

Small Group Leader Guide



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

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a special need, learning difference, or disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro tips.

Today's Suggested Schedule

Greeting & Prayer (3 minutes)

The leader greets the children and asks how they are doing. After a brief time of sharing, the group participates in a short prayer activity to prepare their hearts for the lesson.

Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

Activity 1: Moses's Journey

Activity 2: Courage Stick

Pray & Dismiss (2 minutes)

After small group time, the leader closes in prayer. Then the children are dismissed.



Greeting & Prayer



What You Need

- ☐ A Spinning Wheel
- ☐ Prayer Chart

①

What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive -> Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall a time when God gave you the courage to do something you didn't think you were ready for. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to live inside of you and help you take the next step! Ask God to help the kids trust Him when they feel nervous or unsure. Whether it's a big change or something small, pray that kids would know God is with them even when they don't feel ready.

- Choose a child to spin the wheel.
- Each color matches a prayer prompt on the chart.
- After spinning, the child finds the matching prompt, reads it, and prays.
- Let a few more children take turns spinning the wheel and praying.

②

What You Say

"Prayer is how we talk with God, our loving Father. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing—talking to Him anytime, anywhere. Whatever you do, begin with prayer. When you do, you can trust that God is in control and working in every situation."

Transition -> Lead your group to the small group activity

ACTIVITY ONE

Build and Review

Bible Story Review

MADE TO
↓
Create

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Story Review" Activity Page
- ☐ Butcher paper
- ☐ Marker
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Wall tape

① What You Do

1. Before you begin, hang butcher paper on the wall with tape or lay it on the floor.
2. Divide the butcher paper with a line down the middle.
3. Label one side of the butcher paper "TEAM 1" and the other "TEAM 2."
4. Divide the kids into two teams and give each team a stack of sticky notes (in their team color).
5. Explain that each team will work together to build a wall on their side of the butcher paper.
 - You will ask a question from the "Story Review" Activity Page. If a team raises a hand and answers correctly first, that team adds a "brick" to its side.
 - If a team answers incorrectly, the other team gets a chance to answer.
6. Continue until all questions are answered.
7. Congratulate the teams for building their walls together.

② What You Say

"Great job, friends! With God, anything is possible!"

"Nehemiah had an important job working for the king, but when he heard that the walls of his hometown were broken and the people were in trouble, he was really sad. So he prayed and asked God for help, then bravely asked the king if he could go rebuild the wall—and the king said yes! God even gave Nehemiah everything he needed for this big project.

"When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, he saw that the walls were in really bad shape. But instead of giving up, he gathered families, friends, and workers from all kinds of jobs to help. They weren't expert builders, but they trusted God and worked together to fix the wall. Even when people made fun of them or tried to stop them, Nehemiah prayed, and kept going.

"In just 52 days, they finished rebuilding the whole wall!"

"Rebuilding the wall was a huge task, but Nehemiah did the whole big task with God. Whenever Nehemiah needed help throughout rebuilding the walls, he prayed. When Nehemiah needed building supplies from the king, he prayed. When he needed help against their enemies, Nehemiah prayed. Nehemiah asked God for what he needed every step of the way, and God gave it to him.

"God never left Nehemiah—He gave Nehemiah everything he needed to do big things! God can help you do big things too!"

ACTIVITY TWO

Up in the Air Verse

Memory Verse Activity

MADE TO
Move

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

☐ Bible marked at Isaiah

40:31

☐ Balloon

Inclusive Pro Tips



To adjust the movement to this activity, invite the kids to stay seated and pass the beach ball around the circle as they recite the verse. You can do this on the floor or around a table.

① What You Do

1. Open the Bible and read Isaiah 40:31.
→ NOTE: You can call on an older kid in your group to read the verse too.
2. Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
3. Teach and review the motions with the group:
4. These are the motions for the NIV:
 - Those who trust (HOLD PALMS OPEN AND UP TO THE SKY.)
 - in the LORD (POINT BOTH HANDS UP TOWARD HEAVEN.)
 - will receive (PULL YOUR HANDS IN TOWARD YOUR CHEST LIKE YOU'RE REELING SOMETHING IN.)
 - new strength. (SHOW YOUR MUSCLES—FLEX BOTH ARMS WITH A STRONG FACE.)
 - They will fly as high as eagles. (FLAP YOUR ARMS SLOWLY AND GRACEFULLY LIKE WINGS.)
 - They will run (RUN IN PLACE.)
 - and not get tired. (CROSS YOUR ARMS IN FRONT OF YOU IN AN "X.")
 - They will walk (TAKE SLOW, STEADY WALKING STEPS IN PLACE.)
 - and not grow weak. (CROSS YOUR ARMS AGAIN IN AN "X.")
 - Isaiah 40:31 (OPEN PALMS TOGETHER LIKE A BIBLE.)

Move Together:

1. Instruct the kids to stand in a circle.
2. Explain that they will gently throw the balloons to another kid in the circle while reciting the next word of Isaiah 40:31.
3. Assist the kids with the words as you play.
4. Repeat if time allows. Challenge the kids to not let the beach ball touch the ground for the entire verse.

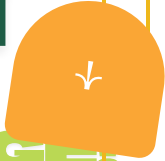
② What You Say

"Wow! Way to remember Isaiah 40:31 this month, friends!"

"Keeping the beach ball up was big job, and you helped each other to keep going. God helps us to keep going too! When we trust God, He gives us the strength we need, just like Isaiah 40:31 says. We're not meant to do hard things on our own. When something feels too big or too difficult, we can talk to God, just like Nehemiah did."

"God is strong. God is kind. Good is GOOD! God never gets tired or gives up. And because of who He is, we can live with confidence and keep going, even when things feel tough. Remember, God can help you do big things!"

MONTLY BIBLE VERSE CHALLENGE



What You Do

- Have all the kids recite the memory verse out loud together several times.
- Explain that this practice helps everyone learn and feel more confident.
- Ask the kids to raise their hands if they want to try saying the verse on their own.
- Invite one child at a time to come up to the Memory Verse Challenge Spot.
- When a child recites the verse, let them choose a prize from the prize box!
- Please tell the kids if they're not ready this time, that's okay---you can always try again next month!

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

GROUPS 4/4

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity



Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

Prayer

"God, thank You for always being with us! You never leave us, and You never run out of strength, because You are a Mighty, all-powerful God! When we don't feel brave or strong enough, remind us that we can trust You. Thank You for helping Nehemiah do a big thing, and thank You for helping us too. We want to live every day knowing that You go with us through everything. Teach us to ask You for everything we need. We want to go through life with You! We love You, God, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen!"

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to share the story of Nehemiah's challenge to rebuild the walls and gates around Jerusalem. Remind them to share the truth that just like God helped Nehemiah: [BOTTOM LINE] God can help you do big things.

1.What job did Nehemiah have in the palace?

He made sure no one poisoned the king's drink. He was the king's wine taster.

2.What bad news did Nehemiah hear from his homeland?

The wall was broken down, and the gates were burned. The people were in trouble.

3.True or False: Nehemiah didn't care because he had never been to Jerusalem.

False! He wept and prayed to God for days.

4.What did Nehemiah ask King Artaxerxes to let him do?

Go to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall.

5.How did God help Nehemiah when he talked to the king?

The king said yes AND gave him supplies and soldiers for the journey.

6.What did Nehemiah do first when he arrived in Jerusalem?

He waited three days, then went out at night to inspect the walls.

7.True or False: Everyone wanted Nehemiah to rebuild the wall.

False. Sanballat and Tobiah made fun of him and tried to stop him.

8.Were the people who helped Nehemiah expert wall builders?

Nope! They were priests, goldsmiths, perfume makers—even families and kids!

9.When people made fun of Nehemiah and the workers, what did Nehemiah do?

He prayed to God, asked God for help, and told the people to keep building.

10.What happened when the wall was halfway finished?

Enemies made a plan to attack and stop the work.

11.How did Nehemiah keep the people safe while they worked?

He had half the people stand guard and the other half build.

12.How many days did it take to finish the wall and gates?

52 days! That's less than two months.

13.Did Nehemiah and the people do this huge job on their own?

No way! God helped them every step of the way.

14.Finish this sentence: God can help you do _____.

BIG things!

TEAM 1



TEAM 2

