



Grades 4–5 • Unit 12 • Lesson 117

Nehemiah Governs Jerusalem

Nehemiah 5:1–5, 5:9–12, 6:12–14, 8:8–10

Nehemiah faced many problems as the governor of Jerusalem. Follow the paths to match each problem to Nehemiah's response then write the letter in the box.

Problems

1. Shemaiah said Nehemiah should hide in the temple from an attack.
2. Sanballat and Geshem sent messages for Nehemiah to meet with them.
3. Sanballat threatened to tell the king of Persia that the Jews were rebelling and Nehemiah wanted to be king of Judah.
4. Jewish nobles and officials took houses, land, food, and money from their own people, forcing some to sell their children into slavery.
5. The Jews did not know the law of God.



Nehemiah's Response

- A. "Shouldn't you fear the Lord? Return the things you have taken."
- B. "I will gather the people so Ezra can read the law of God to them."
- C. "These things are not true. You are making them up."
- D. "I cannot come down or the work will stop."
- E. "Should I run away? I will not go in."

Name _____

Memory Verse

Some of the vowels (A, E, I, O, U) are missing from the memory verse! Fill in the correct vowels (using the code) then practice saying the verse.

▣ ▾ ▣ ▣ ▸
A, E, I, O, U

I will rest__re the fortun__s of
Jud__h and the fort__nes of Israel,
and rebu__ld them as they w__re
at first. __ will cleanse th__m
from all the g__ilt of their sin
ag__inst me, and I will f__rgive all
the guilt __f their s__n and
rebell__on ag__inst m__.
Jerem__ah 33:7–8

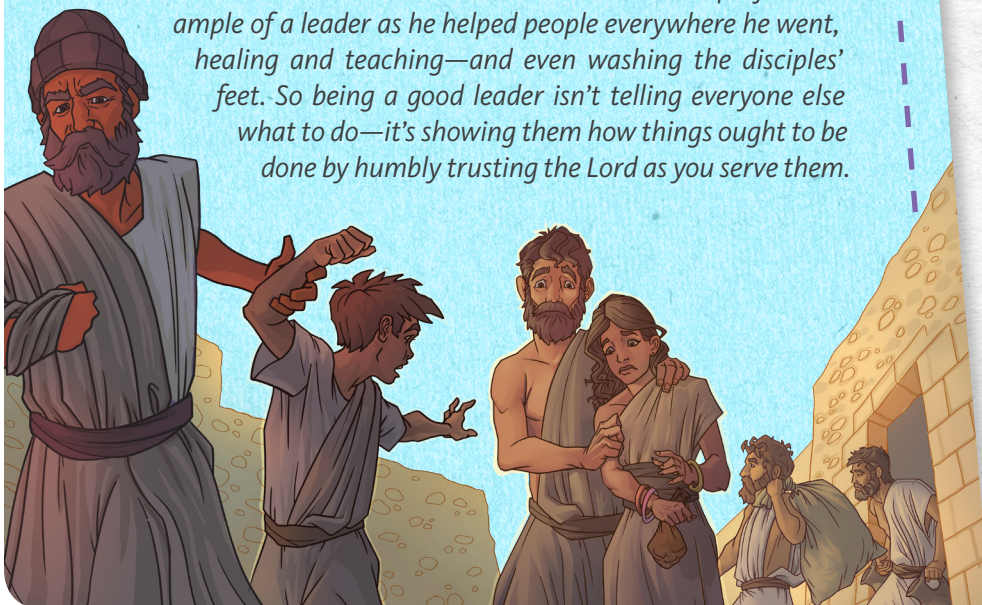
What You Heard *In the Word*

- God protected Nehemiah from the traps and threats of his enemies.
- Nehemiah showed the Jewish nobles and officials how they were sinning against their own people. He organized a reading of the law of God for all the people, who responded with true repentance.

OutWord *For Family Discussion*

Suppose your friend says he wants to be a leader so he can tell everyone what to do. **What could you say?**

That's good you want to lead others. The Bible has lots of examples of people God called to lead. But the best leaders were the ones who humbly trusted in God to help them serve. Gideon was afraid at first, but as he learned to trust God, the Lord used him to deliver the Israelites from an enormous army. Nehemiah knew that rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem would be a huge task, but he trusted God to help him complete the project and to govern the people wisely. Jesus said that leaders should be servants. He was a perfect example of a leader as he helped people everywhere he went, healing and teaching—and even washing the disciples' feet. So being a good leader isn't telling everyone else what to do—it's showing them how things ought to be done by humbly trusting the Lord as you serve them.



HomeWord *For Parents*

In our last lesson, we learned about Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem under King Artaxerxes. Nehemiah succeeded in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem under the guiding hand of God, and he continued as the governor over Jerusalem and the surrounding area for 12 years until he returned to Persia in 442 BC (Nehemiah 13:6). During Nehemiah's time as governor, he faced many attempts to hinder his work and discredit his leadership. He turned down numerous plots where his enemies sought to harm him and stop the rebuilding. When those traps failed, his enemies used a Jewish prophet named Shemaiah to try to lure Nehemiah to shut himself in the temple and hide from attackers. But Nehemiah saw through the plot and refused to break God's laws by entering an area of the temple where he was not permitted to go (Nehemiah 6:1-14). He prayed for protection and did not give in to fear.

Nehemiah also stopped the oppression of the poor by gathering the Jewish nobles and officials who were charging interest, taking money and food, and forcing their own people into slavery. At Nehemiah's rebuke, the officials promised to return what they'd taken from their people (Nehemiah 5:1-12). After the walls were finished, Nehemiah gathered the people and had Ezra the priest read the law of God. The Levites explained what was read so the people understood, and the people wept over their sin (Nehemiah 8:1-9).

Nehemiah is a great example of a leader who sought to protect, serve, and teach his people. But Jesus is the greatest example of a servant leader. Jesus put other people's needs before his own and even washed his disciples' feet! When his disciples were arguing about who was the greatest, Jesus told them that the leader should be the one who serves (Luke 22:25-26).



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