



International Christian Dance Fellowship

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CALLING THE GATEKEEPERS

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The Bible speaks much about gates. Just as there are gatekeepers in the natural realm, God has called us to be gatekeepers in the spiritual realm. When you fly on an airplane, you cannot board the plane unless you have a ticket. The ticket agents act as gatekeepers. Their job is to keep anyone off the plane who may cause any harm. You cannot check into a hotel unless you first stop by the gatekeeper at the front desk to secure a room.

The gatekeepers were very important. In 1 Chronicles 9:17-27, the gatekeepers were mentioned with the singers and musicians. They were appointed and chosen by the King and they had daily responsibilities in the temple. They had to be loyal and trustworthy. They were responsible for the safety of the temple. There were keepers of the temple gates and keepers of the city gates. They were able to refuse or admit entrance to anyone. They were in place for the protection of the temple or the city.

The Bible mentions gates quite a bit. Matthew 7:13-14 says "...wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction... straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads to life..." In Matthew 16:18, Jesus tells us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. Psalm 100:4 says "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise..." So we see that heaven has gates and hell has gates.

Gates and walls were built for the protection of the city. When one was said to possess the gate of his enemy, it meant that the person had gained a position of wealth and power over the enemy. When the gates and the walls were torn down or broken down, it gave access for the enemy to come in.

As mentioned earlier, there were city gates and there were temple gates. Even as the Bible speaks of literal gates, the first gates we need to be keepers of are the gates of our very lives. Know ye not that you are the TEMPLE of the Holy Ghost... We must protect what comes through our ear gates, our eye gates, our mouth gate, our nose gate and even the gate of our skin. We must be careful what we touch. We must also protect the gateway to our physical intimacy.

What are we watching on television? What kind of music are we listening to? What are we eating? We must protect the temple of God and then become those who protect our families and homes. This speaks of being gatekeepers in the realm of the spirit.

Proverbs 8:34-35 says "Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily AT MY GATES, watching at the posts of my door. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord." Are you watching daily at His gates?

A biblical gatekeeper is one who guards access to a place:

- a residence John 18:17
- the ark 1 Chronicles 15-16
- the temple 1 Chronicles 23:30-32
- the city Samuel 18:24; 2 Kings 7:10-11

The city gates were places of assembly. At the city gates they conducted business and the elders gathered there to make important decisions concerning the city and people. We need wise leadership in the church to guard and keep watch over God's people, seek God to make wise decisions.

The city gates were where the people assembled for social and legal matters to be settled. It was a place for marketing, business, reading and teaching the law. It was a place to attract the notice of the King and gain an audience with him. It was a place of authority and punishment and the place where the prophetic word came forth.

I believe God has called us all to be keepers of spiritual gates. We must place ourselves at the gates of our home, our church, our city and our nation. Let us take our positions at the gates through prayer, intercession, dancing, praise, worship and speaking the word of God. Walls are also representative of intercession and prayer.

Nehemiah is a book about restoration. The book of Nehemiah gives us a picture of Christ. It tells us the story of a man who had been placed by God as the cupbearer to the King, yet he gave up a high position to identify with the plight of his people.

At the time of Nehemiah, Jerusalem was the spiritual and political center of Judah. In chapter one, we read that his countrymen came to him to report that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the walls of Jerusalem and the gates had been burned with fire.

"I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me, 'The survivors who are left from the captivity in the province are there in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem is also broken down, and its GATES are burned with fire.'" (Nehemiah 1:2-3)

Without walls, it could hardly be considered a city. It was open to enemy attack and ungodly influences. Upon hearing this news, the Bible says that Nehemiah wept, fasted and prayed to the God of Heaven. After receiving permission to go to inspect the gates, he then called the people together to repair the gates that had been destroyed.

Nehemiah went to Jerusalem and saw that the gates of protection and authority in his city were burned with fire. May I suggest that many gates of the present day church have been burned with fire yet many of us do not open our eyes to see the need or are not willing to do the work necessary for rebuilding. In many churches, it is business as usual, Sunday after Sunday. However, our laziness, lethargy, selfishness, traditions, backbiting, jealousy, competitive spirit and sins have allowed our gates to be destroyed and left us vulnerable to enemy attacks. We need to listen for God's voice, look and see in the spirit realm and be repairers of the gates in our own lives, our families, our churches and our nation.

What gates are in need of repair? First, let us repair the gates of a Holy walk with God so we can go forth to do His works in the earth Psalm 118:19-20. Let us repair the gates of salvation for the harvest to come in. Let us repair the gates of revelation and prophetic anointing with repentance, humility and cleansing with God's word.

In the Old Testament, we see that the priests washed, made sacrifices and were sanctified at the temple gates. I believe this also speaks of the local church. 2 Chronicles 31:2 says the priests were appointed to stand and give thanks and praise. As New Testament priests, we must learn to stand and give thanks and praise and offer spiritual sacrifices to our God. Let us come to the house of God with no agenda, other than to seek Him. Let us cry out for Him and give way to Him. Let us yearn for that which is real, not that which is manufactured. Man cannot duplicate what God gives by His Spirit. Let us yearn to see God, to hear Him.

Because praise and worship is an entrance into the presence of God, it is a gate that is often in need of repair. Praise and worship establishes the Kingdom of God in the earth. Let us empty our songs and make way for His songs. Let us empty our dances and make way for His dances. God has a purpose for every time we gather together. Our culture breeds performance. We often see talent and call it the anointing. Let us become aware of the goings of God in the midst of His people. It is not the job of praise and worship leaders to sing the latest songs. It is their job to lift the heavy burdens off of the people as they come into the Lord's house so they can be free to offer praise to God. It is their job to minister and sing over the people - to be lifters of burdens. As my friend Vivien Hibbert says, Psalmist are carriers of the words of God, musicians are carriers of the sounds of God and dancers are carriers of the sights of God. Let us be those words, sounds and sights at the gates, that God may visit us in Spirit and in Truth, that we might see the gates of the church repaired.

In 2 Chronicles 23:19 the gatekeepers were in place so nothing unclean could enter in. We need to be the authority at the gates. There were gatekeepers at the temple treasuries and storehouses, 1 Chronicles 9:17. Let us pray, speak God's word, sing and dance over the lives of our families and leaders. Let us take God's word in our mouths and prophesy God's word, sing God's word, dance God's word.

We can go to the literal gates of a city but we can also go in the spirit realm. Let us be responsible to minister at the gates through praise, worship, prayer and intercession. Where there are people of righteousness, praise and the prophetic word of God, the spiritual climate of a family, city or nation can be affected for God's purposes.

The rebuilding of the walls (our prayer life) and the gates (our natural and spiritual openings) are found in Nehemiah chapter 3.

As stated earlier, there were city gates and there were temple gates. The temple gates can be representative of our natural body as well as the body of Christ in a corporate context.

Let's look further at Nehemiah. Ten gates are mentioned that were repaired at that time in Jerusalem. Each gate represents a need in the church today:

- **The Sheep Gate** –"Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its gates." (Nehemiah 3:1)

The Sheep Gate was the gate or entrance into Jerusalem that the priests would enter with the sacrificial sheep or lamb to be slain upon the altar for the sins of the people. The Bible says that "Jesus was the Lamb of God that was slain before the foundations of the world." God's redemptive plan of salvation was already laid and provided for man in his fallen state before the foundations of the earth were even created.

The Sheep Gate is repaired or rebuilt in the lives of people when they surrender their lives to Christ.

Let us be those who see as Jesus did and have compassion on those who are as sheep without a shepherd. Sheep need watering. They need safe pastures to eat and safe places to rest. Let's repair that gate salvation so the harvest can come in.

- **The Fish Gate** - "Also the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its gates." (Nehemiah 3:3)

During the days of the first temple, the Fish Gate was of Jerusalem's main entrances. Merchants brought fish to the fish market through this gate.

The Fish Gate, when rebuilt, is a life of fruitfulness, multiplying or sowing into the lives of others, filling the earth with the glory of God, and subduing darkness through Christ. Remember, God has blessed us for this purpose! Winning people to Christ (being a fisher of men) inflicts more damage to the enemy than any other means of battle. For this is the first gate one must enter into to have eternal life.

I believe that if the church of Jesus Christ will take positions at the gates, we can see restoration even as Nehemiah did. Nehemiah stayed focused and true to the vision and the assignment of rebuilding the walls and repairing the gates. He called the people together in a spirit of unity and in spite of opposition, Nehemiah and the people accomplished the task in record time. As a result, all the people were blessed and worshipped the Lord. God brought a great

deliverance. The covenant was renewed, the wall was dedicated, the people separated themselves from sin and complete restoration was the result. Old destructive cycles were reversed and new cycles of blessings were experienced by all.

- **The Old Gate**

"Moreover Jehoiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its gates, with its bolts and bars." (Nehemiah 3:6)

Isaiah 43:18 says "Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold I do a new thing. Now it shall spring forth. Shall you now know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." When we become new creations in Christ, old things pass away and all things become new. Yet we become a part of a family that has its foundations laid upon the ancient paths of righteousness and holiness.

- **The Valley Gate** – "Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it, hung its gates with its bolts and bars." (Nehemiah 3:13)

The Valley Gate overlooks the Kidron Valley which is between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives. It was on the Mount of Olives that Jesus humbled Himself and said "Not my will, but thy will be done."

A valley is the lowest part of an area's landscape. Jesus became the lowest for us and those who choose to rebuild the Valley Gate to their soul must become lowly and humble as well. "Do nothing from selfish or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also the interest of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.(Philippians 2:4)

Those who are self-centered, proud, and arrogant will never be able to repair the "Valley Gate" to their soul or to the souls of others. The extreme importance of this gate is that it is here that the enemy will invade the battle ground of your mind. All of the words and deeds in the world will not affect a single soul without them being empowered by humility and grace.

The Bible also says there are multitudes in the valley of decision. Many will not humble themselves so they may enter in to eternal life or humble themselves to follow Christ at all cost. We are to take our position at the gates and pray for the multitudes not to be deceived by the schemes of the enemy.

- **The Refuse Gate** – This speaks of cleansing the refuse and being free of anything that will defile us. It speaks of having clean hands and a pure heart.

"Malchijah the son of Rechab, leader of the district of Beth Haccerem, repaired the Refuse Gate; he built it and hung its gates with its bolts and bars." (Nehemiah 3:14)

Gates can also represent entry in our souls. The name of this gate gives us a glimpse into its purpose: The Refuse Gate. It can be considered the gate of repentance. This Gate is vital to our spiritual health. Our lives without the blood of Christ are as refuse. "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like filthy rags." (Isaiah 64:6)

The rebuilding of the "Refuse Gate" begins with genuine repentance of one's sins. We then stand in the gap for the sins of others. Let us be repairers of this gate by our prayers and intercession.

- **The Fountain Gate** – This speaks of pure water, the pure word for we are washed by the water of the Word of God. It speaks of cleansing, refreshing and blessings.

"Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its gates with its bolts and bars." (Nehemiah 3:15)

The Lord says in Jeremiah 2:13, "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the FOUNTAIN of living waters, to make for themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water."

The fountain spoken of here is of course the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible states that Jesus is the spring or fountain of life and that all who partake of him will have a wellspring rising up within them, leading to eternal life.

The rebuilding of the Fountain Gate to our soul can be accomplished entirely by faith. It is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as our only means of salvation. There is no other name under Heaven by which we must be saved.

It is our responsibility as ministers of the gospel to make sure that we are being refreshed daily in His presence so that the Lord Jesus Christ will always be the center and focus of all ministry that many may be refreshed at the fountain gate.

- **The Water Gate** - "Moreover the Nethinim (common janitors) who dwelt in Ophel made repairs as far as the place in front of the Water Gate toward the East, and on the projecting tower." (Nehemiah 3:26)

Jesus says in John 7:38, "He who believes in Me, as the scripture said, 'from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'" Of all that Jesus could have referred to Holy Spirit as, He chose to refer to Him as "water." He also stated that it would be out of our (yours and mine) innermost being shall flow the goodness, anointing, and power of the Holy Spirit.

The Water Gate to the soul, when repaired and built, is the power of God manifested in the lives of His children. It is the receiving of the Holy Spirit that allows us to experience the fullness of God's best for our lives. Our destiny and purpose will never come to fruition without a personal relationship with Holy

Spirit. When we come into intimacy with the Holy Spirit, we find ourselves clothed in the armor of God. We receive supernatural faith to lay hands on sick and to raise the dead. We receive the heart of God for a lost and dying world and our soul's burn for the salvation of mankind.

- **The Horse Gate** – "Beyond the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each in front of his own house." (Nehemiah 3:28)

Further study shows that the priests (you and I) made repairs to the Horse Gate in front of their own house. This can also be symbolic of our spiritual houses or places of corporate fellowship. The Horse Gate also speaks of our judging one another. In the self-righteousness and pride within the church, we have found it our duty to replace God as the righteous judge. Gossip runs more rampant in the church than it does in the world. When we talk about another person behind their back, could it be that we are partnering with the "Accuser of the brethren?"

Horses were also used to bear burdens. Let us bear each other's burdens instead of allowing the horse gate to stay in need of repair.

Horses also represent strength in war and the fact that we gain strength in the Lord as we learn to war with our praises.

- **The East Gate**- "After him Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the East Gate made repairs." (Nehemiah 3:29) The Bible says that Jesus Christ will return for His people through the East Gate to rule over all the earth. We are encouraged in scripture to anticipate and long for the Lord's return.

The East gate was also considered to be the King's gate. The king would enter and exit from this gate. It was the gate used for royalty. It was symbolically the gate of the Glory of the Lord Ezekiel 43:1-5. It was the gate of access to the chambers of the King.

- **The Gate of Ephraim** – "Then the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths, (Tabernacles) each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. And there was very great gladness." (Nehemiah 8:16-17)

Ephraim means double fruitful. Our original mandate was to be fruitful and multiply.

We see another example of this is the life of Esther. At the time of Esther, we read that the enemy had plotted and planned evil against God's people. We read that Modecai was gathered at the gate and it was at the gate that he overheard this evil plot. He then told Esther who in turn fasted and prayed for three days. She had access to the King but first and most importantly, she had access to THE KING who had given her a strategy for victory.

In these last days, God is positioning us at the gate in prayer so that He can expose the plans of the enemy and give us a strategy to overcome every time. As we place ourselves at the gates, God will show us how to overthrow the plans of the enemy that would try to stop us from advancing personally and corporately.

To close the gates of hell we must first open the gates of Heaven. Light overcomes darkness. Let's enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

Let's use the authority God has given us, take our positions at the gates and become visual demonstration of what God is saying and doing to release His plans into the earth. Our feet represent authority and He has said He would give us every piece of ground our feet tread upon. He has given us the necks of our enemies and makes the enemy like ashes under the soles of our feet.

Our hands also represent authority. We raise them to God in surrender and we clap them unto Him in praise. But we also clap them together to smite the enemy. The enemy knows the difference is a clap of praise and one that is intended as a weapon of our warfare.

We shout unto God with a voice of triumph! We shout BECAUSE the enemy is defeated, not to defeat him. Jesus has already accomplished that on our behalf Colossians 2:15 says "Jesus has spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of him openly!"

Victory is ours if we will only take our positions at the gates.

Pray with me and dance as you speak these words:
Father in Heaven, I come to you in the name of Jesus, and I take my position at the gate of this temple in which you dwell. Forgive me for not taking my position at the gates daily and for not always protecting your temple. Now that I know this spiritual truth, I will be a gatekeeper of your temple. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. In you I live and move and have my being. My eyes are yours. My ears are yours. I surrender to you all that I take in through my mouth gate and my gate to physical intimacy. Make me more sensitive to you Holy Spirit. Lead me and guide me. Work in me a heart to obey you. Father, show me how to be a gatekeeper for my family, my neighborhood, my church, my city, my state, my nation and even other nations. Allow me to be one who repairs the gates so that others may know you. As I take my position at the gate, reveal your strategies to me for complete and total victory and restoration.

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