



# NEHEMIAH

Preschool-K • #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><b>Activity Station:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Laminated, magnet-backed blocks</i></li><li>• <i>It's a Big Big World Atlas, 1994 Tormont Publications Inc.</i></li><li>• <i>The Rhyme Bible, L. J. Sattgast</i></li></ul> <p><b>Lesson:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Circle stickers, 5/class</i></li><li>• <i>Pen</i></li></ul>	<p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Die-cut flip card w/figure, concept &amp; key verse printed on cardstock, 1/child</li><li>• Die-cut border crown on gray cardstock w/top cut off, 12/3 sections/child</li><li>• Glue sticks</li></ul>

### \*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: Craft Preparation – Fold the die-cut cards and cut the border strips for Learning Activity #2.

- **Instructions:** Fold the card in half, backsides together creasing only the cut-out rectangles. Open card and fold in half with front sides together. Open card and push cut-outs from back through to front and fold the card again with front sides together. When you open the card the cut-outs should stand up. Cut one-half of the border strips in thirds and the other half cut only one-third off leaving two-thirds in one piece.

The day of class: Make faces on circle stickers for a sad Nehemiah, a happy Nehemiah, 2 mean faces, and a crowned King Artaxerxes.

## Incorporation Lg. Group

### Activity Station:

- **Creative Play – Build a Wall**

- **Instructions:** Use laminated magnet-backed blocks to build a wall on the white board. 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? What about the highway around the city? What about if you lived in Bible times?

- **Map – It's A Big Big World Atlas**

- **Instructions:** Look in the atlas for the United States and find Columbus, Ohio. On the Asia pages look for the city of Jerusalem and the country of Iran. Iran was called Persia in Nehemiah's day. See how far apart they are. Talk with the children about where we live and how far various places are from Columbus. Would it be difficult to be far away from home? Today we are going to talk about a man, Nehemiah, who was in Persia, far from his home in Jerusalem.

- **Story – "Nehemiah Builds the Wall"**

- **Instructions:** Read the account of Nehemiah on pages 210-221 in The Rhyme Bible.

## Introduction Lg. Group

Have you ever felt that something was just impossible 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. Every time I say the word "pray" I want you to say, "PRAY, PRAY, PRAY." Every time I say the word "build" I want you to say, "BUILD, BUILD, BUILD."

(Hold up a finger with a sad face sticker on it.) This is Nehemiah. Everyone say, "Hi, Nehemiah." Nehemiah lived in Persia far away from his home in Jerusalem. (Show in It's a Big Big World Atlas.)

## Lesson Lg. Group

## Lesson Continued

Nehemiah's brother and some people who still lived in Jerusalem took a trip to Persia to see Nehemiah. They told Nehemiah that the people were in trouble. Jerusalem was in bad shape. The wall that protected the city had fallen down and needed to be rebuilt. (Wait for them to say BUILD, BUILD, BUILD.) The gates in the wall needed to be rebuilt. (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD.) Nehemiah was sad. His people couldn't build a wall (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) without the king's permission. Nehemiah didn't think the king would let him build the wall, but he knew that God answers when we pray. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.) So Nehemiah says in the book he wrote, "When I heard these things, I sat down and cried for several days. I was sad and did not eat food. I prayed (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY) to the God of heaven" (Neh. 1:4). He asked God to change the king's mind.

Nehemiah was still sad when he went to the king. (Hold sad face sticker finger next to the crowned face sticker finger.) The king asked Nehemiah why he was so sad. When Nehemiah told him that his city wall had fallen down, the king asked what he could do for Nehemiah. Nehemiah was afraid of the king but he knew that God answers when we pray. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.) Nehemiah prayed to God (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY), then he asked the king if he could go and rebuild the walls (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD). The king said yes! He even did more! He gave wood for the gates, for the walls and for a house for Nehemiah! God answered when Nehemiah prayed. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.) Nehemiah was so happy (hold up happy face sticker.)

When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, many people helped to build (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) the wall. But there was still a problem. There were some men who did not want Nehemiah and his people to build the wall. (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD.) They said mean things (hold up two mean-faced stickers). Nehemiah heard them. Nehemiah knew that God answers when we pray. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.) So what do you think Nehemiah did? That's right, he prayed (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY). The mean men tried to fight Nehemiah and his workers. But with every problem Nehemiah prayed. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.) He set up a guard and kept on building (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD). They built (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) with one hand and held a weapon in the other.

Even with all this trouble, Nehemiah and his workers built (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) the wall in just 52 days! God answered their prayers (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY) and they did great things! Nehemiah was very happy (show his happy face).

God wants to answer your prayers (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY) 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 (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY) and asked Jesus to forgive me for my bad choices and start a friendship with him. God answered my prayer. (PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.)

## Lesson Continued

### Learning Activity#1 Sm. Groups

### Transition

### Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

### Optional Activity

He forgave me for all of my sin! Now God is building (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) me into His person. He's also using me to build (BUILD, BUILD, BUILD) his Church by answering my prayers for other people to come know Him.

#### Discussion Questions

- What did Nehemiah ask God for?
- Did God answer his prayer?
- Do you believe God will answer your prayers?
- Can you tell me about a time when God answered when you prayed?

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.

Let's make a card of Nehemiah and the wall to remind us that God answers when we pray.

#### Craft – Nehemiah Built the Wall

**Instructions:** Fold the card in half, backsides together creasing only the cut-out rectangles. Open card and fold in half with front sides together creasing the card. Open card and push cut-outs from back through to front and fold the card again with front sides together. When you open the card the cut-outs should stand up. Give each child a flip card and 1 long and 2 short borders/walls. Color the card and borders/walls. Open the flip card and glue the back of the two smaller walls to the outside square cut-outs and the larger border/wall to the middle square cut-out. When the card is closed the walls should go flat and when the card is opened the walls will pop up.

Build more walls with the blocks.

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