UPPER ELEM Flight Plan
November 8th

Lesson	**The Walls Rebuilt**
Bible Passage	Nehemiah 1-6
Story Point	God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls.
Key Passage	"The God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little while." 1 Peter 5:10
Big Picture Q & A	**Who is in control of everything?** God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.





Nehemiah was a Jew living in Persia. He served as the king's cupbearer. When the Persian Empire conquered the Babylonians, King Cyrus allowed God's people to return to Judah. Two or three million Jews had originally been deported, but only a remnant—50,000 people—returned. They set up their homes and rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem.

But when God's people faced opposition in rebuilding the rest of Jerusalem, they stopped. Some 70 years passed, and the walls and gates around the city were still ruined.

City walls and gates were very important in Bible times. Thick walls protected a city from its enemies and provided a sense of safety and security. Gates were the center of city life, the meeting place for commercial and social transactions. Without these structures, the surviving remnant of God's people struggled and was vulnerable to attack.

Nehemiah traveled from Persia to Jerusalem to lead the effort in rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. His leadership was effective. Nehemiah 3 describes all the people working together to rebuild the gates and walls. But it wasn't long before Nehemiah met opposition from local governors. God's people armed themselves and kept working, completing the wall in just 52 days.

Note how their enemies reacted: "All the surrounding nations were intimidated and lost their confidence, for they realized that this task had been accomplished by our God" (Neh. 6:16).

Now God's people were protected from their enemies. Help kids see that God provided the way for us to be protected from our enemies, sin and death: He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. When we repent and trust in Jesus, He frees us from sin and death. We still sin, but we are no longer slaves to sin. (See Rom. 6:17-18.) We may die a physical death as a result of sin, but we have eternal life. (See John 11:25-26; Rom. 6:23.)

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Gospel—Centered Preparation:

The heart of preparation is rooted in your understanding of the gospel and your personal application of the story.

After your study ask yourself:

- How do the verse and Big Picture Question connect to this story?
- What am I excited to teach from this passage?
- The main point this week is: _____
- Where is the gospel in this story?

November Focus: God's People are Restored



NOV 1st: The Temple was Rebuilt *Ezra 4-6; Haggai*
Story point: God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God.



NOV 8th: The Walls Rebuilt *Nehemiah 1-6*
Story Point: God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls.



NOV 15th: God's People Restored *Nehemiah 8-13*
Story Point: God's people repented and Promised to be faithful.



NOV 22nd: Malachi the Prophet *Malachi*
Story Point: Malachi called God's people to repent to prepare for the Messiah.



Co-Pilot—Included Preparation:

On a Sunday morning, the Pilot is leading everyone in our ongoing journey to Jesus– that includes both flyers and Co-Pilots! The more consistency and continuity we have between Pilots, the better we can prepare our helpers to succeed and grow! With that consistency comes the mentorship aspect for our youth volunteers in particular, and utilizing our adult co-pilots as well: sharing activities, engaging them in the morning, and encouraging their involvement.

As you prepare for the lesson, ask yourself:

- **Does my planning allow for Co-Pilot participation throughout the morning?**
- **How did I prepare my Co-Pilot to help with classroom management?**
- **What specific activities will my Co-Pilot assist with today?**
- **In what ways can I encourage my Co-Pilot?**

Engagement

- Sit with child during the story
- Playing alongside flyers
- Reengage chatty/distracted kids
- Ask to volunteer an example during discussion
- Help play to Co-Pilot's strengths

Activities

- Attendance stickers
- Timeline
- Joining in the verse and BPQ&A
- Assigned to a specific flyer
- Helping find books in the Bible
- Leading crafts & songs

Encouragement

- Thank you for stepping in there!
- You did a great job with _____.
- You really helped me while I was _____.
- Thank you for being _____'s buddy today.
- Your help really made this morning go smoothly.
- _____ was the right thing to do. You handled it well!
- I'm so glad you are here today!

Sunday Morning Flight Plan



Take Off

- Open in Prayer
- Hook
- BPQ and A & Key Passage
- Timeline & Introduce Story

10 Min

Journey

- Attendance & Bible Sticker
- Bible Story
- God's Attributes

15 Min

Flight Lab

- Experience of the Bible Story (Make connections through an activity & motion)

15 Min

Pilot's Log

- Pray
- Calm activity during pick-up
- Give activity sheets to parents as they pick up students

5 Min

PICK UP:

First Service:
Around 9:45

Second Service:
Around 11:45

10 min Take Off

Celebrate being here! Introduce the morning.

Open in Prayer

Hook

Prompt kids to talk about the hardest thing they have ever accomplished. (Examples: finishing a tedious chore, turning in a difficult school assignment, winning a basketball game, and so on) How did they feel when they finished? What kept them from giving up?

Big Picture Question

Nehemiah was heartbroken when he heard that the walls around Jerusalem had been destroyed and that God's people were in danger, but the king was kind to Nehemiah and allowed him to go to Jerusalem to help rebuild the walls. This was not a coincidence; God knew that His people would need help. ***Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.***

Key Passage

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read/sing **1 Peter 5:10** (with video/hand motions). Our key passage reminds us that God has promised to restore, establish, strengthen, and support us. God keeps His promises. God has a purpose and a plan for our lives. This verse also tells us that our life will have suffering and hard times.

Timeline/Introduce Bible Story:

In today's story, God helped Nehemiah restore the walls around Jerusalem. But did you know that God can restore us too? Because of sin, people have a broken relationship with God. But God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, He restores our relationship with God.

Transition to Bible Story: (OPTIONAL) Show the Bible Story Video.

15 Min Journey

Where we travel into God's word

Bible Story

Open your Bible to Nehemiah 1-6 Read from the Bible or use the story example to help you tell the story.

Wrap up with the insights below.

Have you ever watched a friend go through something hard but weren't sure how to help? That is probably similar to how Nehemiah felt when he heard that God's people were in danger. But the king of Persia was kind to Nehemiah and sent him to Jerusalem to help the Jews rebuild the wall around the city.

That was not the end of their trouble, though. Other people did not want the walls rebuilt. God's people had to trust that rebuilding the walls was God's plan for them. They trusted that God would keep them safe while they obeyed Him.

When God asks us to do something, He doesn't guarantee that it will be easy or that everyone will agree. We can listen to God through His Word and trust that His words are true. When we trust God, we will obey Him—even when other people try to get us to stop. God's people knew that they needed to rebuild the wall, even when their enemies were surrounding them. God empowered them to continue, even in a difficult situation. **God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls.**

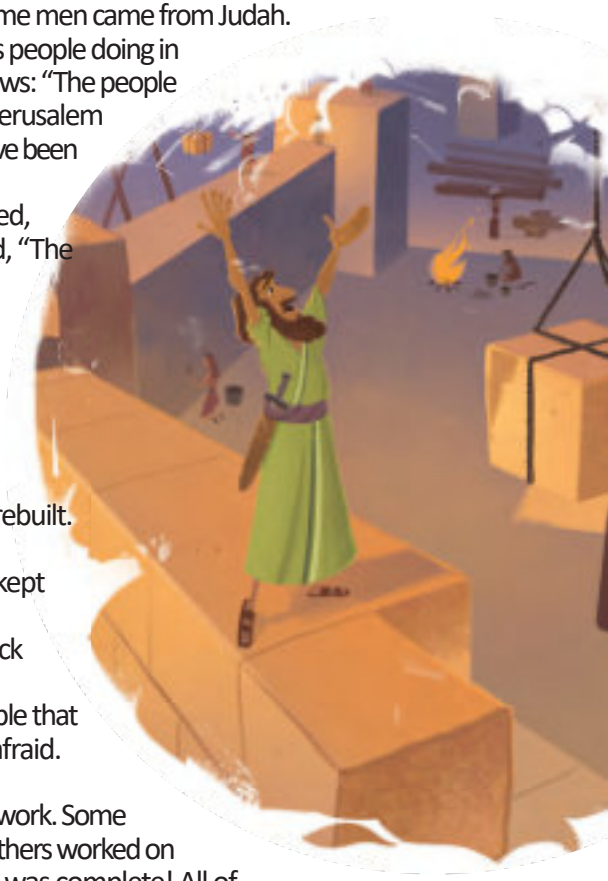


Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem to protect them from their enemies. Jesus came to protect us from our enemies. He died on the cross and rose from the dead to rescue people from sin and death. God had a plan to protect His people in Jerusalem and He has a plan to protect us. ***Who is in control of everything? God is in control*** *of everything in heaven and on earth.*

Age Appropriate Story

STORY POINT: GOD USED NEHEMIAH TO REBUILD JERUSALEM'S WALLS.

God's people had lived in Babylon for 70 years. Then King Cyrus, the king of Persia, took over Babylon and let them go home. Nehemiah stayed and worked for the king of Persia. One day, some men came from Judah. Nehemiah asked, "How are God's people doing in Jerusalem?" The men had bad news: "The people are in trouble. The walls around Jerusalem are broken down, and the gates have been burned down."



Nehemiah cried. The king asked, "What's wrong?" Nehemiah said, "The city where my ancestors are from is in ruins."

The king sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem. Nehemiah inspected the walls and led the people to start rebuilding the walls and gates. Not everyone was happy that Jerusalem's walls were being rebuilt. Some men who lived nearby were angry. God's people kept working on the walls, but their enemies made a plan to attack them and stop their work.

Nehemiah reminded the people that God was with them. "Don't be afraid. God is great and powerful!"

So God's people went back to work. Some stood guard with weapons, and others worked on the wall. In just 52 days, the wall was complete! All of Jerusalem's enemies were afraid because they knew God was with His people.

Christ Connection: Nehemiah led the people to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem to protect them from their enemies. Jesus came to protect us from our greatest enemy, sin and death. He died on the cross and rose from the dead to rescue everyone who trusts in Him.

Discussion & Bible Skills

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Nehemiah 1. Explain that the books of the Bible fit together to show the big story of how God saves sinners through His Son, Jesus. When Nehemiah heard that God's people were in danger in Jerusalem, he was sad. Nehemiah wanted to help, but he was in Persia, which is far from Jerusalem. Lead the group to discuss:

1. **What was the first thing Nehemiah did after hearing about Jerusalem?** *Help kids find Neh. 1:4, which says Nehemiah "mourned and fasted and prayed." Nehemiah had the greatest tool of all—prayer! We can approach every situation with prayer. God hears us when we pray.* (Option: read 1 Thess. 5:16-18.)
2. **What feelings might prompt you to pray?** *Suggest that kids can pray through all of their feelings—joy, sorrow, confusion, and so on. Point out that in his prayer, Nehemiah thanked God and praised Him. Nehemiah prayed even though he was sad and confused. God heard Nehemiah's prayers and answered them.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ps. 34:17.)



3. **What situation do you need to pray about this week? How can you remind yourself to "pray without ceasing"?** *Encourage kids to share their thoughts. Emphasize that God wants us to pray about everything! God knows all things, but He welcomes us to come to Him with all of our questions, cares, and concerns.* (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Col. 4:2.)

God's attributes- helping the children understand what God is like, shown to us in the Bible. In today's story we see that God is:

- PROTECTOR -

Travel Guide:

Use the travel guide for maps, charts, etc… as useful with helping the children learn and understand today's story.

15 min Flight Lab

Instill Wonder as you experience the Bible

CHOOSE ONE ACTIVITY

A Remnant Remaining

Instruct everyone to stand in a circle. Read a list of criteria, one statement at a time. Kids who meet that criterion must keep standing, and those who don't will sit down. Continue reading the statements until only one person remains standing. (Sample criteria: born in this city, owns a pet, has a brother, can play a musical instrument, is on a sports team, and so forth)

•Two to three million Jews were taken into exile in Babylon. But only about 50,000 people returned to Jerusalem. That's not very many! A remnant is a small remaining number of people. Do you think it surprised God that only 50,000 people were left of the nation of Israel? Of course not. Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. God was even in control over the number of Jews who returned to Jerusalem out of exile. He would work through those people to fulfill the promised blessing He had made to Abraham so many years earlier—sending the Messiah, Jesus.

Create Something New

Provide a pile of clean recyclable materials for the kids and invite them to try to make something useful out of it.

•This pile of materials may have looked like trash at first, but you were able to create some really cool things out of it! In our story today we'll learn that Nehemiah wanted to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The walls had been completely destroyed in some places. Many people didn't think it was possible to make the city safe again.

Fingertip Hoop

Form groups of six to eight kids. Give each group a hula hoop. Teams will walk across the room, carrying the hoop parallel to the floor. They may only touch the hoop with one finger, and their palm must face the floor. The first team to reach the opposite wall wins. Play again as time allows.

• You worked together to move the hoops from one side of the room to the other. Your team had to communicate, listen, and help one another. Today we learned how **God used Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls** and how the Israelites worked together to accomplish their goal.

Rapid Fire Response

Form two teams of kids. Call for a volunteer from each team. Name an item. Volunteers must explain how it is properly used. Name items that offer protection: helmet, bug spray, mouth guard, sunscreen, sunglasses, raincoat, oven mitt, umbrella, shin guards, gloves, soap, winter coat, and so forth.

The first volunteer to answer correctly wins that round and earns a point for his team. Play several rounds. The team with the most points at the end wins.

• What do those items have in common? (*They offer protection.*) In today's Bible story, God's people were in danger because the walls around Jerusalem had been broken down.

Wall Ball

Form two teams of kids. Choose two kids from each team to be goalies. Give each pair of goalies a large piece of paper to hold between them. Position the goalies on opposite sides of the room.

Give each player on the team a piece of scrap paper. At your signal, the teams should crumple up their scrap paper and throw it at the opposite team's goalies, with the goal being to get it behind the paper "wall." The goalies should try to block the incoming paper balls. If a paper ball makes it past the wall, kids may not retrieve it. Once a team throws all of the paper balls behind the walls, instruct the teams can count them. The team with the fewest paper balls behind its goal wins.

• Like the goalies tried to protect their team's side from the paper balls, In our story today, we learned what Nehemiah and the Israelites did to protect Jerusalem. ***God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth,*** and He kept His people safe from their enemies.

5 min Pilot's log

Where we prepare to depart.

Pray:

If time, share prayer requests and allow kids to record in the **prayer journal section of their *Travel Guide***.

ALWAYS CLOSE THE MORNING WITH PRAYER.

This is how we model incorporating prayer into their lives.

Waiting for parents/Activity Page:

Tie back into the lesson, remind them of the Big Picture Question/verse, etc…

Be sure to **re-set expectations on what their choices are while waiting for mom and dad:**

- Activity page
- Key Passage Activity (See next page for list of options)
- Coloring page
- Gospel Kit Activities
- Anything quiet at the tables you are ok with *(origami, free draw on blank paper, hangman game at white board, putting Book of the Bible cards in order, etc….)*

Be sure that the Co-Pilots hand out the Activity sheet to each child or to parents so they can go home with families.

Key Passage Review Extra Ideas:

Invite kids to sit around tables. Give each kid a pencil. Show the key passage poster and lead them to read it aloud.

Give a piece of paper to one kid at each table. Instruct him to write down the first word of the key passage and pass the paper to the person on his right. That person will write down the second word, pass the paper to her right, and so on. Kids will pass the paper around the table, writing one vword at a time until they finish the key passage. When kids finish, invite groups one at time to say the key passage together.

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Display the key passage poster. Lead the kids to read it aloud. Then challenge them to read it in various ways: whispering, shouting, quickly, slowly, and so on.

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Form two groups of kids. Call on the first group to say the key passage together. Then call on the second group to say it.

Prompt the first group to say the passage a few phrases at a time, pausing for the second group to echo. When kids finish saying the key passage, lead the second group to begin and the first group to echo.

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Instruct kids to sit or stand in a circle. Choose one kid to begin by saying the first word of the key passage. Guide kids to say the key passage, one word at a time, moving around the circle.

Allow kids to look at the key passage poster if they need help remembering the words. Continue around the circle a few times. Consider shouting, "Switch!" and letting kids move to another place in the circle before playing again. *Or toss the ball to different kids rather than go in order.*

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Before the session, write out the key passage on a chalkboard or dry erase board in eight separate phrases. Display the phrases where kids can see them. Give each kid a marker and eight craft sticks. Instruct kids to copy from the board, writing each phrase on a separate stick. Then instruct kids to mix up their sticks and then quickly rearrange the phrases in the correct order. Kids may work individually or in pairs. Provide rubber bands for kids to bundle their sticks and keep them as a method of practicing the key passage during the week.

Prayer Extra Ideas:

Prayer Chain—In small groups, ask children/co-pilot to write prayer requests on a few paper strips. Connect paper strips into a chain and display our growing conversation to the Lord. Feel free to revisit older requests as well.

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Painted Rocks—Have each child choose a painted rock to write on. Write a word of encouragement, a word about Jesus, a name, etc. The goal is to take it with them and place it somewhere near their typical living space– a neighbor's house, a store, a playground, etc. Then pray over the place or the people who are there.

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Pointing to a Map—Choose one or two kiddos to spin/close their eyes/find a certain color (you can be creative and have fun) and point to a country on the map. Place a pin in the place(s) and pray over it as a group. Even if you don't know anything about the country, we can lift up the people, pray for Jesus' light to shine there, the Gospel to be active there, and churches to grow, etc.

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Looking out the Window—Grab a dry erase marker, have the kids gather at the windows, and look outside. Ask the children to look for 3 things they can see out of the window to pray over. Using the dry erase marker, write those things on the window (Pre-K & K may draw things) and then pray over those things. Feel free to leave them on the window, so whenever we look through, those things are brought to our mind to pray for again.

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Head Shoulders Knees and Toes—Pray through the song.

- Head (mind, imagination, thoughts, creativity)
- Shoulders (physical strength, things we might be dealing with)
- Knees (dancing, playing, jumping, etc.)
- Toes (walking and following after Jesus, standing strong in our faith)
- Eyes, ears, mouth & nose (seeing goodness, listening to Him, speaking truthful words, our senses, etc.)

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Preschool Carpet Bag Prayers— Choose an item(s) out of the carpet bag. Discuss the item and different people/things the item could represent (car—driving safely, mechanics, trips, first responders, etc) Encourage kids to "think outside the bag" and help them make connections. Pray over the people, places, and things that were discussed.

You're ready for Sunday!

