

THE GOSPEL PROJECT[®] FOR KIDS

Sunday February 9, 2020

Nehemiah was a Jew living in Persia. He served as the king's cupbearer. When the Persian Empire conquered the Babylonians, King Cyrus allowed God's people to return to Judah. Two or three million Jews had originally been deported, but only a remnant—50,000 people—returned. They set up their homes and rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem.

But when God's people faced opposition in rebuilding the rest of Jerusalem, they stopped. Some 70 years passed, and the walls and gates around the city were still ruined.

City walls and gates were very important in Bible times. Thick walls protected a city from its enemies and provided a sense of safety and security. Gates were the center of city life, the meeting place for commercial and social transactions. Without these structures, the surviving remnant of God's people struggled and was vulnerable to attack.

Nehemiah traveled from Persia to Jerusalem to lead the effort in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. His leadership was effective. Nehemiah 3 describes all the people working together to rebuild the gates and walls. But it wasn't long before Nehemiah met opposition from local governors. God's people armed themselves and kept working. They completed the wall in just 52 days.

Note how their enemies reacted: “All the surrounding nations were intimidated and lost their confidence, for they realized that this task had been accomplished by our God” (Neh. 6:16).

Now God’s people were protected from their enemies. Help your kids see that God provided the way for us to be protected from our enemies, sin and death: He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. When we repent and trust in Jesus, He frees us from sin and death. We still sin, but we are no longer slaves to sin. (See Rom. 6:17-18.) We may die a physical death as a result of sin, but we have eternal life. (See John 11:25-26; Rom. 6:23.)

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.

Check this session’s Activity Page as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

Preschool

- Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.
- Nehemiah led God’s people to rebuild the walls.

K-4th Grade Kids

- Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.
- God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

1 Peter 5:10

NEXT WEEK

“God’s People Repented” (Nehemiah 8–13)