

**[NARRATOR]** We continued to build the wall. Those who carried supplies did their work with one hand. They held a weapon in the other hand.

**[NEHEMIAH]** Each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked. But the man who blew the trumpet stayed with me. When you hear the sound of the trumpet, join us at that location. Our God will fight for us!

**[NARRATOR]** So we continued the work. Half of the men held spears. We worked from the first light of sunrise until the stars came out at night.

**[NEHEMIAH]** All of them were trying to frighten us. They thought, "Their hands will get too weak to do the work. So it won't be completed." But I prayed to God. I said, "Make my hands stronger."

**[NARRATOR]** So the city wall was completed in 52 days.

**[NEHEMIAH]** All of our enemies heard about it. All of the nations that were around us became afraid. They weren't sure of themselves anymore. They realized that our God had helped us finish the work.

**[THE END]**



## READERS' THEATRE NEHEMIAH REBUILDS THE WALL

Nehemiah 1:3-11; 2:2-20; 4:2-21; 6:9-16 (NIRV)

*This Readers' Theatre Script is a compilation of various scripture quotes from Nehemiah 1:3-11; 2:2-20; 4:2-21; 6:9-16. The quotes are taken directly from the New International Readers' Version.*

Teacher assigns roles and sets everyone in place for scene. Non-readers and younger students may prefer to dress up and act out each sentence as the teacher and assistant read. Older, more proficient readers, may want to read parts. Nehemiah's role requires the most reading; choose a child who enjoys reading or an assistant. For smaller classes, roles may be combined.

1. HANANI (stands center stage)
2. NEHEMIAH (stands stage left)
3. KING (wears crown, sits on throne stage left)
4. QUEEN (wears crown, sit on throne next to king)
5. NARRATOR (stands stage right)
6. SANBALLAT
7. TOBIAH (sit down stage left)
8. GOD'S PEOPLE (sit in center stage circle around Hanani)

**Props** (If no props are available, use paper symbols or imaginary props.)

- Two crowns
- Goblet or cup
- Stackable "stones" (any stackable items such as canned foods, toy blocks, books, boxes, etc.)
- Tape and one piece of construction paper per family

### **Scene**

*Hanani brings news from Jerusalem to Nehemiah in Babylon. Nehemiah asks the king for permission to rebuild the Jerusalem wall. Side by side, fending off the enemy, God's people rebuild the wall.*

[HANANI] The wall of Jerusalem is broken down. Its gates have been burned with fire.

[NEHEMIAH] I'm praying for the people of Israel. We

Israelites have committed sins against You. All of us admit it. We haven't obeyed the commands, rules and laws You gave your servant Moses. You said, "If you people are not faithful, I will scatter you among the nations. But if you return to Me, I will bring you back. If you obey My commands, I will gather you together again." Give me success today. Help King Artaxerxes show me his favor. [Nehemiah

*brings cup to king.*]

[KING ARTAXERXES] Why are you looking so sad? You

aren't sick. You must be feeling sad deep down inside.

[NEHEMIAH] The city where my people of long ago are

buried has been destroyed. Fire has burned up its gates.

[KING ARTAXERXES] What do you want?

[NEHEMIAH] [Prays silently before speaking.] 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.

[QUEEN] How long will your journey take? When will you get

back? [Nehemiah shrugs his shoulders with no answer.]

[NARRATOR] It pleased the king to send him. Then at night

he took a few men with him to check out the walls.

[NEHEMIAH] [To God's people] 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. The God

of heaven will give us success. We serve Him.

[To build wall around Jerusalem, Nehemiah divides group into pairs called "families." He assigns roles of supplier and stacker within each family. Stackers stand side-by-side in a circle stacking stones and then connecting their stack with their neighbor's stack. Each supplier stands behind a stacker creating an outer circle. Supplier goes to stone pile and takes one stone at a time to the stacker.]

[NARRATOR] [As stone stacking begins] So they began that good

work. But Sanballat, the Horonite, heard about it. So did

Tobiah, the official from Ammon. All of them laughed at us.

They made fun of us.

[SANBALLAT] [As stacking continues] What are those Jews trying

to do? Can they make their city wall like new again?

[TOBIAH] What are they building? [Sanballat and Tobiah move

stone pile to farthest corner to slow building process.]

[NARRATOR] God's people repaired it until all of it was half as

high as we wanted it to be. The people worked with all their

heart. But Sanballat and Tobiah heard that Jerusalem's walls

continued to be repaired. All of them made evil plans to come and

fight against Jerusalem.

[NEHEMIAH] But we prayed to our God. We put guards on duty

day and night to watch out for danger.

[NARRATOR] [Stone stacker rolls construction paper into "spear,"

securing it with tape. Hold spear in one hand; supply stones in other

hand. Sanballat and Tobiah block the supplier's path, but must make

way when supplier touches them with spear.] He stationed the

people family-by-family. They had their swords, spears and bows

with them. From that day on, half of his men did the work. The

other half was given spears, shields, bows and armor.