

Bible background

Nehemiah 2:11-18; 8; 9; 10 and 12:27-43

Aim of lesson

To learn that we can work for God, and that God is pleased when we do.

Preparation required

You will need colouring materials, tape and scissors and all the activity sheets to finish the model city of Jerusalem. Any simple musical instruments would be useful.

Suggested outline of lesson

1. Remind the class of Nehemiah who wanted to build the walls round his city, Jerusalem. Tell the class that you are all going to practice building to help him. In a circle, with appropriate actions, sing verses 1-4 of the song 'Who Will Help Us Build The Wall?':
2. Tell the children that when Nehemiah and his friends got to Jerusalem they found it was a mess. All the walls were broken down and the gates burnt - just heaps of rubble everywhere. Tell the children to be bits of stone or wood lying higgledy-piggledy everywhere. Nehemiah decided to go round and inspect the walls. (Go round inspecting.) What a mess! We will have to clear away a lot of rubbish.
3. Ask the children to get up and sing verses 5-7 of the action song.
4. Continue making the large circular wall from the activity book.
5. When Nehemiah and his friends had finished the wall. They were so pleased they wanted to celebrate. Ask the children what they (the children) would do to celebrate. Tell them that Nehemiah (i) thanked God, (ii) read the Bible because they were so pleased God had helped them that they wanted to know how to please him, (iii) they had a party (Nehemiah 8:12) and (iv) they had a procession round the top of the finished wall, praising God as they went.
6. Have a procession like Nehemiah. If you can, go outside and walk round the whole building or garden. If it is impossible to go out, the class can walk round the outside of their model Jerusalem. Divide the class into two groups; the groups start together and go in opposite directions so that they meet on the far side. Use all the instruments you can find or make rice-shakers, tambourines, rolled-up paper trumpets and biscuit-tin drums. Ask the children to sing the song as they march. If it is impossible for your class to have a procession, you could make a large picture of all the people marching round Jerusalem, or plasticine people to go round the model wall. If you decide to have a little party (a plate of biscuits) at the end of the celebrations, point out that when Nehemiah and his friends had their party, they shared their party food with those who did not have any. Ask the children if they share their sweets etc, with those who have none.
7. If there is time, after building the wall you could sing 'Hooray, Hooray'.

Alternative activities

1. Build walls with whatever comes to hand and according to the space you have available! You could use; Plasticine, blocks, boxes, Lego or, if you have a sand tray, moisten the sand and use that to build a wall with sand castle towers or try building a stone wall with flat pebbles. Have some play figures or make Plasticine people to parade around your walls then give them a party with some Plasticine or play dough food.
2. Make instruments such as trumpets and shakers. (see ideas for lesson 115 for making shakers) Trumpets can be made from kitchen roll tubes or rolled up cardboard. Decorate your instruments and then have a grand procession.
3. Paint, print or make collage walls either individually or as a class. Add some happy people parading

Relevance to the children's lives

Nehemiah built the walls because he knew God would like him to do this. Ask the children how they can work for God and please him, e.g. helping at home, being kind to friends, showing a good example to baby brothers and sisters.

Prayer

The party is a good opportunity to have a thank-you prayer. Ask the children about times when they are happy - holidays etc. Do they remember to thank God? Bring out why they should thank God in each situation. Ask the children what each would like to thank God for and have each in turn say one line of the prayer.

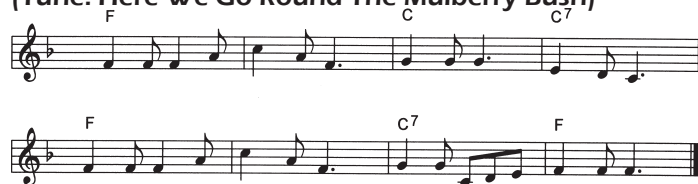
Verse

'Come let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.' Nehemiah 2:17.

Songs

Who will help us build the wall?

(Tune: Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush)



- v.1 Who will help us build the wall? (*fist over fist*)
build the wall?
build the wall?
Who will help us build the wall?
Build the wall of Jerusalem?
- v.2 Who will help us clear the rubbish? (*sweeping action*)
To build the wall of Jerusalem?
- v.3 Who will help us chisel the stone? (*chiselling*)
- v.4 Who will help us saw the wood? (*sawing*)
- v.5 This is the way to clear the rubbish
- v.6 This is the way we chisel the stone
- v.7 This is the way we saw the wood
- v.8 God has helped us build the wall

Music: Traditional.

Hooray, Hooray (Tune: Happy Holiday)



- v.1 Hooray, hooray, it's a happy holiday
Our God has helped us build the walls
It's a happy holiday.
- v.2 Hooray, hooray, it's a happy holiday
Thank you God for helping us
It's a happy holiday.

Music: Traditional.