

# NEHEMIAH

BUILDING  
MINISTRY  
TOGETHER

## Lesson 7: Nehemiah 5:1-19 Building Ministry Through Opposition Part II

### Welcome and Play Time 10 Min

I love the Dallas Cowboys. They've experienced times of great success and then moments that weren't so great. As a fan, I'm okay if they lose because the team they were up against was clearly a better team. The hard losses to watch are the losses where they beat themselves by penalties, turnovers and just not working well together. This is where we find Nehemiah in Jerusalem. His people have overcome so much opposition, you would think that this would bring them together, but as we will see today, some of the more dangerous opposition comes from within.

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: Greedy Grabbers** Nehemiah and the Jews in Jerusalem had been working really hard to rebuild the wall. The problem was that while they were working on this really important thing, they were not able to keep up their farms and make money to feed their families. They were starving! The people who had everything wanted more...even if it meant their fellow Jews would die.



Start with a box full of something easy to grab like small pieces of paper, paper clips, pennies, or even cheerios. Give each person a small bag to gather with. When you say go, kids will race to see how many each person can pick up the fastest. After all of the pieces have been gathered, count to see who has the most. Now make the children who have the fewest give theirs to the children who have the most.

**THINK & DISCUSS:** Is this fair? How did it make you feel to have everything taken away? What would be the kind thing to do? How does sharing show that we love God? (caring for others above ourselves honors God)

**Activity 2: Sin Starts in the Heart** When we care more about things than people, or when we care about ourselves more than other people it is called GREED. Greed is an attitude of the heart. When we are selfish we plant seeds in our heart that grow into big ugly full blown sin. Think of some things we can plant in our hearts that will grow into fruit that glorifies God:

- Contentment (being happy with what we have), humility (having a right view of ourselves), generosity (giving freely), thoughtfulness (thinking about the wellbeing of others)

### 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 directing our steps and using our plans to work in His great plan. Read the Word straight through and then give yourself time to discuss after you've read the whole passage.

### **Read Nehemiah 4:1-16 (NASB) Read from a Bible if you have one available**

1 Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers. 2 For there were those who said, "We, our sons and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain that we may eat and live." 3 There were others who said, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine." 4 Also there were those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our fields and our vineyards. 5" Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage already, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others."

6 Then I was very angry when I had heard their outcry and these words. 7 I consulted with myself and contended with the nobles and the rulers and said to them, "You are exacting usury, each from his brother!" Therefore, I held a great assembly against them.

8 I said to them, "We according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations; now would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us?" Then they were silent and could not find a word to say.

**Discuss with the children what the verses mean.** The people were crying out because they were so hungry. They had been working on the wall for almost two months and they were very sad. **What were some of the bad things that were happening to them?** (*Mortgaging their fields to get food, borrowed money to pay the king's tax, forcing their sons and daughters to be slaves, they are helpless*). **How did Nehemiah respond when he heard of the people's troubles?** (*He was angry*) **What did Nehemiah do with his anger?** (*He consulted with himself, then he brought charges against the rulers*) **Did the rulers listen?** (*no*) He had to bring them in front of a great assembly for them to listen.

### **Let's memorize this week's verse:**

**"Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you." James 4:10**

### **Coloring Sheet** 10 Min

Pass out the memory verse coloring sheets and have children color them. As you color repeat the verse several times to help the words sink in!

### **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!



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PRESENCE OF THE LORD, AND HE  
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JAMES 4:10**