

# Nehemiah 2:9-20

## “A Godly Leader”

**Scripture:** Nehemiah 2:9-20

**Memory Verse:** Psalm 121:2 “My help comes from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth.”

**Lesson Focus:** Nehemiah shows himself as not just any leader, but a godly leader, by inspiring people to join him in God’s work of rebuilding Jerusalem. We will teach the kids about godly leadership and challenge them to follow Jesus, the greatest leader of all!

**Activities and Crafts:** Nehemiah Leader Coloring Picture, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>: Let’s Get To Work Trowel

**Starter Activity:** “Who Am I” Game

We will introduce our lesson by playing a guessing game to identify famous characters that the kids should be familiar with. Slowly work your way through each factoid and after each one give the kids a chance to guess who it is. Each character demonstrates leadership in some way \* which we will draw out as well. Feel free to use your own characters! But conclude the game with Nehemiah and then launch into the lesson!

### **Anna from Frozen**

- I am the second of two sisters
- When I was little, I liked building snowmen (*Do you want to build a Snowman?*)
- I end up marrying a man named Kristoff (*Frozen 2 spoiler*)

### **Tom Brady**

- I was born in California and am 43 years old
- I am 6 ft 4 in and weigh about 225 lbs
- You saw me lead my team to a Super Bowl victory on February 7th

### **Martin Luther King Jr.**

- I was born in Georgia in 1929 and died in 1968
- I am known for my “*I Have a Dream*” speech
- You celebrate my birthday every year in January

### **Nehemiah**

- There is a book of the Bible named after me
- You learned that I was a man of prayer and a man with “godly guts”
- I stood before the king of Persia and asked him to let me rebuild God’s city

Q: What do all of these characters have in common?

A: They were all tremendous leaders! \* In our text today we are going to see how Nehemiah also wasn’t just a leader, but a godly leader!

## Bible Study:

**Nehemiah 2:9:** This picks up where we left off last week. Remember Nehemiah was a cupbearer of the king and after much prayer, he had the “guts” to go before the king and request permission to **lead** an effort to rebuild Jerusalem. God was with him and the king gave him what he asked for, and THEN SOME! Notice the king even sent an army with him! Nehemiah would leave behind what was likely a comfortable position in the court of the king as his cupbearer to begin a city rebuilding project that will be hard and difficult.

**Nehemiah 2:10:** And here are the characters that will make the project hard and difficult!  
\* Think back to the leaders we introduced our study with.

Q: What difficulty or opposition did they each face?

A: Anna was “opposed” by Hans in *Frozen*. Tom Brady was “opposed” by the KC Chiefs. MLK Jr. was “opposed” by racists who didn’t like people with dark skin.

Nehemiah is going to be opposed by these guys, but like all good leaders, he doesn’t give up! And as a “godly” leader, he doesn’t give up because he knows where his help comes from: God!

**Nehemiah 2:11:** Nehemiah finally arrives after what was a very long journey.

Imagine being Nehemiah and how exciting and scary it must have been. Exciting because he knew God was going to do great things here (after seeing how God moved to get him here), but scary because he didn’t know anyone and already faced opposition.

Q: How many of you have ever moved to a new city before? Were you more excited or more scared? \*

**Nehemiah 2:12:** Nehemiah is about to inspect and investigate what it was going to take to rebuild the city.

Q: It says that he went out at night and told no one what he was doing. Why do you think that is?

A: Probably because he didn’t want to attract attention from the “bad guys”.

**Nehemiah 2:13-15:** Nehemiah now begins his tour of the city. **Teachers:** We will give you a little stick horse and some signs that have the different locations that Nehemiah visits. Consider taping them to the walls of your room and pretending to be Nehemiah (or choose a volunteer to be him), sneak around the room to each site as you read these verses. Consider having an assistant go along taking notes at each site. \*

Q: What kind of notes do you think Nehemiah was taking as he visited each site?

A: How much rock and timber will be needed to fix or restore, how many people it will take to fix, what skills are necessary, etc. \*

**Nehemiah 2:16:** Nehemiah was a wise leader. He wanted to fully survey and examine the project so that he could have a well thought out plan before telling anybody about it.

It's been said, "Good leaders *know the way, show the way, and then go the way.*" Now that Nehemiah *knows* the way, what needs to be done, he is going to *show* the way to others.

**Nehemiah 2:17:** Nehemiah now rallies the people to join him in this project.

Remember these are God's people and this is God's city. Guys like Sanballat and Tobiah were likely mocking God and His people saying things like, "If your God is the One True God, why is His city such a waste? Is your God not powerful enough to protect His own people?" Well, yes God is powerful enough, but remember it is God Himself who punished His people because of their sin and rebellion, and exiled them for 70 years. That time was up and now that the people were turning back to Him in faith, God would help them rebuild the city. \*

**Nehemiah 2:18:** Nehemiah not only *shows* them the way, but also *shows* them what God has done to make this project possible. And look how they respond! They're excited and ready to get to work!

Q: Have any of you ever done a work project with your Dad, Mom, or grandparents? Were you excited to do it with them? \*

**Nehemiah 2:19:** Here come the "bad guys" laughing and mocking.

Q: Does anybody like being laughed at? \* A: No!

Q: What do you think good and godly leaders do when they are being laughed at?

A: They don't lose heart! Think about Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David. The Bible says they were all laughed at and mocked for doing God's work. I'm sure this wasn't easy, but did they give up? No! Because they knew God was on their side!

**Nehemiah 2:20:** And this is exactly how Nehemiah responds.

Q: Who did he say is on their side? A: God! The bad guys can laugh all they want, but because they have God on their side, they are going to build. As a godly leader, his confidence was not in himself, but in God, as our memory verse says. (**Psalm 121:2**)

**Key Point:** Many years after Nehemiah another godly leader was mocked and made fun of for doing God's work. **Read John 19:2-3.** Q: Who is this referring to? Jesus!

Jesus is the greatest leader of all time! He knew the way, showed the way, and went the way Himself! In fact He IS the way! No one comes to the Father but through Him. Does your help from Him? Seek Him every day this week and follow His leadership!

**Small Group Time Afterwards:** Consider breaking the kids up into groups of 3 or 4 to play a leadership game. Instead of having them return to a broken-down city like Nehemiah to rebuild it, have them pretend that they are transported to an uninhabited desert island. To make it more fun, grab some fabric from the resource room or turn the lights off or something to help them “enter the story”. **On this island they can only have five items as a group with which to survive.** Have them discuss amongst themselves what objects they would choose to have so that they can survive on this island together. They will need to talk among themselves and agree on these five things. Stress that we aren’t talking about silly things like video games and teddy bears, but that this is a life-or-death situation!

After a few minutes, have the kids share what they decided their five items were and ask them how they arrived at those few things. Also think about what you would have brought! A few questions to consider:

- What was the goal that they all wanted to work together to achieve?
- Did anyone have to make any compromises?
- Did they consider the needs of everyone?
- Did someone in particular arise as the leader of the group?

# Bring It Home

Download at: <https://rncalvary.org/volunteering/childrens-ministry/family-resources/>

Lesson Theme: “A Godly Leader”

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:9-20

Memory Verse: Psalm 121:2 “My help comes from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth.”

Teachers/Parents: We began our study by playing a “Who Am I” guessing game of a few well-known modern-day leaders. Ask your kids if they remember who we introduced our lesson with. Who are some leaders that you have admired or looked up to throughout your life and why did you look up to them?

## Discussion Questions:

- 1) In class we distinguished between being a leader and being a godly leader. What do you think the difference is? As an example, think about Adolf Hitler. He was a leader with tremendous power and influence, but was he a godly leader?
- 2) Read **Nehemiah 2:11-12**. Why do you think Nehemiah waited until dark to inspect the city and kept his intentions to himself?
- 3) In class we talked about how good and godly leaders *know* the way, *show* the way, and then *go* the way. Do you agree with this statement? What might happen if someone leading a project neglects one of these three things?
- 4) Read **Nehemiah 2:17-18**. Now that Nehemiah *knows* the way, he *shows* the way to the people. In what ways did Nehemiah inspire the people of the city to action?
- 5) But not everyone responded positively. Read **Nehemiah 2:19**. How did these guys respond to Nehemiah’s plan?
- 6) The Bible is very clear that Christians will face opposition just like Nehemiah did for their faithfulness and loyalty to God. Read **John 16:33**. Have you ever faced opposition in your walk with God? How did you respond? Read **Nehemiah 2:20**. How did Nehemiah respond?
- 7) In class we talked about how Jesus is the greatest leader of all. For He *knew* the way, *showed* us the way, and then *went* the way Himself. In fact, He IS the way! (Read **John 14:6**) How are some ways that you can follow Him this week?