



## The Walls Rebuilt

*Optional: Sing "Be Still and Know" - music is available @ [firstrefchurch.ca](http://firstrefchurch.ca)*

**Pray** *have kids repeat after an adult who leads the prayer*

"Dear Lord, please help us to listen and hear this story. As we learn how Nehemiah helped to rebuild the walls in Jerusalem, may we know that you always help and protect your people."

**Ask** Have you ever had something that you really loved that was broken? Maybe something happened to it that caused it to break. How did it make you feel?

**Say** Today we are going to learn about Nehemiah and how he helped rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. You might be thinking, why do they need to be rebuilt? What happened to them?

Well, Babylon was conquered by the Persians and much of the city of Jerusalem was destroyed. God helped his people to be able to return to their homes (many of them returned to Judah) and the city of Jerusalem was left all broken and sad for 70 years. The city needed to be repaired and restored.

Nehemiah stayed in Persia and he worked as a cupbearer for the King. The King told Nehemiah that he could go to Jerusalem. Let's read today's Bible story to see what happened!

## The **BIBLE** Story

### The Walls Rebuilt

*Nehemiah 1–6*

God's people had lived in Babylon for 70 years. Then King Cyrus, the king of Persia, took over Babylon and let them go home. Some of God's people went home to Judah, but some of them stayed.

**Nehemiah** (NEE huh MIGH uh) stayed and worked for the king of Persia.



One day, some men came from Judah. Nehemiah asked, “How are God’s people doing in Jerusalem?” The men had bad news: “The people are in trouble. The walls around Jerusalem are broken down, and the gates have been burned down.”

Nehemiah cried. Then he prayed and fasted. The king noticed Nehemiah and asked, “What’s wrong? Why are you sad?” Nehemiah was afraid; no one was supposed to be sad around the king. Nehemiah said, “The city where my ancestors are from is in ruins, and the gates of the city have been burned down.”

The king sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem.

Nehemiah inspected the walls and led the people to start rebuilding the walls and gates. The workers put in doors, bolts, and bars. They cut stones and lifted them into place on the wall, and they filled in gaps and holes. All around the city, people worked

side by side. Soon the wall was half as tall as it had once been!

**Not everyone was happy that Jerusalem's walls were being rebuilt. Some men who lived nearby were angry. God's people kept working on the walls, but their enemies made a plan to attack them and stop their work.**

God's people prayed and chose men to guard the walls all day and all night, but the people were discouraged. "Our enemies are everywhere," they said.

**Nehemiah reminded the people that God was with them. "Don't be afraid. God is great and powerful!"**

Nehemiah said. "Be ready. If our enemies attack us, God will fight for us!" Enemies could threaten God's people, but they could not make God's people stop building. Their enemies were not in charge of rebuilding the wall; God was!

**So God's people went back to work. Some stood guard with weapons, and others worked on the wall.**

Some men worked with one hand and held a weapon in the other. They were always ready to fight, just in case.

Nehemiah was a wise and good leader for God's people while they worked. **In just 52 days, the wall was complete!** The gates were repaired, and the wall was restored. When **all of Jerusalem's enemies** heard that the wall had been rebuilt, they **were afraid because they knew God was with His people.**

*Christ Connection: Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem to protect them from their enemies. Jesus came to protect us from our greatest enemy, sin and death. He died on the cross and rose from the dead to rescue everyone who trusts in Him.*

### **Bible Storytelling Tips**

- **Use props:** Display a few simple tools and ask the kids to brainstorm what they could use them to build. Then lead kids to think about what it would take to build a wall around an entire city.
- **Invite participation:** Before you begin, give each kid a sticky note with a key word from the Bible story. Invite kids to place the sticky note on a focal wall when they hear their word.

## LEARN

**Ask** Why do you think that it's important for the city to have walls and a gate around it? We don't have walls around our city! Why do you think they rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem?

**Answer** City walls were important to help protect the people who lived in the city. In Bible times, there could be a fight to win a city, and the walls helped to keep enemies out! It helped make the people who lived in the city feel safe. The gates to the city were a place where the people would often meet each other. City gates were often used a meeting place for buying and selling or meeting their friends and family

**Ask** Do you think God is still protecting us today, even if we don't have walls around our city? How does God keep us safe?

**Say** God is always watching over us from Heaven and taking care of us. Yes, sometimes we get hurt and bad things happen, but God is always there to comfort us. God protects us in ways that we cannot see with our eyes! It's amazing!

**Ask** Who is in control of everything? We know the answer is GOD! Nehemiah helped to rebuild the gates, but God is the one who made sure Nehemiah knew about it and was able to finish the job. The King sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem, but God was working through him to do that too. Isn't God amazing?

**Say** All of these stories fit together in one big timeline! The Jews, God's people, had been taken into exile in Babylon for 70 years and they were allowed to return to their homes. Then, after those 70 years, they went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Some Jews stayed in Persia, including a young girl named Esther who helped persuade the King to not follow Haman's evil plan to destroy all of the Jews living in Persia. Several years later, Nehemiah wanted to know how the Jews

were doing in Jerusalem, and that's where today's story starts! It all fits together as part of God's big plan!

## **Take to Heart**

*As a family, take time to memorize the Key Bible Passage over the next several weeks!  
Take it to heart and notice how God's Word becomes alive in you!*

“For I know the places I have for you,” declares the Lord,  
“plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you  
a hope and a future” — Jeremiah 29:11

## **Pray**

“Dear Father in Heaven, thank you that you are always watching over us and protecting us and keeping us safe. Thank you for fixing things that are broken, even broken people. Thank you for your love and help us live out that love every day. Amen”

# THE GOSPEL

## GOD'S PLAN for US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



**GOD RULES.** Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



**WE SINNED.** Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



**GOD PROVIDED.** Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



**JESUS GIVES.** Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



**WE RESPOND.** Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.

Use "The Gospel God's Plan for Us" to talk in a kid-friendly way with your family about what it means for Jesus to save us from our sins.