

NEHEMIAH

BUILDING
MINISTRY
TOGETHER

Lesson 1: Nehemiah 1:1-4 Overview of Nehemiah

Welcome and Play Time 10 Min

What a great honor it is to have the opportunity to take part in the teaching of God's Word. Children are a wonderful audience because they have such sweet simple faith. God has given us the charge to build into their lives faith, hope and love. As we begin to share Nehemiah's history and role in the great plan of God lets seize every opportunity to broaden our children's faith through this story of God's faithfulness to His Word, His plan and His people.

Use this time as people are arriving for the kids to get comfortable with each other and settled in so that Mom and Dad can enjoy small group.

Bible Lesson Activities 20 Min



Activity 1: Israel's Journey Home Game This week is an overview and introduction to the book and life of Nehemiah. This is a great opportunity to teach and review where this portion of history falls into God's big picture. Use the game board at the end of the lesson to teach the history of the Israelites. Use a die and playing pieces (taken from other games, or pennies, paper clips, little balls of paper, etc.) Allow the youngest player to go first. As the first player crosses one of the picture spaces, stop to read about what was happening in the Israelites history. Then as each following player passes have them repeat something they know about each event in order to continue. If they can't remember, give them a simple yes or no question to answer. This isn't much of a "winning" game because you want all of the "Israelites" to make it home! If the game goes really fast for your group play it a couple of times. Feel free to modify the rules to fit your group of players.

Activity 2: Get to know Nehemiah Go over some basic facts about Nehemiah.

- What part of the Bible can you find the book of Nehemiah? Old Testament
- Nehemiah was a Jew, one of God's chosen people.
- The Jews were in exile - away from their home.
- Nehemiah was a cup bearer for the king. A cup bearer was a person who tasted everything before the king just in case someone tried to poison the king. He was a very trusted official of the king and knew the king very well because he spent so much time with him.
- He knew God's word.
- He was faithful to pray.

Bible Reading Time & Scripture Memory 10 Min

Have a small snack for the kids like pretzels or cheerios to help encourage quiet mouths and listening ears. Pray and thank God for giving us His Words so that we may share it with others. Read the Word straight through and then give yourself time to discuss after you've read the whole passage.

Read Nehemiah 1:1-4 (NASB) Read from a Bible if you have one available

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, 2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. 3 They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire." 4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

Discuss with the children what the verses mean. Nehemiah's brother has just returned from Jerusalem where Ezra and the Jews were rebuilding the temple and he told Nehemiah that it was very hard. They are not safe and the work has stopped. **How did Nehemiah respond to this news?** *He cried, mourned, fasted and prayed for days. As we study the book of Nehemiah we'll learn how God used Nehemiah's tender heart for his people to lead them in ministry that he wasn't trained to do.* **What was his job?** *He was the cup bearer to the king.* **Where do you think he lived?** *With the king. Fancy house.* **What did Nehemiah's brother say Jerusalem was like?** *Wall broken down, gates burned with fire.* Nehemiah chooses to leave the comfort of the King's house to go and help his people in this wild and unprotected land!

It is important to be able to locate books in the Bible! Take some time to learn the names of the first 20 books of the Bible. This will help you find Nehemiah in church!

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms and Proverbs

Coloring Sheet 10 Min

Practice your books of the Bible as you color them!

Closing/Clean Up 5 Min

Clean up and make sure everyone has shoes on, coloring sheets in hand and everything is put back in the room. Praise God for a wonderful group of young people!

The Old Testament Part 1

GENESIS

EXODUS

LEVITICUS

NUMBERS

DEUTERONOMY

JOSHUA

JUDGES

RUTH

1 SAMUEL

2 SAMUEL

1 KINGS

2 KINGS

1 CHRONICLES

2 CHRONICLES

EZRA

NEHEMIAH

ESTHER

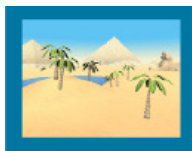
JOB

PSALMS

PROVERBS

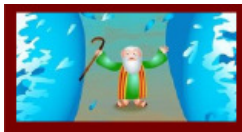
ISRAEL'S JOURNEY HOME

Journey with the Jewish people as they travel through history on their way home to the land God had promised their father, Abraham. Use game pieces or coins for game markers and take turns rolling a dice to move along the path. As you cross the larger pictures take time to stop and read about the journey home.



Start: Egypt

God's people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt. Moses led his people out of Egypt after God sent plagues to the Egyptians and finally Pharaoh let the people go!



Red Sea: God led Moses to part the Red Sea as the Israelites were escaping from the Egyptians. God led his people back to the promised land, but they were afraid of the people there and didn't believe God. They had to wander in the desert for 40 years before God would lead them to the promised land.



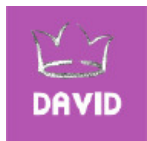
Promised Land: Moses disobeyed God and was not allowed into the promised land. Joshua and Caleb led the people through Jericho and conquered the land. They did not completely get rid of all of the people on the land (like God had told them to do). They began to do what was right in their own eyes and worship other gods.



Give Us A King! The people decided they wanted a king like all of the other nations around them. Their King had always been God, but they wanted a man to be their king. God gave them Saul, a man who looked really good on the outside, and in his pride he thought he was better than everyone else.



Saul did not obey God. He was not building God's kingdom. He was building Saul's kingdom. God said that if Saul wouldn't obey him he couldn't be king anymore.



David as King: God chose David, a man after his own heart to be king. It was 16 years after God told David he'd be king before he was actually the king! He was a wonderful king and loved God with all of his heart. He wanted to build a house for God, but he had fought in so many wars that God would not allow him to.



Solomon was David's son who became king next. He was young when he became king and he asked God for wisdom. He was a very wise man and built the temple of God, God's earthly home. He also did things that were not good. He took many wives and began worshiping other gods. God was not pleased and told Solomon that he would tear the kingdom away from Solomon's son.



There was a fight between the 12 tribes and they split - 10 to the North, called Israel and 2 to the South, called Judea. The Northern kingdom didn't have any good kings. They led all of their people away from God. A great and powerful kingdom called the Assyrians came and destroyed the northern kingdom. The people were taken and scattered never to be united again.



Judea: Judea had the city of Jerusalem and Solomon's temple, but they didn't always do the right thing. There were a few righteous kings, but there were also many wicked kings and God would punish them. He sent many warnings by prophets that they needed to repent (turn from their ways). They didn't listen.



Judea taken captive: God used a wicked nation to punish His people. The Babylonians (modern day Iraq) came and carried all of the Jews off to be slaves in a far away land. They lived in exile (away from home) for 70 years.



Ezra Returns: God had promised to return his people to the land he had promised Abraham so many years before. The Babylonians were conquered by the Persians and King Cyrus decided to allow the exiles to return home. Ezra led a group of Jews home and began to rebuild the temple. It was a really hard job and very dangerous!



Nehemiah Returns: Nehemiah hears of Ezra and his people trying to rebuild the temple but not being safe, so he asks the King to allow him to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall to protect his city and his people.



RED SEA



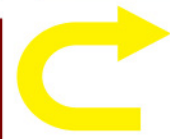
PROMISED LAND



BELIEF



UNBELIEF



ISRAEL'S



**40
YEARS
WANDERING**



JOURNEY



HOME



EGYPT

START

**"EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT
IN HIS OWN EYES" - Judges**



GIVE US A KING



X S A U L


DAVID



SOLOMON

SPLIT

NORTH ISRAEL
10 TRIBES
BAD KINGS

TAKEN CAPTIVE BY BABYLONIANS (IRAQ)

EZRA RETURNS



WARNING!

SOUTH JUDEA
2 TRIBES
FEW GOOD KINGS



NEHEMIAH RETURNS



FINISH BUILDING THE WALL