



4. Bible Study

Nehemiah's Good Decision: Nehemiah 2:11-20; 6:1-19

Set Up: Before telling the story, let the boys build a tower of blocks and time them to see how high they can build it in a specified amount of time. Or see how long it takes to build a wall around an imaginary city. Encourage them to use good decisions in how they work together and how they place the blocks. Use the blocks and your imagination to build interest.

Commander Says: Long ago there was a king named Artaxerxes. King Artaxerxes had a cupbearer—a man named Nehemiah. Do you know what the job of the cupbearer was? (*Allow responses.*) He tasted the king's drinks to make sure they were not poisoned.

Nehemiah was an Israelite who had been captured and taken to serve in Artaxerxes's kingdom. He was very sad when he heard Jerusalem was destroyed. With the walls torn down, the people in Jerusalem were not safe. Anybody could attack them and it looked terrible. Nehemiah got special permission from the king to rebuild the walls. Some governors were jealous of Nehemiah, and they did not trust him. Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem did not want Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem's walls. They sent a message to the king to stop the rebuilding. Nehemiah knew he had to be careful and smart. He had to make good decisions and he did not have much time. So he gathered the people and told each man to concentrate on the section of the wall that bordered his property. They worked long hours without being distracted by those trying to stop them. Nehemiah's enemies accused him of trying to revolt and make himself king. Because Nehemiah made wise decisions and was not fooled by his enemies' tricks, they were able to rebuild Jerusalem's walls in only fifty-two days.

Review: Ask: "What kinds of good decisions did Nehemiah make in building the walls?" (*He had the people work together as a team to get the job done quickly and safely.*)

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