

LESSON 7: GOD IS FAITHFUL TO NEHEMIAH

Leader Guide for Grades 1 & 2

Classroom: Greenhouse Kids

 Nehemiah 1–2

01/19/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Nehemiah 1–2
- In This Passage: Nehemiah is in exile in another country when he hears that the wall around Jerusalem is in ruins. He is devastated and cries out to God for help. God is faithful to provide Nehemiah with all the supplies, protection, and courage he needs to rebuild the wall. Nehemiah is faithful to do what God has called him to do.
- Bible Point: God is faithful...
- Application: ...so we're faithful.
- Summary Verse: "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?" (Isaiah 43:19).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is faithful*. A lot of kids are still learning what it means to be faithful to God. (Aren't we all?) They may compartmentalize God to the part of their lives when they're at church. Help kids see that God is faithful to them all through their week, in all they do, and he wants them to be faithful to him in return.
- Think About: Look back over the past year. How have you seen God's faithfulness to you? Make a list.

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that kids' hearts would be faithfully devoted to God as a response to seeing his faithfulness to them.

Quick Tip

- Set an example of faithfulness in your classroom. Faithfulness means sticking with people and standing up for them, so make sure kids know to be faithful to one another. This may include avoiding put-downs, keeping confidential things confidential, and looking out for someone who seems lonely or sad.

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids serve the king, carry letters and logs, inspect a broken-down city, and rebuild a wall.

Supplies

- Bible
- Legos (at least 1 per child, plus at least 15 more)
- sheets of paper
- small cups of water (1 per child)

Easy Prep

- Use 15 Legos to make a small-scale wall of Jerusalem, and make it look broken-down. Place this wall at an end of your room. Place at least 1 Lego per child in a different area of the room.
- Roll 1 sheet of paper per child, and tape it closed like a scroll so each child has a “letter” to carry.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids build with Legos.

Supplies

- large variety of Legos (roughly 10 blocks per child)*
- boxes or containers (1 for every 30 Legos)
- timer
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Count roughly 30 Legos into each box or container, and spread out the containers around the room.



CRAFT

Kids make a “sticky” game.

Supplies

- 9x12-inch craft foam sheets (1 for every 2 children)
- elastic (10-inch length per child)
- pens
- strips of adhesive-backed Velcro (about 2 per child)
- thick ribbon (4½-inch length per child)
- craft sticks (2 per child)
- duct tape
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Cut the sheets of craft foam into quarters.
- For each child, staple the ends of a length of elastic to separate pieces of craft foam.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids play a game where they change actions.

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids stick Legos together and pray as they hear how God sticks with them.

Supplies

- Legos (4 per child)*



OBJECT LESSON

Kids try to separate oil and water.

Supplies

- vegetable oil
- water
- 16-ounce (approximately) empty soda or orange juice bottles with lids (1 for every 5-6 kids)

Easy Prep

- Fill bottles so they are about half full of water. Then add an inch or 2 of vegetable oil on top of the water. Close lids tightly.

**Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



OPENING

Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids pat the people next to them on the back.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “appy-hay irthday-bay” (“happy birthday” in pig Latin).
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’ll find out what it means that God is faithful, and we’ll learn to be faithful to God, too. *Faithful* means God sticks with us and we stick with him. God loves being with us, and we can always trust him to be there for us. Today we’ll read in the Bible about God’s friend, Nehemiah, who was faithful to God. We’ll hear how Nehemiah gathered supplies to build a special wall to show he loved God and God’s people. Let’s talk about us gathering supplies, too, but we’ll talk about gathering things to make an ice cream sundae.**

Share

- Share what things *you’d* gather to make an ice cream sundae. You can include any ingredients you’d want.
- In small groups, have kids share what things *they’d* gather to make an ice cream sundae.
- After small groups have discussed, have a few kids share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **We sure would have to gather a lot of ingredients to make those yummy sundaes! Today we’ll read in the Bible how Nehemiah gathered supplies to do something else because he wanted to be faithful to God. Nehemiah knew how faithful God was to him and how faithful God is to all of us. When we’re friends with God and we see how faithful God is to us, we want to be faithful to him, too.**

Pray, thanking God for his faithfulness.



Supplies

- Bible
- Legos (at least 1 per child, plus at least 15 more)
- sheets of paper
- small cups of water (1 per child)

Easy Prep

- Use 15 Legos to make a small-scale wall of Jerusalem, and make it look broken-down. Place this wall at an end of your room. Place at least 1 Lego per child in a different area of the room.
- Roll 1 sheet of paper per child, and tape it closed like a scroll so each child has a “letter” to carry.

Ask the King

Say: **Today we'll find out that God is faithful. That means he loves us and we can always trust him to keep his promises.** Show the Bible. **The Bible tells all about how God was faithful to the people a long time ago and how he's faithful to us, too. Today we'll read how God was faithful to his friends, the Israelites. He loved them very much, and he had promised to take care of them. We'll find that out through a man named Nehemiah.**

Even though Nehemiah was an Israelite, he didn't live in the same town as the Israelites did. He worked for a king in a different town. Nehemiah's job was to make sure the king's food and drinks were safe to eat and drink.

Give each child a small cup of water. Say: **Let's try this water to make sure it tastes okay—that's kind of like what Nehemiah did.** Let kids drink the water, and invite their observations.

Say: **One day Nehemiah's brother came to visit him from Judah, where most of the Israelites lived. Nehemiah's brother shared that the Israelites weren't doing well. The wall surrounding their city had been broken down. This made Nehemiah very sad.**

Share about a time *you* felt discouraged. You might share about a time you had hoped to get a job but didn't get it. Or maybe you were trying really hard to learn something, but you didn't feel like you were understanding it.

Ask: • **Tell about a time *you* felt sad.** Kids might share that they were sad when they didn't get to play with a friend, when a relative moved away, or when someone said something mean to them.

Say: **Nehemiah was sad that the Israelites weren't doing well, so he prayed for them. We can talk to God about the things that make us sad, too.** Lead kids in a short prayer.

Say: **After Nehemiah heard the bad news, the king noticed how sad Nehemiah was. The king asked Nehemiah, “What's wrong? You're not usually sad.” Nehemiah didn't know if the king would care about the Israelites, but he told the king why he was sad anyway. Thankfully, the king did care! He even asked what he could do to help.**

Share about a time *you* asked someone how you could help him or her. Maybe you helped around the house for a neighbor who broke his or her leg, or maybe you helped someone carry groceries at the store.

Ask: • **Tell about someone *you* like to help.** Kids might share about helping with baby siblings or helping other kids learn new things they've already learned.

Travel With the King's Help

Say: **Nehemiah got a lot of help from the king. Nehemiah asked if he could go to Judah to help rebuild their wall. He also asked if the king would write letters to other kings so Nehemiah could travel home safely. And he asked the king to write a letter, asking *another* king for logs to build with. Well, the king agreed! He even sent some extra horses and men to keep Nehemiah safe!**

Give each child a “letter” you prepared ahead of time, and explain that kids will be able to travel through the land safely with the letters, like Nehemiah did. Lead them to where you placed the loose Legos. Say: **Let's leave our letters here so we can get some logs. Remember, the king asked another king to give Nehemiah some logs.** Exchange each child's letter for a Lego.

Continue leading kids to the broken-down Lego wall.

Inspect the Wall

Say: **When Nehemiah arrived in Judah, he took some leaders to inspect the walls. Let's look at this broken-down wall. What's wrong with it? What do we need to do to fix it?** Lead kids in noticing how short the wall is and that many of the pieces aren't connected. Invite them to share any thoughts they have about the broken-down wall.

Say: **The people were very excited to rebuild the wall! God had promised that they would have a safe city, and now they had the supplies to rebuild their wall. God was with them all along, and he's the one who made sure things worked out for them. God is faithful. We can always trust God to keep his promises. Let's cheer for God before we rebuild this wall!** Lead the children in a cheer.

Build the Wall

Say: **Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the wall, but Nehemiah did it with God's help. God is faithful and kept his promise to take care of the Israelites. God is faithful to us, too. Let's rebuild our Lego wall as we talk about ways God is faithful to us.** Share each of the following ways God is faithful to kids, and have about a fourth of the kids add a Lego to the wall for each of the ways (so all kids' Legos will be added by the end).

- God promises to take care of you. He gives you family to make sure you have a place to live, food to eat, and clothes to wear.
- God promises to forgive us. Whenever we do something wrong, we can say sorry to God and he'll forgive us.
- God promises he loves us. He shows his love by giving us family and friends who show us love.
- God promises that when we're friends with Jesus, we can live forever in heaven.

Say: **God is always faithful. There is never a time God won't keep his promises to us. God *always* sticks with us.** Show kids how the Legos stick together, and explain that God's like that. **God will stick with us by taking care of us, giving us love, and forgiving us.**

And when we're friends with God, he shows us how to be faithful to him. We can show him our love by talking to God and doing what God says is best. We can stick with him, like he sticks with us. Being faithful to God means we're good friends with him and we trust him to be faithful to us, too.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Don't Lego

Supplies

- large variety of Legos (roughly 10 blocks per child)*
- boxes or containers (1 for every 30 Legos)
- timer
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Count roughly 30 Legos into each box or container, and spread out the containers around the room.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the album [here](#).

Build With Legos

Say: **In our Bible story, Nehemiah talked to God about rebuilding a wall in God's special city. God heard Nehemiah and made a way for Nehemiah to go to the city to start planning how the wall would be built again. Let's play a fun game where you'll make a plan with some friends of what you'll build with Legos and then you'll build it!**

- Form groups of three.
- Have each group go to a container of Legos.
- Give kids a few minutes to look through the Legos and talk about what they could build. If needed, help groups decide what to build.
- Then tell kids they have three minutes to build their creation—they'll have to work together quickly!
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids build.
- Call out "Time's up!" after three minutes, and allow the groups to show each other what they made.

Talk About It

Say: **Legos are great building blocks because they connect and stick together. We help each other when we stick together, too, like you did in your groups. You worked together, you stuck together, and that helped you be a great team!**

Share about a few people in your life who you know will be there for you if you need them, and who you'd do the same for—people who are faithful to you and why that makes you faithful to them.

Ask: • **Who are other people you like to stick together with—maybe a best friend?** Kids may share about family members, friends, care providers, or even pets.

Say: **God is our good friend, and he's faithful. God showed he's faithful to Nehemiah, and God will stick with us, too. God shows us what it means to be faithful so we can be faithful to him and to our friends and family.**



CRAFT

Sticky Hands

[20 min]

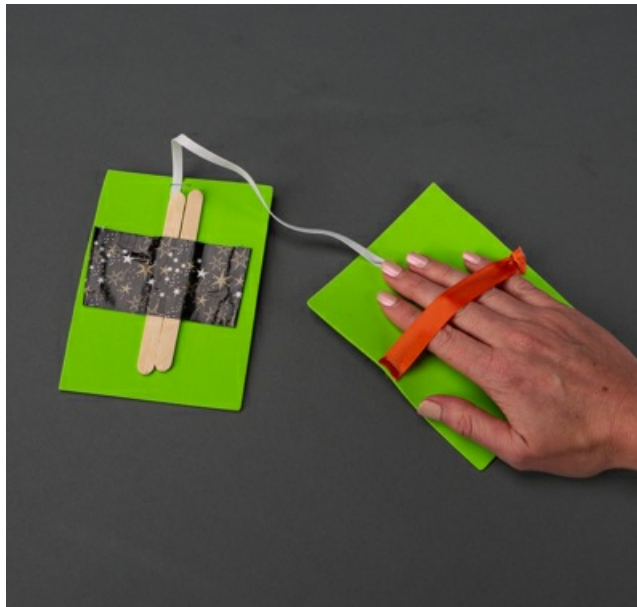
Supplies

- 9x12-inch craft foam sheets (1 for every 2 children)
- elastic (10-inch length per child)
- pens
- strips of adhesive-backed Velcro (about 2 per child)
- thick ribbon (4½-inch length per child)
- craft sticks (2 per child)
- duct tape
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Cut the sheets of craft foam into quarters.
- For each child, staple the ends of a length of elastic to separate pieces of craft foam.
- Make a sample craft to show kids.





Make a Craft

Say: **God is faithful**. That means no matter what good things or bad things we do, God always sticks with us and loves us. Let's make a craft to remind us that God sticks with us. Show kids the sample craft.

- Give each child two sheets of craft foam connected by elastic.
- Help kids get into pairs, and give each pair a pen.
- Show kids how to trace each other's hands onto the foam sheets. One child will lay a hand with fingers spread apart on the foam, and his or her partner will trace the hand with a pen.
- Have kids trace a hand on both sheets of foam.
- Once pairs have finished tracing each other's hands, help kids stick Velcro strips to each handprint.
- Have kids turn over both of their foam sheets to the blank sides.
- Have each child tape two craft sticks onto the blank side of one sheet of foam. The weight will make it easier for kids to "catch" the second handprint when they play the game.
- On the blank side of the second piece of foam, create a handle by stapling a length of ribbon to both longer edges of the foam.

Play With the Craft

Show kids how to slide a hand under the ribbon handle and toss the second piece of foam using the elastic to try to stick the two handprints together.

Let kids play for several minutes.

Say: **Like your two handprints stick together, God sticks with us. God is faithful, and he will never stop loving us.**



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

One Thing Stays the Same

[10 min]

Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Move Around the Room in Different Ways

Say: **In today's Bible story, Nehemiah's life changed a lot when he left his job serving the king to travel to Judah. But there was *one* thing that stayed the same: God was with Nehemiah. No matter where Nehemiah went, God stuck with him! Let's play a game and see if you can figure out the one thing that stays the same.**

- Have kids spread out in a big circle around the perimeter of the room.
- Explain that you'll call out a way for kids to move around the room and what direction they'll go. They'll have to listen carefully when you change things.
- Call out the following motions (or any others you think of), changing the motions at varied intervals.
 - Show the kids what direction you want them to go for the first round while hopping on both feet like a rabbit.
 - Going in the same direction, skip with big jumps.
 - Going in the opposite direction, tiptoe quickly.
 - Going back to the original direction, leap like frogs.
 - Going in the opposite direction, take big sideways steps.
 - Going in the same direction, hop on one leg.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.
- After the last motion, gather everyone to sit near you.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What changed in our game?**

Say: **Even though there were a lot of changes in the game, one thing stayed the same: All of you were there the whole time! That's like our Bible story today. Even though a lot of things changed in Nehemiah's life, God was with him the whole time. Our lives can be full of changes, too.**

Share an example of a change you've experienced in your life lately, such as starting a new job or getting a new pet.

Ask: • **What's a change you've had in your life?** Kids may need a little help getting started, so you can ask if they've outgrown a favorite pair of shoes; have a new baby brother or sister; or have started learning numbers, colors, or letters.

Say: **When things changed in Nehemiah's life, God didn't. God was *always* with Nehemiah because God is faithful. God will always stick with us, too, even when our lives change. We can be faithful like God and stick with our friends and families when things change.**



Supplies

- Legos (4 per child)*

Stick Legos Together

Give each child one Lego. Say: **Today we learned that God is faithful. That means he sticks with us. We never have to worry about God leaving us because God is faithful.**

Give each child a second Lego, and say: **God loves us so much, and his love never stops! God sticks with us.** Have kids stick their Legos together. **Let's thank God for loving us no matter what.** Lead kids in a brief prayer.

Give each child a third Lego, and say: **God takes care of us. He wants the very best for you and for me. He gives us what we need—he sticks with us!** Have kids stick the third Lego to the other two. **Let's thank God for taking care of us no matter what.** Lead kids in a brief prayer.

Give each child a fourth Lego, and say: **God is with us all the time. He *never* leaves us, even if we do something wrong. God doesn't want us to make wrong choices because he knows they're not best for us, but he won't leave us when we do. God sticks with us, and he helps us make good choices the next time.** Have kids stick the fourth Lego to the other three. **Let's ask God to help us make good choices and thank him for helping us when we do make a wrong choice.** Lead kids in a brief prayer.

Ask God for Help

Hold up four Legos stuck together. Say: **God is so faithful. He loves us no matter what, he takes care of us no matter what, and he's with us no matter what. He sure is good to us! Let's ask God to help us be faithful to him, too! We want to stick with God because he's always on our side.**

Have kids hold their Legos as you pray briefly.

Tell kids you're glad you could learn about God's faithfulness with them today. Ask them to come back next week to learn more about how God sticks with us.



OBJECT LESSON

Faithfulness Flip

[10 min]

Supplies

- vegetable oil
- water
- 16-ounce (approximately) empty soda or orange juice bottles with lids (1 for every 5-6 kids)

Easy Prep

- Fill bottles so they are about half full of water. Then add an inch or 2 of vegetable oil on top of the water. Close lids tightly.

Shake the Bottles

Say: **Look at these bottles.** Point to show kids the water and the oil. **There is clear water at the bottom and yellow oil at the top. Let's see if we can shake things up and make the oil stay at the bottom and the water stay on top.**

- Form groups of five or six kids, and assign an adult or teen helper to each group. Give each group a bottle.
- Count down from five as one child shakes or turns the bottle over.
- Set the bottle on the floor or table.
- Invite kids to watch the oil separate from the water and go to the top again.
- Give the bottle to another child to try. Continue having kids pass and shake the bottle until each child has had a turn to try to flip the oil and water in the bottle.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What always happened to the yellow oil? Why do you think that happened?** Invite kids' responses and ideas.

Say: **No matter how many times we shook or flipped the bottle, the yellow oil faithfully went back to the top. When we're faithful, we always do the same thing. We're faithful to our pets when we remember to give them food and water every day. And we're faithful to our friends when we always make time to listen to and play with them. We can be faithful to others because God is faithful to us. No matter what, he always loves us and helps us.**