וַיַּעֲמִידוּ] (ויעמידו) דְלֹתָתָיו מִנְעָלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו וְאֵת חוֹמַת בְּרַכַּת הַשְּׁלַח לְבֹן הַמֶּלֶךְ וְעַד הַמַּעְלוֹת הַיּוֹרְדוֹת מֵעִיר דָּוִד. (טז) אֶחָרָיו הִחְזִיק נְחֻמְיָה בֶּן עֲזַבּוּק שֵׁר חֲצִי פֶלֶךְ בֵּית צוּר עַד נֶגֶד קַבְרֵי דָוִד וְעַד הַבְּרַכָּה הַעֲשׂוּיָה וְעַד בֵּית הַגְּבֵרִים. (יז) אֶחָרָיו הִחְזִיקוּ הַלְוִיִּם

repaired for his district. (18) After him their brothers, Bavvai the son of Henadad, the ruler of half the district of Keilah, repaired. (19) Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, repaired another portion, over against the ascent to the armory at the turning of the wall. (20) After him Baruch the son of Zabbaï earnestly repaired another portion, from the turning of the wall to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. (21) After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another portion, from the door of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib. (22) After him the priests, the men of the Plain, repaired. (23) After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired over against their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah repaired beside his own house. (24) After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another portion, from the house of Azariah to the turning of the wall, and to the corner. (25) Palal the son of Uzai repaired over against the turning of the wall, and the tower that stands out from the upper house of the king, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh. (26) Now the Nethinim lived in Ophel, to the place over against the water gate toward the east, and the tower that stands out. (27) After him the Tekoites repaired another portion, over against the great tower that stands out, and to the wall of Ophel. (28) Above the horse gate the priests repaired, everyone over against his own house. (29) After them Zadok the son of Immer repaired over against his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the east gate repaired. (30) After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another portion. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired over against his chamber. (31) After him Malchijah one of the goldsmiths repaired to the house of the Nethinim, and of the merchants, over against the gate of Hammiphkad, and to the ascent of the corner. (32) Between the ascent of the corner and the sheep gate the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired.

רחום בן בני על ידו התיק השביעה שר חצי פלך קעילה לפלכו. (יח) אחריו התיקו אחיהם בני בן חנדד שר חצי פלך קעילה. (יט) ותיק על ידו עזר בן ישוע שר המצפה מדה שנית מנגד עלת הנשק המקצע. (כ) אחריו התיק התיק ברוד בן [זבי] (זבי) מדה שנית מן המקצוע עד פתח בית אלישיב הפהן הגדול. (כא) אחריו התיק מרמות בן אוריה בן הקוז מדה שנית מפתח בית אלישיב ועד תכלית בית אלישיב. (כב) ואחריו התיקו הפהנים אנשי הכפר. (כג) אחריו התיק בנימן וחשוב נגד ביתם אחריו התיק עזריה בן מעשיה בן ענניה אצל ביתו. (כד) אחריו התיק בניו בן חנדד מדה שנית מבית עזריה עד המקצוע ועד הפנה. (כה) פלל בן אוזי מנגד המקצוע והמגדל היוצא מבית המלך העליון אשר לחצר המטרה אחריו פדיה בן פרעש. (כו) והנתינים היו ישיבים בעפל עד נגד שער המים למזרח והמגדל היוצא. (כז) אחריו התיקו התקעים מדה שנית מנגד המגדל הגדול היוצא ועד חומת העפל. (כח) מעל שער הסוסים התיקו הפהנים איש לנגד ביתו. (כט) אחריו התיק צדוק בן אמר נגד ביתו ואחריו התיק שמעיה בן שכניה שמר שער המזרח. (ל) [אחריו] (אחרי) התיק חנניה בן שלמיה וחנו בן צלף הששי מדה שני אחריו התיק משלם בן ברכיה נגד גשפתו. (לא) [אחריו] (אחרי) התיק מלפיה בן הצרפי עד בית הנתינים והרקלים נגד שער המפקד ועד עלית הפנה. (לב) ובין עלית הפנה לשער הצאן התיקו הצרפים והרקלים.

(8) R' DOV ZAKHEIM, *NEHEMIAH: STATESMAN AND SAGE*, P. 78

Nehemiah's political acumen was evident throughout. He accorded the leading priests, foremost among them Eliashiv the High Priest, their due respect by linking their task to their religious stature. They were the first to begin the work, and they were assigned the construction of the Sheep Gate. Eliashiv apparently supported the construction despite also consorting with Nehemiah's enemy, Tobiah (Neh. 13:4). The two issues were not necessarily linked, however: Eliashiv may have disapproved of Nehemiah's policy of excluding the Samaritans [sic], even as he supported the reconstruction policy.

(9) EZRA 10:6

(ו) וַיָּקָם עֶזְרָא מִלִּפְנֵי בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל לְשַׁכַּת יְהוֹחָנָן בֶּן אֶלְיָשִׁיב וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם לֶחֶם לֹא אָכַל וּמַיִם לֹא שָׁתָה כִּי מִתְאַבֵּל עַל מַעַל הַגּוֹלָה.

(6) Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God, and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib, and when he came there, he ate no bread, nor drank water; for he mourned because of the trespass of those of the captivity.

(10) NECHEMIAH 13:4

(ד) וְלִפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן נָתַן בְּלִשְׁכַּת בֵּית אֶלְהֵינוּ קְרוֹב לְטוֹבִיָּה.

(4) Now before this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, was allied to Tobiah.

(11) RALBAG NECHEMIAH 3:1

אמר שהמה קדשוהו ר"ל שהכינוהו כי בנו החומה מימינו ומשמאלו והעמידו דלתות השער ההוא

It says that they sanctified it, meaning that they prepared it, because they built the wall from the right and the left and set up the doors of that gate.

(12) DA'AT MIKRA NECHEMIAH 3:1

וְנוֹסֵף עַל תְּחוּם הָעִיר שֶׁלִּפְנֵי הַחֲרָבָה, לְכַן הִצְרִיכוּ
לְקַדְּשׁוֹ: הַמָּה קִדְּשׁוּהוּ. מְגִדֵּל הַמַּאֲהָ –

He added to the border of the city from the before the destruction, and therefore needed to sanctify it:
“They sanctified it.”

(13) MALBIM NECHEMIAH 3:4

נראה שכ"מ שנאמר בנה כבר נפלה החומה והוצרכו לבנות הכל מחדש, וכ"מ שנאמר החזיק היה צריך רק לחזק החומה הישנה ולסתום הפרצות:

It appears that wherever it says “built” the wall had already collapsed, and they needed to build it anew, and wherever it says “strengthened” it needed only strengthening of the old wall, and sealing of the gaps.

(14) RASHI NECHEMIAH 3:5

לא סייעו בעבודתו של הקב"ה לבנות חומת העיר:

They did not assist in Gd's construction, to build the wall of the city.

(15) R' DOV ZAKHEIM, *NEHEMIAH: STATESMAN AND SAGE*, P. 83

In contrast to the destitute ordinary townsfolk, the nobles of Tekoa had a vested interest in a politically weak Jewish leadership, and more generally, in the preservation of the status quo, of which they were the prime beneficiaries.

(16) DA'AT MIKRA NECHEMIAH 3:5

לָחֶם²⁴ וַיּוֹשְׁבֵיהָ אַנְשֵׁי מִקְנֵה הַיּוֹ. וְאֲדִירֵיהֶם – בְּעֲלֵי
עֲדָרִים גְּדוֹלִים, וְצִעֲרֵי הָרוּעִים עָבְדוּ אֶצְל
הָאֲדִירִים. הַכְּתוּב מְסַפֵּר בְּשִׁבְחָם שֶׁל הָאֲדִירִים,
שֶׁלֹּא הִבִּיאוּ אֶת צִוְאֵרֵי הַצִּעֲרִים בְּעַל עֲבוֹדָתָם
וְנָתְנוּ לָהֶם לְעֹזֵר בְּתִקּוֹן הַחוֹמָה²⁵.

“And their mighty ones” – the holders of great flocks, and the young shepherds worked for the mighty ones. The text praises the mighty ones, who did not place the necks of the young ones in the yoke of their service, but rather they let them help with the repair of the wall.

(17) MALBIM NECHEMIAH 3:27

שהעופל היה מבצר מיוחד ועומד משוך מהמגדל הגדול היוצא מבית המלך

The “Ophel” was a special fortress which stands extended from the great tower which comes out of the king’s palace.

(18) YERUSHALMI KIDDUSHIN 4:1

מיד עמד וריחקן. שָׁנְאָמַר וְהַגְּבֻעוֹנִים לֹא מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה. אִם עֲזָרָא רִיחֲקוֹן. שָׁנְאָמַר וְהַנְּתִינִים יוֹשְׁבִים בְּעוֹפֵל. אִם לְעֵתִיד לְבוֹא
הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְרַחֵקוֹן. דְּכַתִּיב וְהַעוֹבֵר אֶת הָעִיר יֵאבְדוּהוּ.

Immediately, David stood and distanced them, as Shemuel II 21:2 says, “And the Givonim were not of the Jews.” Ezra also distanced them, as it says, “And the Netinim dwelled in the Ophel.” In the future, too, Gd will distance them, as Yechezkel 48:19 says, “And the ones who serve in the city will work [that land].”

(19) DA'AT MIKRA NECHEMIAH 3:24 N. 63

63 וְעַד הַפְּנֵה – רַבִּים סָבְרוּ שֵׁישׁ כֹּאן כִּפֵּל לְשׁוֹן, וְטַעוּתָם הִיא שֶׁהֵם חוֹשְׁבִים שֶׁהוֹרָאת פְּנֵה הִיא רֶק – קֶרֶן זוּיָה, כִּרְשׁוּם
בְּמַלּוֹנִים. אֲבָל כָּל הַמַּעֲיִין בַּחֲבִיץ יוֹכַח שֶׁאֵין זֶה הוֹרָאתָה הַקְּדוּמָה, אֲלֵא מִקּוֹם מוֹרֵם מִיֵּתֵר הַמְּקוּמוֹת, וּמִכֵּאן: רֹאשׁ פְּנֵה
(תהי' קיח כב); הַפְּנֹת הַגְּבֹהוֹת (צפ' א טז); הַמְּגַדְלִים הַפְּנֹת (דה"ב כו טו). אֲבָן פִּינָה הִיא בְּגוּדָה שֶׁל אֲבָן מוֹסַד (עי' יר')

Many have believed this was redundant language. Their mistake is that they think the meaning of pinah is only “corner”, as listed in dictionaries. But anyone who examines Tanach will be shown that this is not the original definition, but a place which is elevated above other places. Thus “rosh pinah” in Psalms 118:22...

THE FIRST OPPOSITION

(20) NECHEMIAH 3:33-38

(33) But it happened that when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. (34) He spoke before his brothers and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, seeing they are burned?" (35) Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, "Even that which they are building, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall." (36) "Hear, our God for we are despised; and turn back their reproach on their own head, and give them up for a spoil in a land of captivity. (37) And don't cover their iniquity, and don't let their sin be blotted out from before You; for they have provoked You to anger before the builders." (38) So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

(לג) ויהי פאָשר שְׁמַע סַבְבַּלַּט כִּי אָנַחְנוּ בּוֹנִים אֶת הַחוֹמָה וַיִּחַר לוֹ וַיִּכְעַס הַרְבֵּה וַיִּלְעַג עַל הַיְהוּדִים. (לד) וַיֹּאמֶר לִפְנֵי אָחָיו וְחֵיל שְׂמֵרוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר מָה הַיְהוּדִים הָאֵלֶּלֶם עֹשִׂים הֲיִעֲזְבוּ לָהֶם הַיְזוּבָחוֹ הַיְכָלוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַיְחִיו אֶת הָאֲבָנִים מֵעֲרָמוֹת הָעֶפֶר וְהִמָּה שְׂרוּפוֹת. (לה) וְטוֹבִיָּה הָעַמֹּנִי אָצְלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר גַּם אֲשֶׁר הֵם בּוֹנִים אִם יַעֲלֶה שׁוֹעַל וּפְרָץ חוֹמַת אֲבָנֵיהֶם. (לו) שְׁמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ כִּי הָיִינוּ בּוֹזֵה וְהִשָּׁב חֲרַפְתָּם אֶל רֵאשִׁים וּתְנִם לְבוֹזָה בְּאַרְץ שְׁבָיָה. (לז) וְאֵל תִּכַּס עַל עוֹנָם וְחִטְּאַתָּם מִלִּפְנֵיךָ אֵל תִּמְחָה כִּי הִכְעִיסוּ לְנֶגְדְּ הַבּוֹנִים. (לח) וַנִּבְנֶה אֶת הַחוֹמָה וַתִּקְשָׁר כָּל הַחוֹמָה עַד תִּצְנָה וַיְהִי לֵב לָעַם לַעֲשׂוֹת.

(21) DA'AT MIKRA NECHEMIAH 3:34

הַשְּׂבוֹרוֹת. מִכְמָה טְעָמִים לֹא הָאֵמִין סַבְבַּלַּט יָדָה, וְגַם מִפְּנֵי שְׂאֲבֵי הַחוֹמָה הַתְּרַבָּה, אֶפְלוּ אִם בְּהַצְלַחַת הַמַּסְעָל: הַשְּׂבִיִּים מְעֹשִׂים וְחֻלְשִׁים, קָשָׁה יִנְקוּ אוֹתָן מִן הָעֶפֶר, הֵן שְׂרוּפוֹת, חֲסֵרוֹת חֹזֵק לְתַקֵּן אֶת הַחוֹמָה בְּגִלְל עֲרָמוֹת הָעֶפֶר שְׂנֻצְבוּ עַל וּמִתְפֹּרְרוֹת.

(22) EIKHA 5:18

(יח) על הר ציון ששעמם שועלים הלכו בו.

(18) over Mount Zion that is desolate; jackals trample on it.

(23) SHOFTIM 15:4

(ד) וילך שמשון וילכד שלש מאות שועלים ויקח לפדים ויפן זנב אל זנב וישם לפיד אחד בין שני הזנבות בתוך.

(4) Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and he took firebrands and turned tail to tail, and he put a firebrand in the midst between every two tails.

(24) MAKKOT 24B

שוב פעם אחת, היו עולין לירושלים. פִּינּוֹן שֶׁהִגִּיעוּ לְהַר הַצּוֹפִים, קָרְעוּ בְּגָדֵיהֶם. פִּינּוֹן שֶׁהִגִּיעוּ לְהַר הַבַּיִת, רָאוּ שׁוֹעֵל שֶׁיֵּצֵא מִבַּיִת קֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים. הִתְחִילוּ הֵן בּוֹכִין, וְרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא מְצַחֵק...

On another occasion they were ascending to Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple. **When they arrived at Mount Scopus** and saw the site of the Temple, **they rent their garments** in mourning, in keeping with halakhic practice. **When they arrived at the Temple Mount, they saw a fox that emerged from the site of the Holy of Holies. They began weeping, and Rabbi Akiva was laughing.**

(25) R' DOV ZAKHEIM, *NEHEMIAH: STATESMAN AND SAGE*, P. 89

His problem, however, was that Nehemiah was a royal official who was ostensibly on a mission from the king. For that reason, he could not openly take up arms against Nehemiah. Instead, Sanballat initially resorted to a form of psychological warfare... Sanballat delivered this address to his followers – the “force” being a body of irregular troops – within earshot of the Jewish workers in order both to intimidate them and to arouse doubts about the likelihood that the wall could be completed in a timely fashion.

FURTHER READING

<https://outorah.org/p/5679>

https://jewishaction.com/jewish-world/israel/king_davids_tomb_a_different_perspective/

<https://etzion.org.il/en/tanakh/ketuvim/sefer-nechemia/nechemia-chapters-34-building-and-securing-jeruselems-walls>

OUTLINE
