

LESSON 2: NEHEMIAH: GOD SENDS NEHEMIAH TO REBUILD THE WALL AROUND JERUSALEM

Leader Guide for Ages 3-6

Classroom: Pre-K, K, 1st Grade

 Nehemiah 3–4; 6

04/26/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Nehemiah 3–4; 6
- In This Passage: Nehemiah leads a team of Israelites in rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem, which was destroyed when the Israelites were in exile. Sanballat, Tobiah, and others threaten them, mock them, and try to stop them from building the wall. But God is stronger than those who are against us, and they finish the wall in less than two months!
- Bible Point: God is stronger than those who are against us.
- Summary Verse: “For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Dig Deeper

- You’ll Be Teaching: *God is stronger than those who are against us.* Many kids have faced teasing or bullying at school. And kids with siblings have probably felt as if their brothers and sisters were against them at times. Use this lesson to empower kids. Help them see how Nehemiah and the team persevered with God’s strength, despite what their enemies did.
- Think About: Who or what is “against you” right now? Call on God’s strength.

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that God would help kids face opposition with his strength.

Quick Tip

- When it feels like the kids aren’t cooperating with you, rely on God’s strength. Ask him to show you what needs to change to reach each child where he or she is. Maybe some kids need more leadership responsibility, and you can ask them to do something like help you get

supplies out when they're needed or run the video equipment. Some kids might not yet feel comfortable sharing their answers to questions, but you can build a relationship with them to help them feel safe. Maybe you need to change which activity blocks you're using to better meet the needs of your kids. God is strong!

This Lesson at a Glance (CLICK ON EACH HEADING TO GO TO EACH ACTIVITY)



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers build strong paper bridges.

Supplies

- paper (1 sheet per child)
- blocks (2 per child)*
- small toy cars, trucks, or trains



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers act out the story by building a wall and protecting it.

Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Scatter the blocks around the room.

- inflated balloons (1 for every 5 or 6 kids)
- blocks, preferably giant brick blocks (at least 2 blocks per child)
- masking tape
- Use masking tape to make a line on the floor where you want kids to build the wall. Build it far enough from any walls so kids will be able to form a circle around it.



DEEPER BIBLE

Preschoolers play with balloons and sing a song.

Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))
- inflated balloons (1 for every 3 kids)*
- permanent marker
- tissues
- umbrellas (1 for every 5 or 6 children)



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Recommended for elementary kids.

Supplies

- “The Wall” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



MUSIC VIDEO

Preschoolers sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- “Great Things!” (watch or download [here](#))

- “Stand Together” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Wisdom Wave” (watch or download [here](#))



CRAFT

Preschoolers make hard hats for their stuffed animals.

Supplies

- paper bowls (1 per child)
- paintbrushes (1 per child)
- yellow washable paint
- thin yellow ribbon cut into 8-inch lengths (1 per child)
- stickers and other decorating supplies
- hole punch
- newspaper or plastic tablecloth
- wet wipes or access to a sink

Easy Prep

- Punch 2 holes in the rim of each paper bowl, 1 hole on each side.
- Lay newspaper or a plastic tablecloth over preschoolers’ work area.
- Pour the washable paint into a few paper bowls so kids can easily access it.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers pass blocks and build a wall.

Supplies

- blocks (at least 1 per child)*
- various classroom toys to represent a city

Easy Prep

- Make a “city” by placing classroom toys in the middle of your meeting space. Include cars, dolls, and other toys that represent a town. Place a pile of blocks a short distance away from this “city.”



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers find ways to move balloons.

Supplies

- inflated balloons (1 per child)*
- plastic straws (1 per child)
- paper plates (1 per child)
- electric fan
- masking tape

Easy Prep

- Use masking tape to create a starting line and a finish line about 10 feet apart.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers build a wall of prayer with sticky notes.

Supplies

- paper
- crayons
- 8 sticky notes per child
- *Friends With God Story Bible* (optional) (order [here](#))



TAKE-HOME

Preschoolers receive a take-home page about the lesson.

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING

[5 min]

Welcome

Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))

Welcome

Thank kids for coming.

Just for fun, have kids high-five three of their friends.

Make announcements.

Introduce new kids.

Celebrate birthdays by having preschoolers whisper the “Happy Birthday” song.

Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: Today we'll learn that **God is stronger than those who are against us.**

Let's start today by talking about the strongest people we know.

Share

Share about the strongest person *you* know.

In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share about the strongest people *they* know.

After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **Those sound like really strong people! But they're not stronger than God. No one is. That's one reason God can protect us from enemies or people who are mean. Today we'll read in the Bible about how God showed he's stronger than those who are against us. The Bible is full of true stories about God, and it's one way God talks to us. Let's listen to God as we hear from the Bible today.**

Pray, thanking **God that he's stronger than those who are against us.**



OBJECT LESSON

[10 min]

Hold Up

Supplies

- paper (1 sheet per child)
- blocks (2 per child)*
- small toy cars, trucks, or trains

Tip

- If you don't already have blocks in your meeting area, you can use any supplies that lift paper at least an inch off the table or floor. Examples include cups, bins, buckets, and books. Test both the flat and folded paper on whatever objects you choose.

Make a Paper Bridge

Say: **Have you ever gone over a bridge? Bridges need to be strong so they can hold up heavy cars, trucks, and trains that drive across them. Let's make bridges that these toys can drive across.**

Give kids each two blocks and a sheet of paper. Show them how to place the blocks and set the paper on it so the paper lies on top like a bridge. Then have kids choose a toy car to set on top of the paper. The weight of the toy will make the paper fall down.



Fold the Paper

Say: **Well, that didn't work very well. The paper wasn't strong enough to hold the toys.**

Ask: • **How can we change the paper so it becomes a strong bridge?**

Invite kids to share and try their ideas. After several minutes, show them how to fold the paper to make sides (sort of like an upside-down tunnel with an open top). Then place the paper on the blocks again. This time the bridge will hold up a toy car. Invite kids to send their toy across the bridge or work together to see how many cars the bridge will hold. Adding another piece of paper underneath the first will make it even

stronger. Allow a few minutes for kids to play and experiment with their cars and bridges.



Talk About It

Say: **Bridges hold up heavy things. They are strong enough to hold up cars, trucks, buses, trains, *and* the people who ride in them. Those things are heavy!**

Tell about a time *you* held up something that was really heavy.

Ask: • **Tell about something *you've* held that was really heavy.**

Say: **God is so strong; he can hold up anything! God supports us and helps us when things feel too heavy for us to hold by ourselves. In our Bible story, God helped the Israelites stay strong even when their mean neighbors made fun of them for building a wall. But God is stronger than those who are against us. He protects us and holds us up.**



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

[20 min]

Nehemiah: God Sends Nehemiah to Rebuild the Wall Around Jerusalem (Nehemiah 3-4; 6)

Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))
- inflated balloons (1 for every 5 or 6 kids)
- blocks, preferably giant brick blocks (at least 2 blocks per child)
- masking tape

Easy Prep

- Scatter the blocks around the room.
- Use masking tape to make a line on the floor where you want kids to build the wall. Build it far enough from any walls so kids will be able to form a circle around it.

Tips

- If you don't have giant brick blocks, you can use smaller blocks such as Legos. You could also use shoeboxes or other small boxes.
- To avoid choking hazards, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly.

Gather the Bricks

Show the Bible, and say: **The Bible tells us about a time God's friends, called the Israelites, had to rebuild a wall. The wall protected the Israelites from mean neighbors, but it had fallen down. As the Israelites were building the wall, they learned that God is much stronger than those mean neighbors were. Today we'll learn that God is also stronger than those who are against us. Let's learn more about what happened.**

As I said, the big wall had fallen down. Point out the blocks around your room. **God's friends, the Israelites, had to clean up the broken pieces from the wall and gather all the pieces before they could fix the wall.** Have the children gather the blocks near the masking-tape line. Explain that this is where the wall was and where kids will build a new one.

Build and Defend the Wall

Say: **They all worked together to build up the wall again. Some people built a door in the wall. Others built a tall tower in the wall, and others built another part of the wall. They worked very hard. Let's start building our own wall.** Lead children in working together to build part of the wall. Make sure each child gets to place at least one brick, but make sure kids don't use up all the bricks yet.

Say: **God's friends were working so hard, and the wall was on its way to being done. But when their mean neighbors saw that they were fixing the wall, they got mad. They made fun of the Israelites, and they said the wall wouldn't be strong. They said the Israelites were building a wall so they could start a fight and then hide behind the wall. But that wasn't true. And the mean neighbors even made a plan to come over and fight the Israelites. So the Israelites' leader, Nehemiah, said a prayer to God. Nehemiah asked God for help.** Have children put their hands together like they're praying and bow their heads for a few seconds. **They didn't have anything to worry about because God is stronger than those who are against us.**

God's friends kept working, but they wanted to be ready if the mean neighbors came over to fight them. So some of them held their swords in one hand while they kept building with the other hand! Have kids pretend to draw a sword. Then have them pretend to hold it in one hand and use only the other hand to continue to build. **But they didn't have anything to worry about because God is stronger than those who are against us.**

Once the wall is built, say: **While some of God's friends continued to work, others stood guard around the wall.** Have the children stand in a circle, facing outward, around the wall they built. Have them make strong poses such as holding a shield, making muscles, and puffing out their chests as they place their hands on their hips. **But they didn't have anything to worry about because God is stronger than those who are against us.**

Have the children turn to face inward in the circle and then sit down. Say: **They worked until the wall was all the way done. The mean neighbors never came to fight them because they knew that the Israelites' God is strong. They didn't want to fight anyone who was on God's side because God is stronger than those who are against us.** The neighbors were afraid and amazed when they saw the wall that God's friends had made.

Toss Balloons

Have kids remain seated and spread out in their circle so they're at least a few feet away from the wall. Say: **Even if we don't feel strong, God is strong. He's stronger than those who are against us. Toss the balloons at the wall from where you're sitting, and see if it can knock over the wall.** Give a balloon to every fifth or sixth child in the circle, depending on how many you have. Have the children holding the balloons toss them. Make sure they're sitting far enough from the wall that the force of a balloon won't knock it down when a child tosses the balloon at the wall.

Let kids each take a turn tossing the balloons at the wall from where they're sitting in the circle.

Say: **God is strong like the wall we built. God is stronger than those who are against us. Nothing can knock over God. God will always protect us. Even if someone is mean to us, God is stronger. Even if we're afraid of the dark, God is strong and he'll protect us. God is the strongest of all.**



Supplies

- Bible (click [here](#))
- inflated balloons (1 for every 3 kids)*
- permanent marker
- tissues
- umbrellas (1 for every 5 or 6 children)

Block Balloons

Say: **Today we're learning about how strong God is. God is so strong! He's stronger than any bad thing against us. God is stronger than the things we're sad about.** Draw a sad face on a balloon. **God is stronger than the things we're worried about.** Draw a sad face on another balloon. **God is stronger than mean words people might say to us.** Draw a sad face on another balloon. **God is stronger than the dark and stronger than pretend monsters.** Draw a sad face on another balloon. **There are lots of things that can make us scared or worried. And on our own, we might not feel very strong against those things. Let's see what that's like.**

Give a third of the preschoolers each a tissue, and have them stand together. Have the rest of the preschoolers stand several feet away from the preschoolers with the tissues, and give these preschoolers the balloons. Explain that the preschoolers with the balloons will toss them toward the preschoolers holding the tissues. The children with the tissues will use the tissues to try to block the balloons from hitting them. Have preschoolers play for about 20 seconds; then choose a new third of the preschoolers to hold the tissues. Play until all the preschoolers have had a turn holding a tissue like a shield.

Say: **The floppy, little tissues weren't very good at blocking the balloons. Kind of like that, we might feel small and weak compared to bad or sad things. But God is with us! And God is stronger than those who are against us. Let's see what it's like when we have God with us!**

Play with the balloons again, but this time have preschoolers hold an opened umbrella instead of a tissue. Play several rounds so that all the children can have a turn holding or standing behind an umbrella.

Say: **God is so strong! He's with us all the time and protects us when we're scared or worried or sad.**

Sing a Song

Read aloud Nehemiah 4:14, and then say: **Let's sing a song about how strong God is!**

Sing the following to the tune of "Do Your Ears Hang Low," and lead preschoolers in the accompanying motions.

My God is so strong. *(point up; make muscle arms)*

Oh yes, my God is so strong. *(point up; make muscle arms)*

And he's with me every day. *(put hands over heart)*

He's stronger than anything. *(make muscle arms)*

And I never have to worry 'cause *(put hands over heart)*

my God's always the winner. *(put hands on hips)*

My God is so strong. *(point up; make muscle arms)*

Sing several times as time allows.

Say: **God loves us so much. God is stronger than those who are against us, and he will never leave us on our own.**



The Wall

Supplies

- “The Wall” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Talk-About Videos may work for preschoolers, but they’re geared more toward elementary kids. If you find that the videos aren’t hitting the mark for your preschoolers, try using the Preschool Puppet Skit activity block instead.
- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or just purchase this quarter’s DVD [here](#).

Discuss and Watch “The Wall”

Ask: • **How do you feel about bugs?**

Say: **Some people like bugs, and some people don’t. What do you think today’s Bible story would look like if instead of people, it had bugs? Let’s see!**

Watch “The Wall.”

Ask: • **Tell about a time someone made fun of you.** Share your own example first.

• **What did you think about what the ants did when others were making fun of them?**

Say: **Sometimes people are mean to us, just like Nehemiah’s enemies were mean to Nehemiah. But God is stronger than those who are against us. When people are mean to us, we can be strong and keep doing God’s work.**



MUSIC VIDEO

[10 min]

Great Things!

Supplies

- “Great Things!” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Stand Together” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Wisdom Wave” (watch or download [here](#))

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



CRAFT

[20 min]

Hard Hats

Supplies

- paper bowls (1 per child)
- paintbrushes (1 per child)
- yellow washable paint
- thin yellow ribbon cut into 8-inch lengths (1 per child)
- stickers and other decorating supplies
- hole punch
- newspaper or plastic tablecloth
- wet wipes or access to a sink

Easy Prep

- Punch 2 holes in the rim of each paper bowl, 1 hole on each side.
- Lay newspaper or a plastic tablecloth over preschoolers’ work area.
- Pour the washable paint into a few paper bowls so kids can easily access it.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Tip

- Begin this craft at the beginning of your time together so the paint will have time to dry before kids add the finishing touches. Depending on your climate, the paint should take about 45 minutes or less to dry.

Paint Hard Hats

Say: **Our Bible story today is about how the Israelites and their leader, Nehemiah, rebuilt the huge wall to protect them. God's friends were kind of like construction workers who build buildings and bridges and other things. Construction workers always wear special hats called hard hats so they don't have to worry about their heads getting hurt while they're building. Hard hats are stronger than some things that might fall at a construction site, like nails or rocks. Just like hard hats are strong, God is stronger than those who are against us.** Show the sample craft.

Give each preschooler a paper bowl and a paintbrush. Have preschoolers each turn over their bowls and paint the outside yellow to look like a hard hat. While preschoolers work, ask about any building projects they may have helped their parents with, such as building a birdfeeder, putting together a bookshelf, or creating a gingerbread house. After preschoolers finish painting, help them clean their hands, and then continue on to other activity blocks to allow time for the paint to dry.

Add Finishing Touches

Once the paint is dry, preschoolers can add stickers and other decorating supplies to their hard hats. After the hats are completed, help preschoolers tie a yellow ribbon through the punched holes on either side of the bowl.

Say: **You can put your hard hat on a stuffed animal or doll at home, and it will help you remember that, like a hard hat protects our heads because it's stronger than nails or rocks, God is stronger than those who are against us, and he protects us.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

All Together Now

Supplies

- blocks (at least 1 per child)*
- various classroom toys to represent a city

Easy Prep

- Make a “city” by placing classroom toys in the middle of your meeting space. Include cars, dolls, and other toys that represent a town. Place a pile of blocks a short distance away from this “city.”

Tip

- If you don't have enough blocks to build a wall around your “city,” consider using tissue boxes, plastic cups, small cardboard boxes, or paper-bag bricks.

Build-a-Wall Assembly Line

Have kids form a line that reaches from the pile of blocks to the city.

Say: **In our Bible story, God's friends worked together to build a wall around the city. Let's work together to build a wall around *our* city.**

Begin by having the person closest to the block pile quickly pass one block down the line. When it reaches the last person in line, he or she will use the block to begin building a wall around the toys. As soon as the child puts the piece of wall (the block) in place, the first child in line will move to the end of the line (next to the city), and everyone else will move one place closer to the pile of blocks. Then the new child who is closest to the pile will pass another block down the line for the child closest to the city to continue building the wall. Help kids move their line one step forward each time. Celebrate when kids have positioned the blocks all the way around the “city.” Repeat if time allows.

Talk About It

Say: **You worked together and built a wall to protect our city. In our Bible story, the Israelites and their leader, Nehemiah, built a wall even though other people said mean things to them. They knew that God is stronger than those who are against us, and they kept working, knowing God would protect them.**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Finish Strong

Supplies

- inflated balloons (1 per child)*
- plastic straws (1 per child)
- paper plates (1 per child)
- electric fan
- masking tape

Easy Prep

- Use masking tape to create a starting line and a finish line about 10 feet apart.

Tip

- To avoid choking hazards, be sure to pick up pieces of any broken balloons promptly.

Send Balloons to the Finish Line

Say: **When we work at something, we might say that we do the job from start to finish. Let's play a game where we'll move balloons from a starting line to a finish line.**

Give kids each a balloon and a straw, and have them get on their hands and knees behind the starting line. Show kids how to blow into their straws to move the balloons forward. Encourage them as they blow their balloons all the way to the finish line.

Say: **Now let's use something else to move the balloons back across the room.**

Give kids each a paper plate, and show them how to fan the balloons forward. Have them race to fan their balloons back to the starting line. After they've arrived back at the start, share whether you liked using a straw or paper plate better. Explain why. For example, maybe you liked using the paper plate because it blew the balloon faster, or maybe you preferred the straw because you could make the balloon move in a straight line.

Ask: • **Which did you like better—blowing the balloon with a straw or a paper plate? Why?**

Say: **It's fun to move the balloon, but it takes some work! Let's try one other way.** Place the fan behind the starting line. If the electrical cord allows, hold the fan toward the balloons and walk down the starting line, blowing all the balloons across to the finish line. Kids can follow and chase the balloons as they fly!

Talk About It

Collect the balloons, and have kids form a circle near the finish line. Point to the electric fan.

Say: **That fan was so strong! It blew our balloons across the finish line without our help. God is strong, too! God is stronger than those who are against us. Sometimes it's hard to finish a job on our own, but God will give us the strength we need.**

Tell about a time it was hard for *you* to finish a job. Perhaps you were working outside in the hot sun and wanted to go inside, or maybe you started a cleaning project and got tired and wanted to quit.

Ask: • **When was it hard for *you* to finish a job?**

Say: **God will help us finish strong! He gives us strength to do hard things like he gave the Israelites strength to finish their wall. God protected them from their mean neighbors, too. When we have a hard job to finish, we don't have to worry about others around us. We can be like the Israelites because God is stronger than those who are against us.** Have kids stand on the finish line in a strong pose and shout, "God is strong!"



Supplies

- paper
- crayons
- 8 sticky notes per child
- *Friends With God Story Bible* (optional) (order [here](#))

Draw a Picture

Say: **Today we learned how God helped the Israelites be strong. Their neighbors were mean, and they didn't think the Israelites were strong enough to build the wall. But God was stronger than the mean neighbors. God is stronger than everyone who's against us.**

Share some examples from your own childhood of things you were scared of or people who seemed to be against you. You might share about a pretend monster that you thought was under your bed, or you might share about a bully.

Give each child a sheet of paper and some crayons. Have kids draw a picture of something or someone who is mean or scary to them.

Build a Wall of Prayer

Say: **God is stronger than the scary things you drew. God is stronger than those who are against us. Like the Israelites built a strong wall that their enemies couldn't knock down, let's build a strong wall to block the scary things we drew.**

Give each child a stack of eight sticky notes to represent bricks. Say: **Let's talk to God as we make our wall.** Lead children in the following prayers. After each prayer, have kids add one brick over the scary thing they drew until they've used all their sticky notes to make a wall.

- **God, you're so strong.**
- **You're stronger than everyone.**
- **You protect us with your strength.**
- **You help us be strong, too.**
- **Thank you for taking care of us.**
- **Help us remember that you love us.**
- **Help us remember you're with us.**
- **You're amazing and strong.**

Close in prayer, and then say: **As we prayed, we made a strong wall like God's friends did. We prayed true things about God and how strong he is. When we remember the truth about God, we can be sure of God's strength and his loving care for us. And like Nehemiah was sure, we can be sure that God is stronger than all those who are against us.**



TAKE-HOME

Dig In @ Home

[0 min]

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

Distribute a copy of the "Dig In @ Home" handout to kids as they leave, or email it to parents during the week.

The Bible in One Year, Lesson 2: Nehemiah: God Sends Nehemiah to Rebuild the Wall Around Jerusalem,

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