

Lesson 153: Nehemiah Seeks God's Forgiveness for Israel
Nehemiah 1:1–2:9

Youtube Link for Teachers: <https://youtu.be/ViZIWICXEel>

Children's Bible Story Video: <https://youtu.be/xlfrEkhDoj4>

Worship Theme: God restores us.

Memory Verse: "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

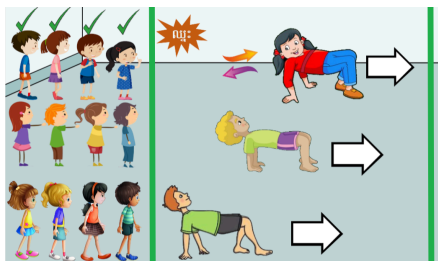
Songs (Youtube links):

1. God Will Make a Way <https://youtu.be/pKmid-FNhhw>
2. I Can Do All Things <https://youtu.be/RAti7KCmlvM>
3. Be Strong and Courageous <https://youtu.be/Mr7oyUvG7U8>

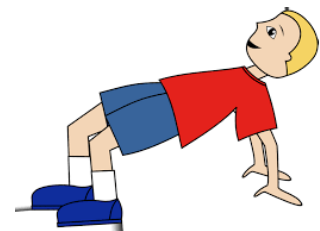
Pray

Song: Select songs from the list above.

Icebreaker: "Crab Walk"



1. Divide the children into 3 equal groups.
2. Teacher will set a goal at about 4 meters from the starting point.
3. When the game starts, each child needs to walk on all fours on their back to the finish line. Once they reach the finish line, they run back to the starting line and tag the next child to continue the game.
4. The group that finishes first wins the game.
5. After the game, explain to the children that although this was a hard game, they were able to finish the game. In the same way, even when things are hard in our lives, if we trust God and continue, God will restore us.



Introduction:

Have you ever broken anything? Could you fix it and make it new again? God doesn't like to see us broken. He always wants to restore us and make us whole. Today, we will learn about how one man prayed to God to restore the brokenness of Israel.

Bible Story:

The Bible tells us about the beautiful city of Jerusalem built by God's people. The people protected their city with a wall. For a while the people loved nothing better than to serve God and worship him. They were known as God's people. But then they started to forget to serve God. They decided to do things their own way instead. God had to punish them to help them learn how important it is to serve and worship him. So God allowed a country called Babylon to come and take their city away from them. The enemies knocked down the wall around the city.

What used to be Babylon was now taken over by a country named Persia. Nehemiah was one of God's people living in Persia. Nehemiah was a cupbearer. Being a cupbearer meant not only that he carried the king's cup, but that he was also supposed to taste drinks prepared for the king. That way, if the drink was poisoned, Nehemiah would get sick or die, but the king would be protected.

When Nehemiah heard what had happened to the wall of Jerusalem, he was very sad. He prayed that God would forgive his people for forgetting to serve God. Nehemiah came up with a plan to restore the wall around the city of Jerusalem. But he knew he would need the help of the king of Persia.

Usually, Nehemiah was a happy cupbearer. But one day, Nehemiah came to work looking sad. Being sad in front of a king in those days could cost you your life. But the king really loved and trusted Nehemiah and asked why he looked so sad. Nehemiah said a quick prayer to God and then explained to the king that he was sad because the wall and the gates of the city of Jerusalem, the city of his people, were ruined. Nehemiah began to tell the king about his plan to visit Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the king approved his plan and promised to help him!

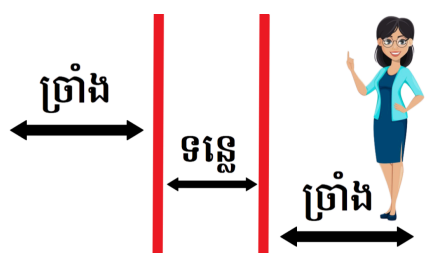
Nehemiah had a change from sadness to gladness because God answered his prayer. And in his gladness, Nehemiah got busy making plans to restore the wall of the city—to build it up so it was just like it had once been. Nehemiah knew he could depend on God because God restores us.

God is the one who helps us when we're broken and in trouble. God is the one who restores us. Sometimes God uses kind helpers, like the king in our Bible story, who helped Nehemiah and his people. We praise God for always being willing to fix things that go wrong!

Questions to discuss:

1. Why did the city of Jerusalem come to ruins? (Because they did not obey God, God allowed another country to take over and break down the city)
2. Who was Nehemiah? (He was a Jew who served as a cupbearer to the king of Persia)
3. What did Nehemiah want to do? (He wanted to return to Jerusalem and restore the city by rebuilding the wall around the city)
4. What in your life needs to be restored fixed by God right now? (Let the children answer)

Game: River and Bank



1. Teacher will draw two lines and call the space outside the lines “bank” and the space inside the lines “river.”
2. Divide the children into two groups and have them stand on the bank.
3. When the teacher says “river,” the children have to jump into the river. When

the teacher says “bank,” they have to jump out to the bank. Teacher may repeat the word to confuse the children.

4. If a child makes a mistake, then they are out of the game.
5. Play the game until there is one winner.
6. After the game, explain to the children that they had to listen to the teacher carefully in order to avoid making mistakes. In the same way, we need to listen to God carefully because God always wants to restore us.



Memory Verse:

“But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” (Isaiah 40:31)

Craft: Nehemiah Prays for Jerusalem - Coloring Page

Materials Needed: Print coloring page, crayons

Song: Select songs from the list above

Pray

Teacher’s Devotion (Please read before you get ready to teach the students.)
Sin damages our lives and pulls us from God. Do you need God to restore an area of your life? Nehemiah envisioned the restoration of a damaged city, and he asked the king for permission to begin the work. Find a quiet place and pray this prayer: “God, I want to begin the work of rebuilding [describe the area that needs restoration]. Thank you for hearing my prayer and helping to restore what is broken between us.”

Nehemiah Prays for Jerusalem

