

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 124: NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER & VIEWING OF THE WALL
NEHEMIAH 1:1-2:20

****NOTE** THIS STORY IS EXCESSIVELY LONG - AN
OPTIONAL WAY IS TO READ THE BOOKLET INSTEAD TO THE
CHILDREN - IT IS MUCH QUICKER AND THEY CAN COLOR IT AS
YOU READ.**

These are the words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: I, Nehemiah, was in the capital city of Susa in the month of Kislev. This was in the 20th year that Artaxerxes was king of Persia. While I was in Susa, one of my brothers named Hanani and some other men came from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had escaped captivity and still lived in Judah. I also asked them about the city of Jerusalem. They answered, "Nehemiah, the Jews who escaped captivity and are in the land of Judah are in much trouble. They are having many problems and are full of shame because the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." When I heard this about the people of Jerusalem and about the wall, I sat down and cried. I was very sad. I fasted and prayed to the God of heaven for several days. Then I prayed this prayer: "LORD, God of heaven, you are the great and powerful God. You are the God who keeps His agreement of love with people who love you and obey your commands. "Please open your eyes and ears and listen to the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night. I am praying for your servants, the Israelites. I confess the sins we Israelites have done against you. I am confessing that I have sinned against you and that the other people in my father's family have sinned against you. We Israelites have been very bad to you. We have not obeyed the commands, rules, and laws you gave your servant Moses. Please remember the teaching you gave your servant Moses. You said to him, 'If you Israelites are not faithful, I will force you to be scattered among the other nations. But if you Israelites come back to me and obey my commands, this is what I will do: Even if your people have been forced to leave their homes and go to the ends of the earth, I will gather them from there. And I will bring them back to the place I have chosen to put my name.' The Israelites are your servants and your people. You used your great power and rescued them. So, Lord, please listen to my prayer. I am your servant. Please listen to the prayers of your servants who want to show respect for your name. You know I am the king's wine servant, so please

help me today. Help me as I ask the king for help. Give me success and help me to be pleasing to the king."

In the month of Nisan in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes, some wine was brought to the king. I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had never before been sad when I was with him, but now I was sad. So the king asked me, "Are you sick? Why do you look sad? I think your heart is full of sadness." Then I was very afraid. But even though I was afraid, I said to the king, "May the king live forever! I am sad because the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and the gates of that city have been destroyed by fire." Then the king said to me, "What do you want me to do?" Before I answered, I prayed to the God of heaven. Then I answered the king, "If it would please the king, and if I have been good to you, please send me to Jerusalem, the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried. I want to go there and rebuild that city." The king and the queen who was sitting next to him asked me, "How long will your trip take? When will you get back here?" The king was happy to send me, so I gave him a certain time. I also said to the king, "If it would please the king to do something else for me, let me ask. Please give me some letters to show the governors of the area west of the Euphrates River. I need these letters so that the governors will give me permission to pass safely through their lands on my way to Judah. I also need wood for the heavy wooden beams for the gates, the walls, the walls around the Temple, and my house. So I need a letter from you to Asaph, who is in charge of your forests." The king gave me the letters and everything I asked for. The king did that because my God was kind to me. So I went to the governors of the area west of the Euphrates River and gave them the letters from the king. The king had also sent army officers and soldiers on horses with me. Sanballat from Horon and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about what I was doing. They were very upset and angry that someone had come to help the Israelites. I went to Jerusalem and stayed there three days. Then at night I started out with a few men. I had not said anything to anyone about what my God had put on my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no horses with me except the horse I was riding. While it was dark I went out through the Valley Gate. I rode toward the Dragon Well and the Gate of the Ash Piles. I was inspecting the walls of Jerusalem that had been broken down and the gates in the wall that had been burned with fire. Then I rode on toward the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool. As I got close, I could see there was not enough room for my horse to get through. So I went up the valley in the dark, inspecting the wall. Finally, I turned back and went back in through the Valley Gate. The officials and important Israelites didn't know

where I had gone. They didn't know what I was doing. I had not yet said anything to the Jews, the priests, the king's family, the officials, or any of the other people who would be doing the work. Then I said to them, "You can see the trouble we have here: Jerusalem is a pile of ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let's rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. Then we will not be ashamed anymore." I also told them that my God had been kind to me. I told them what the king had said to me. Then they answered, "Let's start to work, now!" So we began this good work. But Sanballat from Horon, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard that we were building again. They made fun of us in a very ugly way. They said, "What are you doing? Are you turning against the king?" But this is what I said to them: "The God of heaven will help us succeed. We are God's servants and we will rebuild this city. You cannot help us in this work because none of your family lived here in Jerusalem. You don't own any of this land, and you have no right to be in this place."

124. NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER & VIEWING OF THE WALL (NEHEMIAH 1:1-2:20)



"O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name." **NEHEMIAH 1:11**

124. NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER & VIEWING OF THE WALL

NEHEMIAH 1:1-2:20

MEMORY VERSE:

"O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name." NEHEMIAH 1:11

TRUE OR FALSE

1. Nehemiah asked about the Jews who escaped from captivity and about the city of Jerusalem. TRUE or FALSE
2. And they answered him, "Everything is well with the people. The walls of Jerusalem are tall, and the gates are strong. TRUE or FALSE
3. When Nehemiah heard that the Jews were in trouble and that Jerusalem was in ruins, he sat down and cried. TRUE or FALSE
4. Nehemiah also prayed to God when he heard about Jerusalem. TRUE or FALSE
5. Nehemiah was the king's farmer. TRUE or FALSE

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. What did the king say to Nehemiah when he came to serve him wine? Did he ask him why he was sad?
 2. Did Nehemiah tell him why he was sad?
 3. What happened when Nehemiah asked the king for permission to travel to Jerusalem and to look at the city and its walls?
 4. Did king Artaxerxes let Nehemiah go back to Jerusalem?
 5. What did Nehemiah tell everyone about God? Did he tell them that He was kind to Nehemiah?
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LESSON 124 Activity

Print the first 7 pages of the Nehemiah Coloring Book & Let the children take it home.

Helpers in the Classroom

Bring to class sponges, paper towels, cleanser, vacuum, etc. Explain to the children that it is a privilege to serve the Lord. Everyone worked together to build the temple and then the wall around Jerusalem. It is important that we work together to learn how to take care of God's house today.

Give each child a job. You can have them wipe down the chalkboard, wipe down the chairs, clean smudges off of the walls, vacuum the floors, clean windows (if applicable), etc. If you like, sing a praise song while you work and make it fun. Have small prizes available for all of the children who have worked hard doing the Lord's work.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to be ready and willing to do whatever God asks them to do. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.