

Church at Home Pack – 12th September 2021

Join us in church for our 10:30am service on Sunday or watch live at home on

<https://ccwsm.org.uk/service-type/sunday-service-online/>

If you like, join in with the discussion on Facebook with our church family (@ccwsm)!

In some sections we make several suggestions of ideas. Some may be more appropriate to you or the different people in your family or life group than others. We're not expecting you to do all of them (although you are very welcome to!) Choose the ones which best suit you.

Our verse for the year is the same as last year's verse as we think about the difference being with Jesus makes to our lives

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13

GATHER TOGETHER

A prayer to start –

Father God,
As we gather together at the start of our journey through the book of Nehemiah. Open our hearts and minds to what you have to say to us.
Help us to use what we learn to live lives that bring you glory.

Amen



Action reminder –

From the top of my head
(Touch head)
to the tips of my toes;
(Touch toes)
from the lobes of my ears
(Touch ear lobes)
to the end of my nose;
(Touch nose)
from my back, to my front
(Turn round)
to my wiggly fingers,
(stretch out arms and wiggle fingers)
God loves me!
(jump up and down)



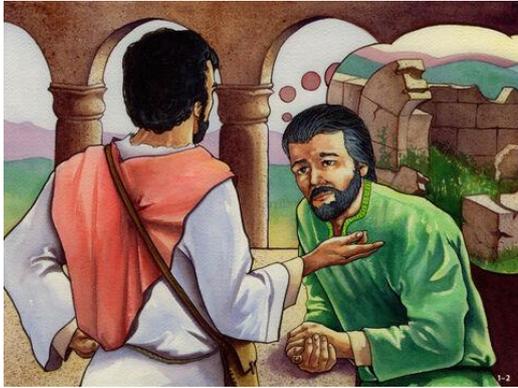
READ TOGETHER

Nehemiah 1: 1-11



International Children's Bible (ICB)

1 These are the words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah.



I, Nehemiah, was in the capital city of Susa. It was in the month of Kislev. This was in the twentieth year. ² One of my brothers named Hanani came from Judah. Some other men were with him. I asked them about the Jews who lived through the captivity. And I also asked about Jerusalem.

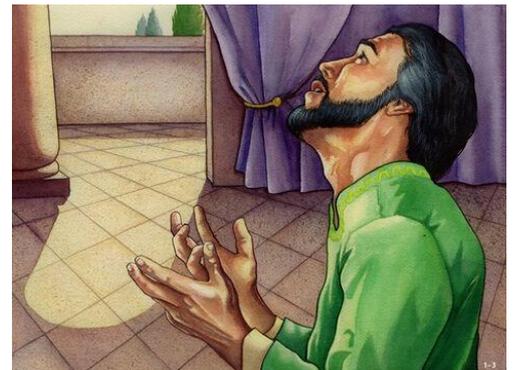
³ They answered, "Nehemiah, those who are left from the captivity are back in the area of Judah. But they are in much trouble and are full of shame. The wall around Jerusalem is broken down. And its gates have been burned."

⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and cried for several days. I was sad and did not eat food. I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ I said, "Lord, God of heaven, you are the great God who is to be respected. You keep your agreement of love with those who love you and obey your commands. ⁶ Listen carefully. Look at me. Hear the prayer your servant is praying to you day and night. I am praying for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites have done against you. My father's family and I have sinned against you. ⁷ We have been wicked toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, rules and laws you gave your servant Moses.

⁸ "Remember what you taught your servant Moses. You said, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations. ⁹ But if you come back to me and obey my commands, I will gather your people. I will gather them from the far ends of the earth. And I will bring them from captivity to where I have chosen to be worshiped.'

¹⁰ "They are your servants and your people. You have saved them with your great strength and power. ¹¹ Lord, listen carefully to my prayer. I am your servant. And listen to the prayers of your servants who love to honour you. Give me, your servant, success today. Allow this king to show kindness to me."

I was the one who served wine to the king.



New International Version (NIV)

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

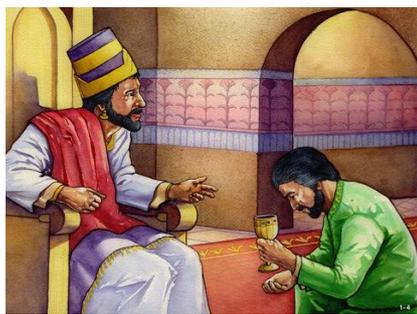
In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

³ They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

⁴When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ⁵Then I said:

“LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s family, have committed against you. ⁷We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

⁸“Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, ⁹but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.’



¹⁰“They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. ¹¹Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man.”

I was cupbearer to the king.

WATCH TOGETHER

As we begin this series on Nehemiah, you might find it useful to watch one of these videos as they give a short overview of the whole book.



Nehemiah rebuilds the wall – Bible Trek <https://youtu.be/4JcsnksdlRY>



Nehemiah rebuilds Jerusalem's wall – Life Kids <https://youtu.be/JlXqTBIys7s>



God's Story – Nehemiah – Crossroads Kids Club
<https://youtu.be/HdDvqWtVkro>

TALK TOGETHER

- When you have a problem or are overwhelmed by sadness for a situation, how do you react?

STUDY TOGETHER

The book of Nehemiah records the history of the third return to Jerusalem after captivity, telling how the walls were rebuilt and the people were renewed in their faith.

– Read Nehemiah 1: 1-11

- How did Nehemiah, who was living in Persia, learn about the condition of the exiles and the state of walls surrounding Jerusalem?
- What was Nehemiah's first response to the news?
- Why was Nehemiah so concerned about the state of the walls?
- Nehemiah's Prayer v 5 – 11 is a passionate plea to God about a situation that is deeply troubling him. He begins with praise and recognition that God keeps his promises. Why do you think he begins in this way?
- Nehemiah then turns to repentance and confesses not only his sins but those of the whole people of Israel before he makes his requests. Why do you think he does this?
- What does Nehemiah's prayer tell you about his view of himself and of God?
- What can we learn from Nehemiah's attitude to facing a difficult situation?



Tom gave us a challenge to think about: When we hear disappointing news or face difficulties, do we have the humility to bring them to God and the courage to act on any opportunities that he might provide?

PLAY TOGETHER

The Bible reading starts with broken walls.

Just for fun and as a reminder of what caused Nehemiah to feel so sad and cry out to God, why not have a go at this game:

Jenga Walls



Depending on how many people you play this with, you can build walls individually or in teams. Each individual or team needs their own space in the room.

Put an equal number of Jenga blocks or wooden bricks in each building space.

Each space should also have an equal number of scrunched up paper balls.

Set a timer for a minute (longer if you wish). Then each individual/team races to build the tallest wall whilst at the same time throwing their paper balls at the other walls in the room. Players must stay in their spaces and not cross into another space to throw the balls.

At the end of the time, the team with the tallest wall still standing – wins!

MAKE TOGETHER

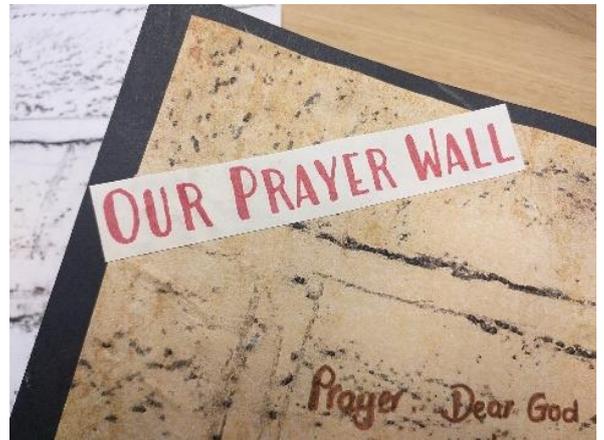
Prayer wall



Find a brick wall. Using a piece of paper and the side of a wax crayon make a 'rubbing' of the wall. You can use more than one piece of paper and join them together to make a bigger 'wall' if you like. Give it a title like 'Our Prayer Wall' and write/draw your prayers on it!

Put it up somewhere where you will see it and use it regularly. Keeping some pens or pencils close by!

See the **Do Together** section for an idea on how to use it.



SING TOGETHER

Pray at all times – Nicky and Becky Drake, Worship for everyone: https://youtu.be/E2ZEj_y_BgE

Sanctus – Jools Holland: <https://youtu.be/l1zatd2d3MI>

This is a version of a Kyrie Eleison (Lord/Christ have mercy) which was performed in Wells Cathedral with the Wells and Rochester Cathedral Choirs.

Repentance – Margaret Becker, Joanne Hogg and Kristyn Getty: <https://youtu.be/BOQxOyPj1k>

O God, forgive us – for King and Country: <https://youtu.be/tz4toSf-xQU>

You forgive me – Lifetree Kids: <https://youtu.be/LO-2fm7IKcU>

I'm gonna live so God can use me – Cedarmonk Kids: <https://youtu.be/KCVBKjuouKs>

REFLECT TOGETHER

Why is prayer so important?

Prayer makes us wait:

We cannot pray and act at the same time. We have to wait to act until we finish praying. Prayer forces us to leave the situation with God; it makes us wait.

Prayer clears our vision:

Southern California often has an overhanging weather problem in the mornings because of its coastal location until the sun ‘burns through’ the morning fog. Prayer does that. When you first face a situation, is it foggy? Prayer will ‘burn through’. Your vision will clear so you can see through God’s eyes.

Prayer quiets our heart:

We cannot worry and pray at the same time. We are doing one or the other. Prayer makes us quiet. It replaces anxiety with a calm spirit. Knees don’t knock when we kneel on them!

Prayer activates our faith:

After praying, we are more prone to trust God. And how negative and critical we can be when we don’t pray! Prayer sets faith on fire!

The Lord is the specialist we need for those uncrossable and impossible experiences. But he awaits our cry. He listens for our requests. Nehemiah was quick to call for help.

(Taken from Max Lucado’s Life Lessons from Nehemiah)



PRAY TOGETHER

The Problem and The Prayer

When Nehemiah heard the news that made him so sad, he prayed. He gave the problem to God. God heard and answered his prayers. The Bible tells us we should pray about everything, in all situations.

Philippians 4:6-7

Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the middle. Write ‘The Problem’ at the top of the left-hand side and ‘The Prayer’ at the top of the right-hand side. Think about any difficulties, problems or sad situations that you want to ask God for help with. Write or draw them in ‘The Problem’ column. Now write a prayer asking God for help in ‘The Prayer’ column. If you are doing this with younger children, talk about the problem they want help with and help them to write a prayer. Read it together.

The Problem	The Prayer

Take time to stop, think and offer a problem to God in prayer. God will provide the **best** way forward, if we ask him.

A Personal Prayer

Father God,

I so often worry and complain about my problems.

I struggle to solve things on my own instead of depending on you.

Forgive me, Father, for living as though I don't need you.

Teach me to turn to you first, to face every challenge in your strength, and to give you praise for what you accomplish through me.

Amen

DO TOGETHER

Prayer and Action

When we hear disappointing news or face difficulties we have two choices. We can complain, sulk, maybe feel helpless or even blame God. Or we can choose to believe that God is in control, put the problem in his hands and trust him. Nehemiah chose the second option. Not only did he pray but he became an active part of doing God's will. He prayed and then acted.

This week, when you find yourself facing problems, disappointments, or weighed down by sadness for a difficult situation – pray. Ask God for help but be prepared that he may say, 'Here's how you can be the answer.' Then be prepared to act.



You might like to use the ***Prayer Wall*** in the ***Make Together*** section to record your prayers and the actions that God may ask you to take.

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Action Reminder taken from

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The Problem and The Prayer idea taken and adapted from Urban Saints Energize (www.energize.uk.net)

A Personal Prayer taken and adapted from Max Lucado's Life Lessons from Nehemiah