



NEHEMIAH

Young Preschool • #OT25 • November 26, 2023

Concept

God answers when we pray.

Goal

Children will learn that God helped Nehemiah. Nehemiah prayed to God for help because he knew that God answers when we pray. They will be challenged to remember to pray that God will build His church.

Passage

Nehemiah 1-4 and 6

Key Verse: "I prayed to the God of heaven." Nehemiah 1:4b (NCV)

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Cardboard building blocks</i>• <i>One brick</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Rhyme Bible, L. J. Sattgast</i>	<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed picture "Nehemiah Built the Wall," 1/child• Stone stickers printed on Avery 5160 labels, 1 sheet/5 children

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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"Quite clearly these two books (Ezra and Nehemiah) are more than a bare chronicle. Here are events to learn from, not only to learn about. There is indeed a certain kinship between this last stretch of narrative in the Old Testament and the last in the New, in that both bring the reader to a point of arrival which is a staging-post rather than a destination, and tacitly invite him to explore God's purpose further. With Nehemiah at Jerusalem, just as with Paul at Rome, the narrative breaks off abruptly, leaving us in no doubt of a stiff journey ahead, but also of a venture well launched and of great potentiality. 'The hand of our God' (to borrow a favourite phrase of Ezra-Nehemiah) has been much in evidence;...

"There is no question here of a small and cloistered deity, however tiny a remnant His people have become. He is boldly acclaimed as creator and sustainer of 'heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host', to say nothing of the earth and all its creatures (Ne. 9:6); and this is not privately held theology. The Jews' reply to a formidable commission reporting to the emperor was: 'We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth' (Ezr. 5:11)... For private encouragements His people could remind one another that He was also 'great and awesome' (Ne. 4:14 [8, Heb]; cf. 9:32), and that He was committed to them as 'our God'.

"There is in fact a strong emphasis on the covenant by which God had bound Himself to Israel in this way, and thereby to the individual as 'my God' (a relationship of which Nehemiah was specially conscious). His choice of Abraham, His rescue of Israel from Egypt and His patience under their provocations, dominate the great confession of Nehemiah 9...

"This divine steadfastness is the first thing that meets us in this pair of books. The whole train of events was set in motion to fulfill a promise (Ezr. 1:1). What is equally apparent is the divine sovereignty. There are no overt miracles, but one imperial decision after another is quietly initiated by the Lord, who 'stirred up the spirit of Cyrus' (Ezr. 1:1), 'put' a certain thing 'into the heart of Artaxerxes', and again saw to it that 'it pleased the king to send' Nehemiah to reverse a previous policy (Ezr. 7:27; Ne. 2:6). Equally, of course, it was God who roused the spirit of each volunteer, we are told, to return from exile (Ezr. 1:5), and 'put into' Nehemiah's heart to tackle first the wall (Ne. 2:12) and then the living human structure which it must serve (7:5)." [1]

[1] Derek Kidner, *Ezra & Nehemiah*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, D. J. Wiseman, General Editor, © Derek Kidner 1979 by InterVarsity Press, pp. 20, 21.

Set Up

The day of class: Cut stickers apart.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Station:

- **Creative Play – Build a Wall**

- **Instructions:** Use the blocks in the classroom to build a wall on the floor. Show children the real brick and discuss how heavy real bricks and stones would be and what it would be like to carry them. How many workers would it take to build this building we are in now?

Introduction Lg. Group

Is there anything that is very hard for you to do? I remember when I was little I thought I would never be able to ride a two-wheeler bicycle! My dad knew I wanted to ride and he helped me learn how. (Use your own example if this isn't applicable to you.) Today we are going to learn about a man, Nehemiah. Nehemiah learned that a giant wall needed to be built and it seemed impossible. But he prayed to God to help him build it. We are going to talk about praying and building today.

Lesson Lg. Group

Story – "Nehemiah Builds the Wall"

Instructions: Read pages 210-221 in The Rhyme Bible.

When Nehemiah served the king,
His face was always glad.
But one day when he came to serve,
His face was very sad.
The king and queen asked him why
And listened to his sad reply:
"Jerusalem is broken down,
And that's what makes me cry!"

The king let Nehemiah go
To help rebuild the city
But when he saw Jerusalem,
His heart was filled with pity.
Its mighty walls were broken down
With rocks and rubble all around.
"Come on! Let's build!"
He cried to all the people in the town.

The people gladly went to work.
They got up with the sun.
And many stars were shining bright
Before the day was done.
The gates were first to be installed,
And then they started on the wall.
"Come on! Be strong!" Nehemiah said,
"We'll build it straight and tall."

But there were some who said "You can't"
They laughed and then began to chant:
"Don't be a sissy! Don't be a fool!
Stop your work, and drop your tool!
Why do you build such a rickety wall?
Even a fox could make it fall!
Nah, Nah, na-Nah, Nah!"

The people kept on working,
But it gave them quite a fright
To hear that men were coming
Who would try to pick a fight.
From that day on they carried swords
While stacking stones or cutting boards.
"Never fear!" Nehemiah said,
"Our trust is in the Lord"

When, at last the work was done,
They gathered in Jerusalem
And listened while the Word of God
Was read out loud to them.
"Amen! Amen!" the people said.
They worshipped God and bowed their heads.
And then they went to celebrate
With special food and bread!

Either ask questions below or briefly review story using questions as a guide.

Why was Nehemiah sad? (Jerusalem needed to be rebuilt.) What did Nehemiah do? (He prayed to God.) Did God answer his prayer? (Yes, the king told him to go.) What happened while the people were building the wall? (Some mean men told them they couldn't do it.) Then what did Nehemiah do? (He prayed again and God answered his prayer again.)

God wants to answer your prayers, too. Do you know that I had a big problem? My big problem was that my bad choices and sin were keeping me from being God's friend. I prayed and asked Jesus to forgive me for my bad choices and to start a friendship with him. God answered my prayer! He forgave me for all of my sins when I asked for Jesus's death to count for me! Now God is building me into His person. He's also using me to build His church by answering my prayers for other people to come know Him.

Let's pray and thank God that He answers when we pray. Let's ask Him to help us remember that we can talk to Him anytime and anywhere. Let's ask Him to use us to help build His church.

Transition

Let's color a picture of Nehemiah and build a wall to remind us that God answers when we pray.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Craft – Nehemiah Built the Wall

Instructions: Give each child a printed page with the key verse and some stickers. Color the page and the stickers. Build a wall with the stickers.

Optional Activity

Build more walls with the blocks.

Read "Nehemiah Builds the Wall" in The Rhyme Bible again.