

BIG IDEA:	God's wants us to work together to build His kingdom.
BIBLE BASIS:	Book of Nehemiah
KEY VERSE:	"Two people are better than one. They can help each other in everything they do." Ecclesiastes 4:9 (NirV)

THE BIG BIBLE STORY- NEHEMIAH REBUILDS THE WALL

Watch the Preschool video: <https://youtu.be/IlXqTBlys7s>

Watch the Elementary video: <https://youtu.be/HdDvqWtVkro>

After the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, all of the Israelite people were taken away to foreign lands. One of those people was a man named Nehemiah. One day, Nehemiah was talking to his friends. His friends told him that a bunch of Israelites had moved back to Jerusalem, but they were having a hard time because the city walls were still broken down. Nowadays, most cities don't have walls. Back then, if you didn't have a city wall, your enemies or wild animals could just walk right in and attack people. It was also kind of embarrassing, because it meant that your city had been defeated. When Nehemiah heard the news, he felt incredibly sad for his people. So he sat down and wept and prayed to God for help.

When he finished praying, Nehemiah went to the king with a big request. "Oh great and mighty king. If it pleases you, may I return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall? Oh and one more thing, could you give me protection during my travels? Oh and one more thing, could you give me materials to help rebuild the wall? Oh and one more thing, could you help me build a house to live in? Oh and one more thing, actually— never mind. That was all." Nehemiah waited nervously for the king to answer. If the king said "no," there was nothing Nehemiah could do to help. But God was kind to Nehemiah and persuaded the king to say "yes!"

When Nehemiah got to Jerusalem and saw the wall, he knew he couldn't fix it alone. So he gathered all of the people of the city together and said, "Come on. Let's rebuild this wall!" And that's exactly what they did. The people gave money to help rebuild the wall. The people gave supplies like wood and stone to help rebuild the wall. And when they had enough money and supplies, the people rolled up their sleeves and started building.

When their enemies heard that the wall was being rebuilt, they weren't too happy and came up with a plan to attack. But Nehemiah heard about it and came up with his own plan. He had half of the people work all night and day. Finally, after working and guarding for only 52 days, the entire wall was rebuilt.

When the wall was finished, a priest named Ezra gathered all of the people together. (*Parents, read Nehemiah 8:5-6.*) "Ezra opened the book. All the people could see him. That's because he was standing above them. As he opened the book, the people stood up. Ezra praised the Lord. He is the great God. All the people lifted up their hands and said, 'Amen! Amen!' Then they bowed down. They turned their faces toward the ground and worshiped the Lord." Then, the people celebrated, prayed and confessed their sins together. For more than 150 years, the people of Israel were forced to live in a foreign land. But now, finally, the peoples' hearts had returned to God and because of that, God returned them to the Promised Land.

BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS

For Preschoolers:

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How do you think the story would have turned out differently if no one helped Nehemiah??
- How was God the hero of this story?

For Elementary:

- What was your favorite part of this story?
- How did Nehemiah go about solving the problem of the story?
- How do you think the story would have turned out differently if no one helped Nehemiah?
- How does this story inspire you to help others around you?

BIG BIBLE STORY ACTIVITIES

Prayer Station prompt: Write a prayer to God and tell Him how much you love Him.

Journal Station prompt: Have you ever worked together with other people to do something helpful or kind? Write a letter to God and tell Him about it.

Bible Station prompt: Read it for yourself: Nehemiah 4. Draw a picture of the story or write to God your favorite part of the story. Tell Him why you like it.

Art Station prompt: Ezra helped the people of Jerusalem worship God together. We can do that too! Draw a picture of yourself singing and worshipping God with your friends.