

K-3rd

Large Group

November — Week 5

# Large Group Leader Guide

## Today's Suggested Schedule

### Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

### Small Group (10 minutes)

#### Social: Providing time for fun interaction

##### 1. Opening Activity

### Large Group (30 minutes)

#### Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

#### Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

### Small Group (15 minutes)

#### Groups: Creating a safe place to connect 1. Bible Story

### Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Parent Cue Card (Print or Email)
- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue App and ParentCue.org

THIS MONTH



### Today's Bible Story

## Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1-4, 6:1-15

### Bottom Line

**God can help you do big things.**

### Memory Verse

**"Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak."**

Isaiah 40:31 (NirV)



### Inclusive Pro Tips

Loud sounds, bright lights, and large groups can be overwhelming or overstimulating for some children. To create a more inclusive large group experience, consider offering adaptive tools like noise-canceling headphones, sunglasses, sensory-friendly items, or access to modified spaces.

5 MINUTES

# Opener

10 MINUTES

# Worship

20 MINUTES

# Story

## ① Opener

AUDIO → Play high-energy music as kids enter.  
SLIDE → Theme  
Optional Video → Theme Loop

→ Host enters.

Optional Video → Countdown  
Optional Video → Theme Intro  
Optional Video → Theme Loop

HOST: “Hey, there! I’m so glad that each one of you is here today. I love getting to spend time with you. All month, we’ve been digging into our theme of Bedrock: Building Confidence in God Block by Block. And today we’re going to meet someone who took that confidence in God and built on it ... literally! He knew God was with him, so he was able to build something big!

“So to warm us up, I think we should play a building game. It’ll fit right into our Bible Story today! Who wants to play?”

→ Choose 6 volunteers and bring them up on stage. Divide them into three teams of two.

“All right. We’ve got our teams. But we still need our building material. And it looks like ... this!

→ Pull out stacks of large, plastic cups. They can all be red, but it would also be fun to have a different color for each of the three teams.

“Each team will get 50 [OR YOUR NUMBER OF CHOICE] cups. When I say, ‘stack it up,’ you will have ONE minute to see which team can build the very tallest tower. You can stack the cups end to end or make a large pyramid. You can build them up in any other way you want. But when we hit one minute, that top cup has to hold for at least a count of five!

“Are all of the teams ready? Do you understand the challenge? (MAKE SURE EACH TEAM HAS WHAT THEY NEED.)

“Then ... STACK IT UP!

AUDIO → Upbeat Music  
Optional Video → One-Minute Countdown

→ Start the timer or the countdown. When the timer reaches zero, count to five out loud and announce the winner. The winner will have the tallest structure that also holds the top cup steady for a count of five!

5 MINUTES

# Opener

10 MINUTES

# Worship

20 MINUTES

# Story

“Okay, those were some amazing towers! Let’s have a round of applause for all of our builders.

→ Lead the kids in a round of applause.

“You can all go back to your seats now.

→ If time allows, play a second round with new volunteers.

“It’s clear that plastic cups are not always trustworthy for building! But there is something we can always trust in. SOMEONE. It’s God! He goes with us through every single thing.

“In our true story from the Bible today, we’ll learn how someone’s trust in God helped them do something really big! Before we dive into our true story from the Bible today, let’s worship the God who goes with us everywhere! On your feet, everyone!”

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## ② Worship

→ Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: “That opening game was so fun! You guys are full of energy — and that’s perfect, because now it’s time to use that same excitement to worship God. He’s the One who gives us strength and helps us stand strong, no matter what we face.

This first song reminds us that following Jesus fills our hearts with joy. It’s a Happy Day when we remember what He’s done for us. So come on — sing it loud and celebrate with all you’ve got!

Video → Happy Day - Orange Kids

WORSHIP LEADER: “That was awesome! I love seeing how much joy you bring to worship. You know, one of the coolest things about singing together is that it reminds us we’re not alone — we all belong to the same God who never leaves us.

In our story today, Daniel demonstrated what it means to trust God, no matter what. Even when things were scary, he prayed and believed that God was with him. This next song is all about that same truth — that when we ask, seek, and knock, God hears us. He listens, He cares, and He always knows what’s best.

Let’s take a deep breath, think about how good God is, and sing this next song together.

Video → Ask, Seek, Knock - Hillsong Kids

WORSHIP LEADER: “God, thank You for always being with us — just like You were with Daniel. Thank You for listening when we pray and helping us trust You no matter what’s going on. We love You so much. Amen.”

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“Let me read it our memory verse again, and then you can repeat after me!

SLIDE -> Memory Verse

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “Those who trust in the LORD will receive new strength.  
They will fly as high as eagles.  
They will run and not get tired.  
They will walk and not grow weak. —Isaiah 40:31

“Let’s say it together!

WORSHIP LEADER: “Those who trust in the LORD”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “Those who trust in the LORD”

WORSHIP LEADER: “will receive new strength.”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “will receive new strength.”

WORSHIP LEADER: “They will fly as high as eagles.”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “They will fly as high as eagles.”

WORSHIP LEADER: “They will run and not get tired.”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “They will run and not get tired.”

WORSHIP LEADER: “They will walk and not grow weak.”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “They will walk and not grow weak.”

WORSHIP LEADER: “Isaiah 40:31!”

WORSHIP LEADER AND KIDS: “Isaiah 40:31!”

“The man in our true story from the Bible today experienced this truth firsthand. He saw how God gave him strength to do a big, big thing—his name was Nehemiah, and he trusted God to help him build an entire wall! Let’s go ahead and sit down and hear our true story from the Bible today!”

### ③ Bible Story

SLIDE -> Theme Background

→ Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit

5 MINUTES

# Opener

10 MINUTES

# Worship

20 MINUTES

# Story

## INTRODUCTION

STORYTELLER: “Hey friends, today we’ve got an epic story from the book of Nehemiah! (HOLD UP BIBLE.)”

“All month long, we’ve been talking about building confidence in God, and Nehemiah actually took that confidence in God and led the people to build an entire wall!

“But before we get into our true story from the Bible, let me tell you about something amazing we’re doing this year! We’re going to go through the entire story of the Bible this year from cover to cover!

“You see, part of the reason God gave us the Bible is so that we can get to know Him! So as we learn about the stories in the Bible, hopefully we will learn about Him!

### GOD’S BIG STORY OPENER (OPTIONAL)

STORYTELLER: “We’re going to go through God’s Big Story in the Bible to get to know Him! (GESTURE TO SLIDE.)”

SLIDE -> God’s Big Story

“Each week, we’ll look at a story from God’s Big Story and add a picture of that story to our timeline, so we can see where we’ve been in the Bible as we journey along. (GESTURE TO TIMELINE.)”

“Let me bring you up to speed on where we’ve been in God’s Big Story so far!

“So you might remember that in the very beginning, God made everything! He made the world, the animals, people ... everything! God made the first people for the same reason He made all people—to be His close, close friends. But sadly, the first people God made chose to turn away from Him and sin. God wanted people to be close to Him, but they couldn’t anymore! It was so sad.

“And awful things happened to the world too. Pain, sickness, and death entered into it.

“But God didn’t want to leave things that way! So He put His rescue plan in motion right from the start!

“God was going to rescue everything through a family! God chose a man named Abraham and promised that his family would bless the whole world. Many years later, Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph ended up in Egypt. After some hard times, God helped Joseph become a super-important leader there! Joseph saved his whole family by bringing them to Egypt. But hundreds of years passed. God grew and grew His people. A new Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, came along. He didn’t know about Joseph. He saw how many of God’s people there were, he got scared, and he started being mean to them.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“God’s people cried out to God for help. He answered! God brought His people out of Egypt into a beautiful home He had for them—the Promised Land!

“After some time living in the Promised Land, God’s people wanted a king like the other nations around them. God gave them a king, and then many more kings (**AND ONE QUEEN**) followed. Sadly, the nation of God’s people split in two—into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

“During this time, there were prophets in both kingdoms who spoke and taught on God’s behalf. Many of the prophets delivered the same message from God: ‘Come back to Me!’

“But many of the kings didn’t listen. They turned their hearts away from God, and as a result, the northern kingdom of Israel was totally destroyed and never heard from again. The southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive by other nations. God’s people were taken from the Promised Land! It was sad, but God was preserving a remnant, mostly from the nation of Judah.

“After some time in captivity, God worked through a foreign king to allow His people to come home to the land of Judah, which is part of the Promised Land. Many of God’s people came back home! But some stayed in foreign lands—like Esther’s family, and a man named Nehemiah. The people who did come home came back to find their homeland had been destroyed. They had to rebuild everything.

“And that’s where we are in God’s Big Story!”

### SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Today we’re going right through the Bible to Nehemiah’s story.

“As we do, let me tell you a little backstory before we get started!

“When God’s people were captured and taken to live in foreign lands, their homeland was destroyed. Some years later, God worked in the heart of the Persian king Cyrus—he let God’s people come back home! Some of God’s people stayed in foreign lands, but the ones who did come home found their homeland was a mess!

“One of God’s people who chose to stay in a foreign land was a man named Nehemiah. He held an important position as cupbearer to the current king of Persia, Artaxerxes. Nehemiah was a trusted servant who made sure no one poisoned the king’s drink.”

### NEHEMIAH’S REQUEST

STORYTELLER: “Even though Nehemiah lived about a thousand miles from Jerusalem, he received news one day from his brother and some others, who had just returned from Jerusalem. They said:

→ Open the Bible to Nehemiah 1:3 (**NIRV**) and read.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“Some of the people who returned are still alive. They are back in the land of Judah. But they are having a hard time. They are ashamed. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down. Its gates have been burned with fire.”

“Okay, I think we should see what the wall might have looked like. Can I get a couple of builders up here to help assess the situation? If you want to volunteer, raise your hand!

- Choose two volunteers from the kids with their hands raised. Bring the kids up on stage, and bring out the garbage bags full of cardboard bricks.
- Optional: Give the builders construction hats.

“Great! (OPTIONAL: “HERE ARE THESE HATS! NEHEMIAH DIDN’T HAVE HATS LIKE THIS. BUT, YOU KNOW, SAFETY!”) Before we build, we need to see what the wall looks like! Can you help me dump out all these bags?

- With the help of the volunteers, empty out all the bricks. Make sure the bricks are scattered across the stage.

“Wow! Thank you, builders. You can wait right over here until it’s time to start building.

- Look at bricks.

“What a mess. I would not want to live in a place that looked like this. And Nehemiah felt the same. The news was devastating to him. Without a strong wall, God’s people were open to enemy attack. For days, Nehemiah wept and cried out to God. He prayed:

- Open the Bible to Nehemiah 1:5-6 (NIRV) and read.

“LORD, you are the God of heaven. You are a great and wonderful God. You keep the covenant you made with those who love you and obey your commandments. You show them your love. Please pay careful attention to my prayer. See how your people are suffering.”

“Nehemiah reminded God how, long ago, God had promised to bring His people back home if they were faithful. Nehemiah believed that God wanted him to help—but Nehemiah couldn’t travel to his homeland without permission from the king. So Nehemiah asked God to give him favor.

“The next time Nehemiah went to serve the king, he allowed himself to show the sadness he was feeling.

“The king was shocked because he had never seen Nehemiah looking sad. So Nehemiah explained that his hometown was in big trouble. Then this happened:

- Open the Bible to Nehemiah 2:4-5 (NIRV) and read.

The king said to me, “What do you want?”

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

I prayed to the God of heaven. Then I answered the king, “Are you pleased with me, King Artaxerxes? If it pleases you, send me to Judah. Let me go to the city of Jerusalem. That’s where my people are buried. I want to rebuild it.”

“It was a bold move! But Nehemiah had prayed, and God gave him exactly what he needed. God gave Nehemiah favor with King Artaxerxes!

### THE BUILDING BEGINS

STORYTELLER: ““In fact, the king sent army officers and horses with Nehemiah, and letters to local governors so that Nehemiah would have all the supplies he needed.

“The journey was epic, lasting for months. When Nehemiah finally arrived in Jerusalem, he didn’t explain his mission right away. After three days in the city, Nehemiah went out at night to inspect the walls.

**(TO VOLUNTEERS)** “Okay, builders, I want to see you walk around our broken-down wall and inspect it like Nehemiah.

- Gesture for the volunteers to walk around the cardboard bricks. As they do, continue the story.

“It was clear to Nehemiah that the walls were completely ruined. Huge stones lay tumbled everywhere. All the gates had been burned up. It was clear this was an EPIC job.

**(TO VOLUNTEERS)** “Excellent inspection. You can gather over here, now.

- Direct the kid volunteers to stand over to the side and stop their inspection.

“Nehemiah called together the people. He said:

- Open the Bible to Nehemiah 2:17-18 **(NIRV)** and read.

“You can see the trouble we’re in. Jerusalem has been destroyed. Fire has burned up its gates. Come on. Let’s rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. Then people won’t be ashamed anymore.” I also told them how my gracious God was helping me. And I told them what the king had said to me.

They replied, “Let’s start rebuilding.” So they began that good work. Call the volunteers over to you and say to them:

“It’s time to get started, builders! I want you to go ahead and build up this wall. Make the wall as strong as you can!

- Continue telling the story as volunteers build

“Now, you’ve got to understand—even though God’s people were eager to get to work, none of them were certified expert wall builders. They were priests and goldsmiths and perfume makers and merchants and nobles.

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“But each family or group of workers took a different part of the wall or gates to repair. Men and women together, they worked with every bit of strength God gave them. Let’s tell our builders, ‘Keep up the good work! Ready?’”

STORYTELLER and KIDS: “Keep up the good work!”

STORYTELLER: “But not everyone was encouraging. Two of the enemies of God’s people, men named Sanballat and Tobiah, kept mocking Nehemiah and God’s people. Sanballat said:

→ Open the Bible to Nehemiah 4:2b-3 (NIRV) and read.

“The stones from their city wall and buildings are piled up like trash. And everything has been badly burned. Can they use those stones to rebuild everything again?”

Tobiah from Ammon was at Sanballat’s side. He said, “What are they building? They’re putting up a stone wall. But suppose a fox climbs on top of it. Even that will break it down!”

“Yikes! Builders, would that make you stop working?”

→ Get a response from the volunteers.

“I didn’t think so. And Nehemiah refused to be intimidated too! He needed help from his enemies, so he cried out to God. God protected His people.

“In a short time, the wall had reached half its height!

→ Check out the wall.

“We’re definitely getting there. Good job, builders! Let’s give them a thumbs-up and say, ‘Keep up the good work! Ready?’

STORYTELLER and KIDS: “Keep up the good work!”

### THE WALL IS FINISHED

STORYTELLER: “Well, Sanballat and Tobiah were outraged and made a plot to attack the city. But Nehemiah continued to place his confidence in God, and he reminded the people to do the same. He said:

→ Open the Bible to Nehemiah 4:14b (NIRV) and read.

“Don’t be afraid of your enemies. Remember the Lord. He is great and powerful. So fight for your families. Fight for your sons and daughters. Fight for your wives and homes.”

“Nehemiah directed half the people to stand guard while the others worked on the wall.

(TO VOLUNTEERS) “Okay, I need one of you to stop working and stand guard. The other volunteer can keep working on the wall!

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

“Nehemiah told the people to listen for the sound of the trumpet, in case there was trouble, and run to that place. He knew that God would fight for them! Even with all the threats against them, Nehemiah and the people did not slow their pace. Every day, they worked on the wall from the break of dawn until night fell and the stars came out.

“And in 52 days ... less than two months ... the entire wall of Jerusalem was finished!

→ Treat the wall as finished, and speak to the builders.

“Excellent job, builders. Come on out and stand beside your wall! Let’s give our builders a giant round of applause!

→ Lead applause and send the volunteers back to their seats.

### WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: “Rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem had seemed like a nearly impossible job. But Nehemiah had made a habit of talking to God. Whenever he needed help, he asked God! When Nehemiah went before the king to ask permission to go rebuild the walls, Nehemiah prayed. And God answered! When Nehemiah needed help with his enemies, he prayed. And God answered!

“God helped him with every single step of the building of the wall, so Nehemiah was able to do a big thing!

“God is always ready to help us do what He calls us to do too! Let’s say our Bottom Line together.

SLIDE → Bottom Line

[BOTTOM LINE] “God can help you do big things. Say that with me.”

→ Host enters and joins in.

STORYTELLER, HOST, and KIDS: [BOTTOM LINE] “God can help you do big things.”

### GOD’S BIG STORY CLOSER (OPTIONAL)

STORYTELLER: “Let’s take a look at the progress we made in God’s Big Story this week!

SLIDE -> God’s Big Story

“This week, we’re up here on the path past the picture of Daniel, but before the birth of Jesus. We’re on the path of God’s Big Story, just traveling along! (GESTURE TO IMAGE OF GOD’S BIG STORY.)

“This week, we looked at the story of Nehemiah! God had worked in a foreign king’s heart to allow some of God’s people to go back to Judah, which was part of the Promised Land. But everything was in ruins. When

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem's walls were broken down, God put it on his heart to go to Judah and oversee the rebuilding—and he did. God would use those walls to protect the people of Judah, from whom Jesus would come! And Jesus would rescue us all!

"Let's put the next image on our timeline!"

SLIDE -> Week 5 Timeline Image

→ If you're making a timeline of printed images on your wall, take this moment to place today's timeline image on the clothesline.

"This week we talked about Nehemiah!"

### WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

HOST: "So what can we take away from Nehemiah's story? Well, Nehemiah wasn't a builder. And he was living nearly a thousand miles from his homeland. But when God gave him a vision to repair the wall of Jerusalem, Nehemiah trusted that God would help him carry it out. And God helped Nehemiah do something incredible.

"God can help you do big things too! You can start where Nehemiah did: by talking with God and asking Him for every single thing you need. If you need courage, ask Him for it! If you need to know what to do, ask Him! If you need physical supplies to get the job done, ask Him! Whatever you need—ask Him!

"Then, like Nehemiah, trust that God will provide you with everything you need and keep working.

"Perhaps you've got a huge class project and no idea where to start. Maybe you have to start at a new school and make friends all over again. Or it might just be that your mom tells you to clean your room, and you can't even see the floor right now!

"Or maybe you're facing something even bigger and harder, and you have no idea how to navigate it. You're not even sure what the next step is.

"Ask God for every little thing you need! You never have to do something big on your own. Let's spend some time talking to God about that right now."

5 MINUTES

## Opener

10 MINUTES

## Worship

20 MINUTES

## Story

### ③ Prayer

STORYTELLER or HOST: “Dear God, thank You so much for the incredible story of Nehemiah. Help us to come to You first for help, any time we face something big. Help us to trust that You are always with us and You will give us everything that we need to do the things You call us to. We love You and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Transition → Dismiss kids to their small groups.  
AUDIO -> Play high-energy music as the kids exit.  
SLIDE -> Theme  
Optional Video (MEDIA PACKAGE) → Theme Loop