

Nehemiah—God's Builder

Nehemiah 1-4, 6; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 628-645, 653-660

How come the pastor is always asking for money?" asked Jessica.

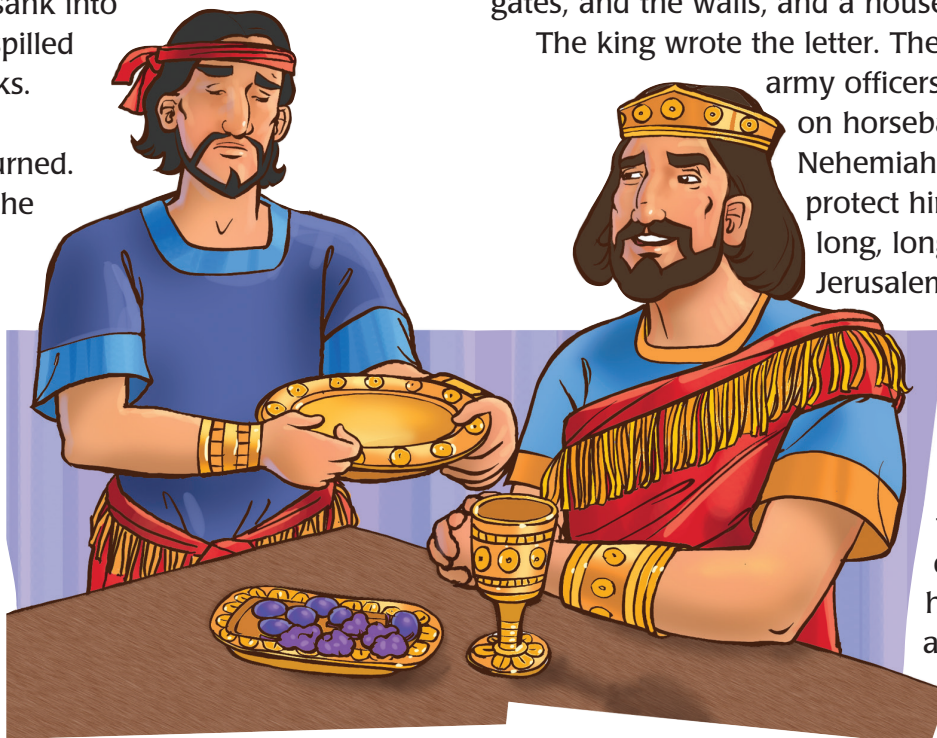
"Because our church family has outgrown our old church and we need a new one," answered Dad. "It takes money and a lot of people willing to help build," explained Dad. "It reminds me of Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem's walls."

I'm so glad to see you again!" Nehemiah exclaimed, hugging his brother Hanani. Hanani had recently arrived with others from Judah. "How are you? How are the rest of the Jews surviving back in Jerusalem?"

The smile left Hanani's face. "Not well," he said sadly. "The wall around Jerusalem has been torn down. The gates have all been burned. Enemies could walk right in and attack God's people."

Nehemiah sank into a chair. Tears spilled down his cheeks.

For days Nehemiah mourned. He fasted, and he prayed. "Oh, Lord," he pleaded, "listen to my prayer! I am going to ask the king for a great favor. Please put it into his heart to be kind to me."



One evening Nehemiah went to work as usual. He carried the king's drink to him at the dinner table.

The king looked up. "Why do you look so sad tonight?" he asked.

"Long live the king!" Nehemiah exclaimed. "I am sad because the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins."

"How can I help you?" the king asked kindly.

Nehemiah prayed a quick, silent prayer. Then he answered the king. "Please send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried."

Nehemiah took a big breath. He had more to ask. "O, king, please give me a letter to the manager of your forest. Tell him to give me wood so I can build. I will rebuild the city gates, and the walls, and a house for myself."

The king wrote the letter. Then he ordered army officers and soldiers on horseback to go with Nehemiah. They would protect him on the long, long journey to Jerusalem.

Nehemiah finally reached Jerusalem. After staying there three days, he rode his donkey around at night to look at the

The Message

God gives me the grace and power to do His will.

Memory Verse

“The gracious hand of my God was on me”

(Nehemiah 2:8, NIV).

damage. He found that he couldn't even ride through some of the gates into the city. They were blocked with big rocks that had been part of the wall.

Then Nehemiah spoke to the city leaders. He told them about the king, and how God had helped him so far. “Let's rebuild the wall of Jerusalem!” he exclaimed.

So the people began the work. And they worked hard.

But their enemies made plans to attack and kill the Jews. The Jews prayed and asked God to protect them. Then Nehemiah told them to get their swords, their spears, and their bows and arrows. They would guard the wall with one hand and work with the other. “Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord!” Nehemiah encouraged them.

Many times the enemies tried to stop the rebuilding work. Nehemiah prayed constantly, and God gave him the wisdom to know what to do. The work continued. And

the wall was finished in just 52 days!

God blessed this project in many ways. He gave Nehemiah courage to ask the king for help. He gave the workers power to carry on their rebuilding. God truly led His people.



S A B B A T H

DO Go for a walk and find a wall (or fence). Look at how it is built. How long do you think it would take you to build a wall like that? Find a place nearby and read your lesson story together.

READ Read and discuss Nehemiah 2:8 together. Whose hand is over you? Thank Him for it.

SING Sing "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 98) before prayer.

S U N D A Y

READ During family worship, read and discuss Nehemiah 1. Practice being a cupbearer and take a drink of water to someone.

DRAW Draw a picture of what you think the Jerusalem wall might have looked like. Write the memory verse on it and place it where you will see it often.

PRAY Pray that God will fill you with His power.

M O N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss Nehemiah 2. Look at verse 20 again. Whom did Nehemiah trust? Whom do you trust to help you?

DO Start a family "Blessing Book." Talk about times God has helped your family and write about them. Add to it often.

DO Review the memory verse. Tell what it means. Then thank God for blessing your family.

Nehemiah gave each family a part of the wall to rebuild.



T U E S D A Y

READ Read and discuss Nehemiah 3 for family worship. Name the gates of Jerusalem. How many were there? What do you think each name meant?

DO Look for something in your house that needs repairing. If possible, help to fix it.

DO Say your memory verse from memory.

DO Gather some stones to build a wall. What else would you need?

PRAY Thank God for a safe place to live.

W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE Read and discuss Nehemiah 4 with your family. Look at verse 10. Ask an adult if they ever feel discouraged. What do they do about it?

DO Look at verses 17 and 18. Try to do something helpful with only one hand. Was it easy or hard? How do you think the workers felt?

DO Review the memory verse; then sing "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40) before prayer. Thank God that He is able to meet your needs.

T H U R S D A Y

READ For worship, read and discuss Nehemiah 6 with your family.

DO Play "Builders and Enemies." For three minutes, build a wall with blocks. The rest of your family will act like enemies and try to keep you from working. At the end of three minutes, switch roles. Tell your family what it was like trying to work while they bothered you. How did Nehemiah do it? Look again at verses 2 and 3.

DO Look at verse 9. Have you ever felt nervous or scared by someone who may have been trying to hurt you? What did Nehemiah do when others tried to do that to him? Thank God for being with you when you are scared.

SING Make up a tune for your memory verse and sing it together.

F R I D A Y

SHARE Act out Nehemiah's story. Read Nehemiah 6:16 again. Ask your parents about work they have been able to do with the help of God. Add this to your family "Blessing Book."

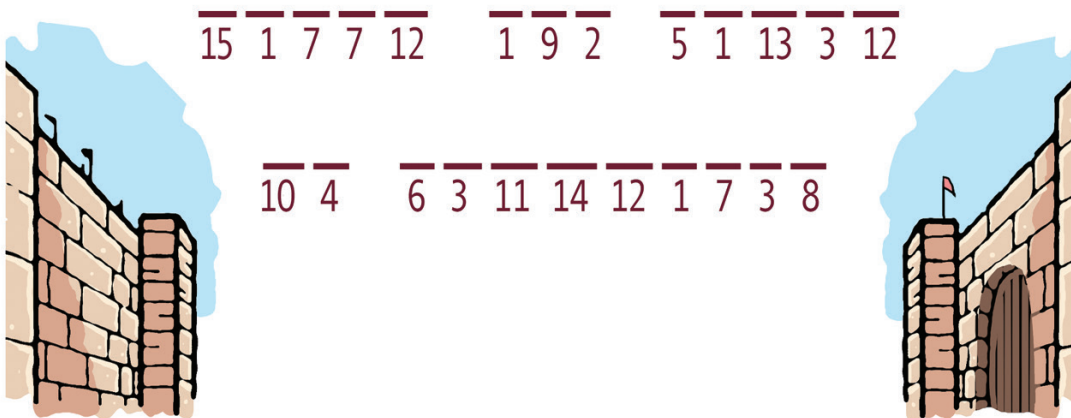
DO Say your memory verse together.

DO Make a kitchen band of pots, pans, spoons, etc. Celebrate God's grace and power by singing and playing "The Joy of the Lord" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 92). Thank God for His help for your family.

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PUZZLE

Directions: Use the code key to find out what Nehemiah rebuilt with God's help.



A	D	E	F	G	J	L	M	N	O	R	S	T	U	W
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15