

# HAVING COURAGE

This month we are learning about how we can have courage when we are facing something difficult or scary. No matter how old we get, we all have times when we feel afraid. The Bible tells us that God is always with us, and we can always depend on him for courage when we are feeling scared.



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The story of Daniel and the fiery furnace teaches us to always follow God, even when we are afraid of what might happen to us because of our obedience to him. Read Daniel 3:1–30 and the devotion in the middle of the Bible story.

DANIEL 3

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clay. And the fourth kingdom will be divided up. But it will still have some of the strength of iron. That's why you saw iron mixed with clay. <sup>42</sup>The toes were partly iron and partly clay. And the fourth kingdom will be partly strong and partly weak. <sup>43</sup>You saw the iron mixed with baked clay. And the fourth kingdom will be made up of all kinds of people. They won't hold together any more than iron mixes with clay.

<sup>44</sup>"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom. It will never be destroyed. And no other nation will ever take it over. It will crush all those other kingdoms. It will bring them to an end. But it will last forever. <sup>45</sup>That's what the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain means. Human hands didn't cut out the rock. It broke the statue to pieces. It smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver and gold.

"The great God has shown you what will take place in days to come. The dream is true. And you can trust the meaning of it that I have explained to you."

<sup>46</sup>Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed low in front of Daniel. He wanted to honor him. So he ordered that an offering and incense be offered up to him. <sup>47</sup>The king said to Daniel, "I'm sure your God is the greatest God of all. He is the Lord of kings. He explains mysteries. That's why you were able to explain the mystery of my dream."

<sup>48</sup>Then the king put Daniel in a position of authority. He gave him many gifts. He made him ruler over the city of Babylon and the towns around it. He put him in charge of all its other wise men. <sup>49</sup>The king also did what Daniel asked him to. He appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to help Daniel govern Babylon and the towns around it. Daniel himself remained at the royal court.

### A Gold Statue and a Blazing Furnace

**3** King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue. It was 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide. He set it up on the plain of Dura near the city of Babylon. <sup>2</sup>Then the king sent for the royal rulers, high officials and governors. He sent for the advisers, treasurers, judges and court officers. And he sent for all the other officials of

Babylon. He asked them to come to a special gathering to honor the statue he had set up. <sup>3</sup>So the royal rulers, high officials and governors came together. So did the advisers, treasurers, judges and court officers. All the other officials joined them. They came to honor the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They stood in front of it.

<sup>4</sup>Then a messenger called out loudly, "Listen, you people who come from every nation! Pay attention, you who speak other languages! Here is what the king commands you to do. <sup>5</sup>You will soon hear the sound of horns and flutes. You will hear zithers, lyres, harps and pipes. In fact, you will hear all kinds of music. When you do, you must fall down and worship the gold statue. That is the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. <sup>6</sup>If you don't, you will be thrown into a blazing furnace right away."

<sup>7</sup>All the people heard the sound of the horns and flutes. They heard the zithers, lyres, harps and other musical instruments. As soon as they did, they fell down and worshiped Nebuchadnezzar's gold statue. They were people from all nations no matter what language they spoke.

<sup>8</sup>At this time some people who studied the heavens came forward. They spoke against the Jews. <sup>9</sup>They said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, may you live forever! <sup>10</sup>Your Majesty has commanded everyone to fall down and worship the gold statue. You told them to do it when they heard the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, pipes and other musical instruments. <sup>11</sup>If they didn't, they would be thrown into a blazing furnace. <sup>12</sup>But you have appointed some Jews to help Daniel govern Babylon and the towns around it. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They don't pay any attention to you, King Nebuchadnezzar. They don't serve your gods. And they refuse to worship the gold statue you have set up."

<sup>13</sup>Nebuchadnezzar was very angry. He sent for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So they were brought to him. <sup>14</sup>The king said to them, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, is what I heard about you true? Don't you serve my gods? Don't you worship the

Start  
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DANIEL 3

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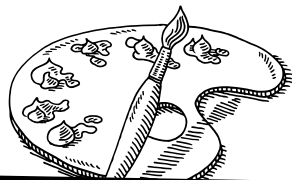
gold statue I set up? <sup>15</sup>You will hear the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, pipes and other musical instruments. When you do, fall down and worship the statue I made. If you will, that's very good. But if you won't, you will be thrown at once into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to save you from my power?"

<sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him. They said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we don't need to talk about this anymore. <sup>17</sup>We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive. He will save us from your power. <sup>18</sup>But we want you to know this, Your Majesty. Even if we knew that our God wouldn't

save us, we still wouldn't serve your gods. We wouldn't worship the gold statue you set up."

<sup>19</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar was very angry with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The look on his face changed. And he ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter than usual.

<sup>20</sup>He also gave some of the strongest soldiers in his army a command. He ordered them to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Then he told his men to throw them into the blazing furnace. <sup>21</sup>So they were tied up. Then they were thrown into the furnace. They were wearing their robes, pants, turbans and other clothes. <sup>22</sup>The king's



# TUESDAY

**"We might be thrown into the blazing furnace. But the God we serve is able to bring us out of it alive. He will save us from your power" (Daniel 3:17).**

**TODAY'S BIBLE READING:** Daniel 3:13–29

## WHEN TO DISOBEY

Sometimes you've got to stand up for what's right. Sometimes you even need to disagree with someone in authority.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were being held captive by King Nebuchadnezzar. They had no power. They were trapped!

But when the king told them to worship a false god, they would not obey. They did not put up a fuss about it. They didn't start a fight or shout and scream. They just told the king that they would not obey him.

Be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Obey God first. And when an adult wants you to do something you know is wrong, disobey. Quietly. Respectfully. Because God is your king, and he must be obeyed before anyone else.

**ASK**

**YOURSELF**

How should you stand up for what is right? Who should you obey before anyone else?

I have read this devotion.

For your next reading, turn to page 1067. If you want to read more, see 1 Timothy 4:11–16 on page 1500.

command was carried out quickly. The furnace was so hot that its flames killed the soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into it. <sup>23</sup> So the three men were firmly tied up. And they fell into the blazing furnace.

<sup>24</sup> Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet. He was so amazed he asked his advisers, “Didn’t we tie up three men? Didn’t we throw three men into the fire?”

They replied, “Yes, we did, Your Majesty.”

<sup>25</sup> The king said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire. They aren’t tied up. And the fire hasn’t even harmed them. The fourth man looks like a son of the gods.”

<sup>26</sup> Then the king approached the opening of the blazing furnace. He shouted, “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, come out! You who serve the Most High God, come here!”

So they came out of the fire. <sup>27</sup> The royal rulers, high officials, governors and advisers crowded around them. They saw that the fire hadn’t harmed their bodies. Not one hair on their heads was burned. Their robes weren’t burned either. And they didn’t even smell like smoke.

<sup>28</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “May the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be praised! He has sent his angel and saved his servants. They trusted in him. They refused to obey my command. They were willing to give up their lives. They would rather die than serve or worship any god except their own God. <sup>29</sup> No other god can save people this way. So I’m giving an order about the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. No one may say anything against him. That’s true no matter what language they speak. If they say anything against him, they’ll be cut to pieces. And their houses will be turned into piles of trash.”

<sup>30</sup> Then the king honored Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He gave them higher positions in the city of Babylon and the towns around it.

Nebuchadnezzar Dreams About a Tree

**4** I, King Nebuchadnezzar, am writing this letter.

I am sending it to people who live all over the world. I’m sending it to people of every nation no matter what language they speak.

May you have great success!

<sup>2</sup> I am pleased to tell you what has happened. The Most High God has done miraculous signs and wonders for me.

<sup>3</sup> His signs are great.

His wonders are mighty.

His kingdom will last forever.

His rule will never end.

<sup>4</sup> I was at home in my palace. I was content and very successful.

<sup>5</sup> But I had a dream that made me afraid. I was lying in bed. Then dreams and visions passed through my mind. They terrified me. <sup>6</sup> So I commanded that all the wise men in Babylon be brought to me. I wanted them to tell me what my dream meant. <sup>7</sup> Those who try to figure things out by using magic came. So did those who study the heavens. I told all of them what I had dreamed. But they couldn’t tell me what it meant. <sup>8</sup> Finally, Daniel came to me. He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god. The spirit of the holy gods is in him. I told him my dream.

<sup>9</sup> I said, “Belteshazzar, you are chief of the magicians. I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you. No mystery is too hard for you to figure out. Here is my dream. Tell me what it means. <sup>10</sup> Here are the visions I saw while I was lying in bed. I looked up and saw a tree standing in the middle of the land. It was very tall. <sup>11</sup> It had grown to be large and strong. Its top touched the sky. It could be seen anywhere on earth. <sup>12</sup> Its leaves were beautiful. It had a lot of fruit on it. It provided enough food for people and animals. Under the tree, the wild animals found safety. The birds lived in its branches. Every creature was fed from that tree.

<sup>13</sup> “While I was still lying in bed, I looked up. In my visions, I saw a holy one. He was a messenger. He

End  
Reading  
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Esther was a very brave woman who saved her people from being killed. She was courageous in order to help others. Read Esther 3:8-4:17 and memorize the Words to Treasure verse.

Start  
Reading  
Here

was the 12th year that Xerxes was king. It was in the first month. That was the month of Nisan. The lot chose the 12th month. That was the month of Adar. The lot was also called *pur*.

<sup>8</sup>Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "Certain people are scattered among the nations. They live in all of the territories in your kingdom. Their practices are different from the practices of all other people. They don't obey your laws. It really isn't good for you to put up with them.

<sup>9</sup>"If it pleases you, give the order to destroy them. I'll even add 375 tons of silver to the royal treasures. You can use it to pay the men who take care of the matter."

<sup>10</sup>So the king took his ring off his finger. The ring had his royal seal on it. He gave the ring to Haman. Haman was the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite. He was the enemy of the Jews.

<sup>11</sup>"Keep the money," the king said to Haman. "Do what you want to with those people."

<sup>12</sup>The king sent for the royal secretaries. It was the 13th day of the first month. The secretaries wrote down all of Haman's orders. They wrote them down in the writing of each territory in the kingdom. They also wrote them in the language of each nation. The orders were sent to the royal officials. They were also sent to the governors of the territories. And they went out to the nobles of the nations. The orders were written in the name of King Xerxes himself. And they were stamped with his own royal seal. <sup>13</sup>They were carried by messengers. They were sent to all of the king's territories.

The orders commanded people to destroy, kill and wipe out all of the Jews. That included young people and old people alike. It included women and little children. All of the Jews were supposed to be killed on a single day. That day was the 13th day of the 12th month. It was the month of Adar. The orders also commanded people to take the goods that belonged to the Jews.

<sup>14</sup>A copy of the order had to be sent out as law. It had to be sent to every territory in the kingdom. It had to be announced to the people of every nation. Then they would be ready for that day.

<sup>15</sup>The king commanded the messengers to go out. So they did. The order was sent out from the safest place in Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink wine.

## ESTHER 3-4

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But the people in the city were bewildered.

### Mordecai Talks Esther Into Helping the Jews

**4** Mordecai found out about everything that had been done. So he tore his clothes. He put on black clothes. He sat down in ashes. Then he went out into the city. He sobbed out loud. He cried bitter tears. <sup>2</sup>But he only went as far as the palace gate. That's because no one who was dressed in black clothes was allowed to go through it.

<sup>3</sup>All of the Jews were very sad. They didn't eat anything. They sobbed and cried. Many of them put on black clothes. They were lying down in ashes. They did all of those things in every territory where the king's order and law had been sent.

<sup>4</sup>Esther's eunuchs and female attendants came to her. They told her about Mordecai. So she became very troubled. She wanted him to take his black clothes off. So she sent him other clothes to wear. But he wouldn't accept them. <sup>5</sup>Then Esther sent for Hathach. He was one of the king's eunuchs. He had been appointed to take care of her. She ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai. She wanted to know why he was so upset.

<sup>6</sup>So Hathach went out to see Mordecai. He was in the open area in front of the palace gate. <sup>7</sup>Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him. He told him about the exact amount of money Haman had promised to add to the royal treasures. He said Haman wanted it to be used to pay some men to destroy the Jews.

<sup>8</sup>Mordecai also gave Hathach a copy of the order. It commanded people to wipe out the Jews. The order had been sent from Susa.

Mordecai told Hathach to show the order to Esther. He wanted him to explain it to her. He told him to try and get her to go to the king. He wanted her to beg for mercy. He wanted her to make an appeal to the king for her people.

<sup>9</sup>Hathach went back. He reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. <sup>10</sup>Then Esther directed him to give an answer to Mordecai. She told him to say, <sup>11</sup>"There is a certain law that everyone knows about. All of the king's officials know about it. The people in the royal territories know about

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ESTHER 4-5

## Words to Treasure

**I'll go to the king. I'll do it even though it's against the law. And if I have to die, I'll die.**

Esther 4:16



it. It applies to any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner courtyard without being sent for. It says they must be put to death. But there is a way out. Suppose the king reaches out his gold rod toward them. Then their lives will be spared. But 30 days have gone by since the king sent for me.”

<sup>12</sup>Esther’s words were reported to Mordecai. <sup>13</sup>Then he sent back an answer. He said, “You live in the king’s palace. But don’t think that just because you are there you will be the only Jew who will escape. <sup>14</sup>What if you don’t say anything at this time? Then help for the Jews will come from another place. But you and your family will die. Who knows? It’s possible that you became queen for a time just like this.”

<sup>15</sup>Then Esther sent a reply to Mordecai. She said, <sup>16</sup>“Go. Gather together all of the Jews who are in Susa. And fast for my benefit. Don’t eat or drink anything for three days. Don’t do it night or day. I and my attendants will fast just as you do. Then I’ll go to the king. I’ll do it even though it’s against the law. And if I have to die, I’ll die.”

<sup>17</sup>So Mordecai went away. He carried out all of Esther’s directions.

### Esther Invites the King and Haman to a Big Dinner

**5** On the third day Esther put her royal robes on. She stood in the inner courtyard of the palace. It was in front of the king’s hall.

The king was sitting on his royal throne in the hall. He was facing the entrance. <sup>2</sup>He saw Queen Esther standing in the courtyard. He was pleased with her. So he reached out toward her the gold rod that was in his hand. Then Esther approached him. She touched the tip of the rod.

<sup>3</sup>The king asked, “What is it, Queen Es-

ther? What do you want? I’ll give it to you. I’ll even give you up to half of my kingdom.”

<sup>4</sup>Esther replied, “King Xerxes, if it pleases you, come to a big dinner today. I’ve prepared it for you. Please have Haman come with you.”

<sup>5</sup>“Bring Haman at once,” the king said to his servants. “Then we’ll do what Esther asks.”

So the king and Haman went to the big dinner Esther had prepared. <sup>6</sup>As they were drinking wine, the king asked Esther the same question again. He said, “What do you want? I’ll give it to you. What do you want me to do for you? I’ll even give you up to half of my kingdom.”

<sup>7</sup>Esther replied, “Here is what I want. Here is my appeal to you. <sup>8</sup>I hope you will show me your favor. I hope you will be pleased to give me what I want. And I hope you will be pleased to listen to my appeal. If you are, I’d like you and Haman to come tomorrow to the big dinner I’ll prepare for you. Then I’ll answer your question.”

### Haman Brags About Being Invited to Esther’s Dinner

<sup>9</sup>That day Haman was happy. So he left the palace in a good mood. But then he saw Mordecai at the palace gate. He noticed that Mordecai didn’t stand up when he walked by. In fact, Mordecai didn’t have any respect for him at all. So he burned with anger against him. <sup>10</sup>But Haman was able to control himself. He went on home.

Haman called his friends and his wife Zeresh together. <sup>11</sup>He bragged to them about how rich he was. He talked about how many sons he had. He spoke about all of the ways the king had honored him. He bragged about how the king had given him a higher position than any of the other nobles and officials had. <sup>12</sup>“And that’s not all!” Haman added. “I’m the only person Queen Esther invited to come with the king to the big dinner she gave. Now she has invited me along with the king tomorrow.

<sup>13</sup>“But even all of that doesn’t satisfy me. I won’t be satisfied as long as I see that Jew Mordecai sitting at the palace gate.”

<sup>14</sup>Haman’s wife Zeresh and all of his friends spoke up. They said to him, “Get a pole. In the morning, ask the king to have Mordecai put to death. Have the pole stuck through his body. Set it up at a place where it will be 75 feet above the ground. Every-

End  
Reading  
Here

When the king asked why Nehemiah was sad, Nehemiah was afraid to answer truthfully. But he found courage in God, and his honest answer led to wonderful things for God's people. Read the following devotion and discuss how your child can be a Nehemiah in a situation they might be going through.

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## Nehemiah

## NEHEMIAH

**I prayed to the God of heaven. Then I answered the king.**

## NEHEMIAH 2:4-5

**N**ehemiah (Nee-huh-MY-uh) stood next to the king's table in Persia. He watched as a servant poured fresh wine into the king's cup. The cup was heavy, golden, and covered with jewels. Nehemiah took a sip of the wine and waited. When nothing happened to him, he knew the wine was safe for the king.



Nehemiah handed the cup to the king, a frown on his face. He had never been sad in front of the king before. He hoped the king wouldn't notice.



But the king did notice. And he wondered what was wrong with Nehemiah. "Why are you so sad?" the king asked Nehemiah.



Nehemiah shook with fear. No one was supposed to bother the king with personal problems. How should he answer? Nehemiah bravely looked at the king and answered straight from his heart. "Why shouldn't I be sad? My home in Judah is in ruins. The wall of the city is broken down. The gates to the city have been burned. And my people there are suffering."

"What can I do?" the king asked.

Now Nehemiah shook with surprise instead of fear. In his heart, he prayed to God for wisdom. Then he said, "Let me go to Jerusalem. I'll rebuild the wall there. Could you give me letters to the kings of the lands I'll have to cross to get there? Then they'll let me go through safely. I could also use a letter to the man who takes care of your forests. I'll need logs for rebuilding the wall and gates."

The king gave Nehemiah all that he asked for. Soon after, Nehemiah left for Jerusalem. He inspected the wall and made plans. Then he led the people of Jerusalem in a great rebuilding project. The walls of Jerusalem and its gates were soon safe and strong again.

**Be a Nehemiah**

God gave Nehemiah the strength, the bravery, and the wisdom to answer the king truthfully. The Bible says that before Nehemiah answered, he prayed. You can too. God will help you just like he helped Nehemiah. You just have to ask.

**Read the Whole Story: Nehemiah 2:1-8**

Go to page 578 for the next Super Hero.

What should we do when we are afraid? This devotional from Jude reminds us that we should pray always, including when we need courage from the Holy Spirit.



## What Should I Pray?

*BUT you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray.*

—JUDE 20

**D**o you ever wonder what you should pray? Maybe you're going through a tough situation and you don't know what to do. Maybe you have a choice to make and you're afraid to make the wrong one. Or maybe everything is fine and you don't feel the need to pray.

The good thing is when you give your heart to Jesus, the Holy Spirit guides and helps you when you pray. Even when you think you know what to pray, the Holy Spirit prays for you. So when you're going through a tough time, let the Holy Spirit guide you and help you when you pray. When you have a choice to make, let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. And when everything seems to be going fine, let the Holy Spirit guide and help you when you pray. Thanks to the help of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, you can go boldly to God in prayer.

Dear God, thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Help me not to be afraid to come to you in prayer. Amen.






This illustration shows the courageous men with an angel in the fiery furnace.



**The Fiery Furnace: *Daniel 3***

Key Idea: I dedicate my life to God's plan.

Nehemiah reminds us that God wants us to live differently than others, and that takes courage. Read the devotion below and work through the activities on the next 5 pages.



**NEHEMIAH**

**Week 13, Day 1**

## Read About It

**God wants people who love him to be different than those who don't.**

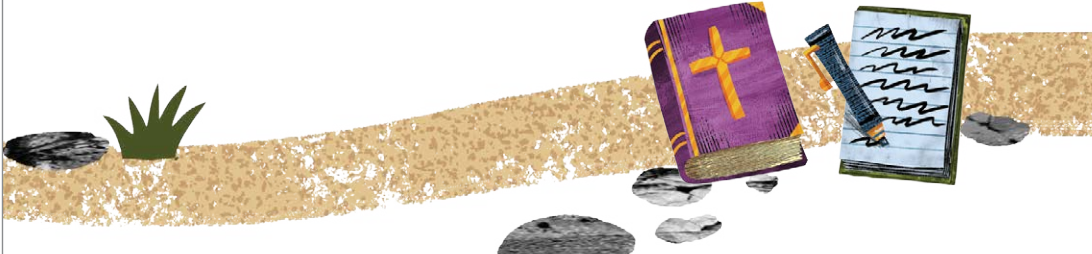
Nehemiah was in Persia serving the king. Then he heard something about Jerusalem that made him very sad. He heard that its walls were still broken down. This made it hard to tell who were God's people and who weren't.

So, Nehemiah went back to Jerusalem. He helped God's people rebuild the wall around the city. It was hot and sweaty work. And that wasn't the only hard part! The other people living around Jerusalem didn't want God's people to build the wall! They wanted God's people to be just like them! And many of God's people wanted to be just like those other people. After all, who wants to be different from everyone else? Would God's people be willing to turn away from God to be like everyone else?

Nehemiah encouraged God's people to be different! And God's people listened to him. God's people decided they would live the way God had told them to live. By doing that, they would be a blessing to the people living around them. They would show those people the new, better life God wanted for them. God's people could only do that if they were living differently than the people around them.

**How does doing the right thing help people see what God is like? Can people see something true about God by looking at what you do?**

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Week 13, Day 2

## Think About It

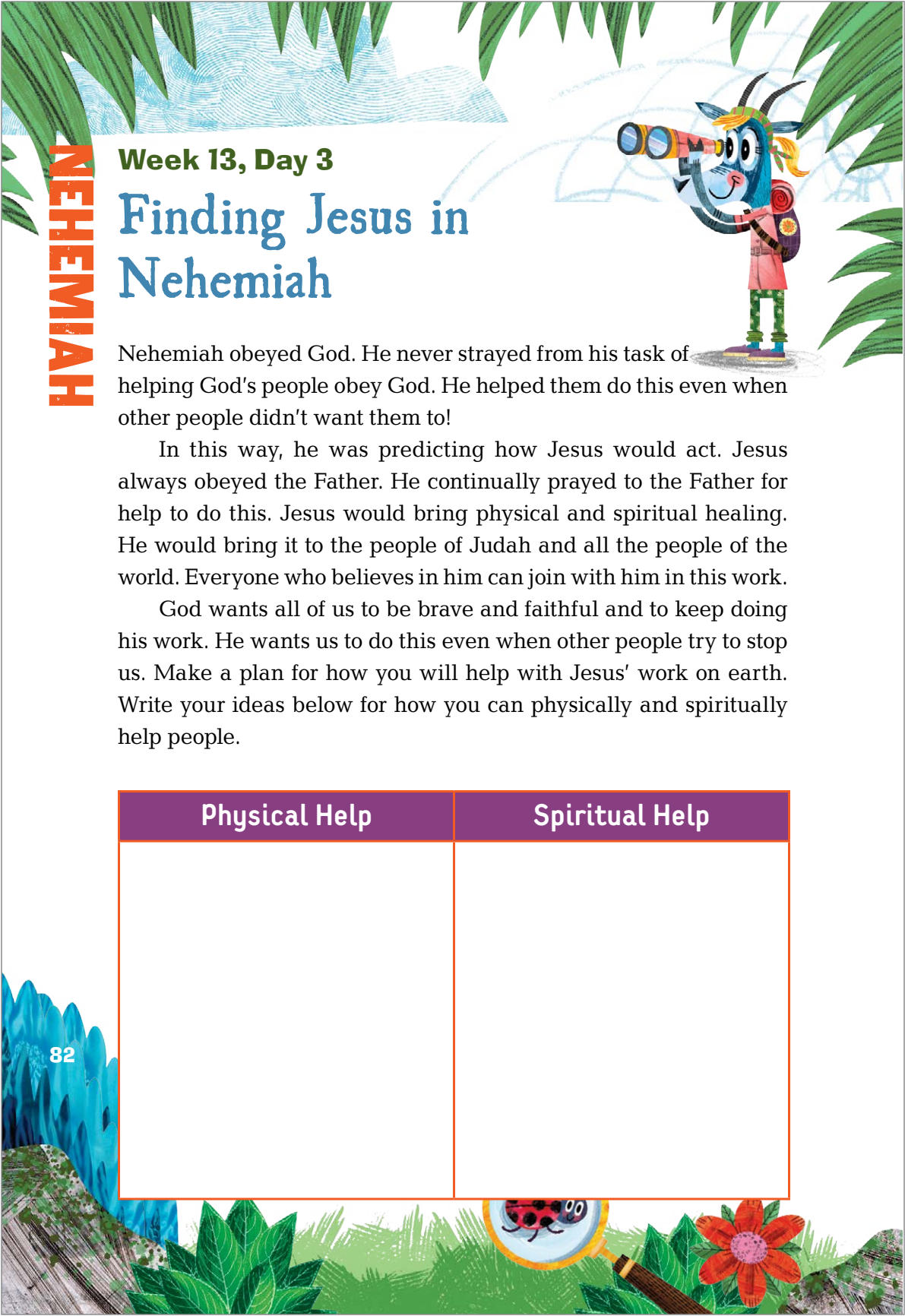
God wants people to be able to see the better life he wants for them. So, God's people have to live differently than those who don't know God. We do that by living as God has told us in the Bible. Then other people will be able to see the difference. We'll be showing them the better life God wants them to have too! Can people see that you live differently because you follow God? Can they spot the differences?

Let's see if *you* can spot the differences in the two drawings below. Thinky has a twin! Well, almost. Can you find at least five differences between the Thinky on the left and the Thinky on the right? Circle each one you find.



NEHEMIAH

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**NEHEMIAH**

**Week 13, Day 3**

# Finding Jesus in Nehemiah

Nehemiah obeyed God. He never strayed from his task of helping God's people obey God. He helped them do this even when other people didn't want them to!

In this way, he was predicting how Jesus would act. Jesus always obeyed the Father. He continually prayed to the Father for help to do this. Jesus would bring physical and spiritual healing. He would bring it to the people of Judah and all the people of the world. Everyone who believes in him can join with him in this work.

God wants all of us to be brave and faithful and to keep doing his work. He wants us to do this even when other people try to stop us. Make a plan for how you will help with Jesus' work on earth. Write your ideas below for how you can physically and spiritually help people.

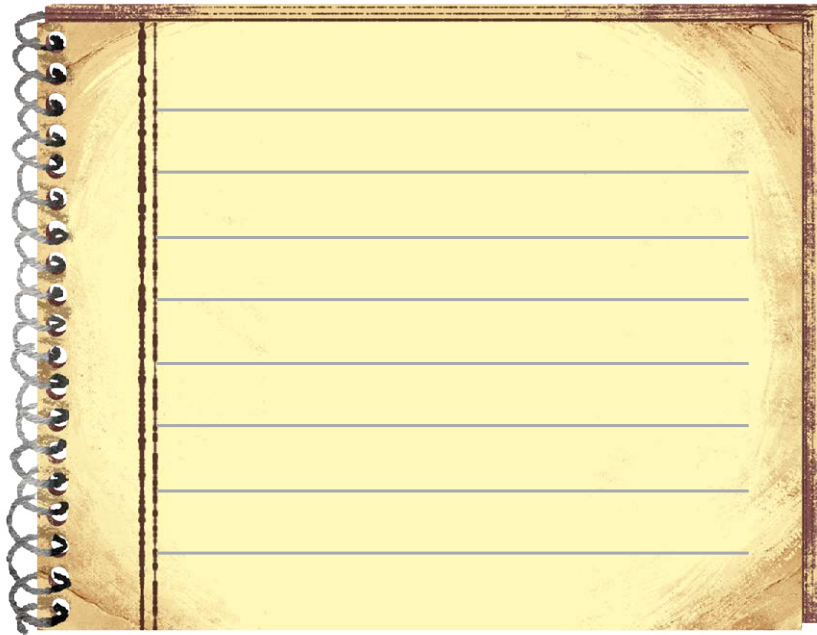
Physical Help	Spiritual Help

Week 13, Day 4

# Write About It

NEHEMIAH

On day 2 of this week, you spotted the differences between the two pictures. Think about your own life. Do people see anything different about you because you believe in Jesus? Think about the things you do differently than people who don't know Jesus. Write a few of those things in the notebook.



Did you ever do something even though you know God said it was wrong? Think about why you did it. How did it keep other people from seeing the better life God wants for them? Write your thoughts here.

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**NEHEMIAH**

**Week 13, Day 5**  
**Pray About It**

Dear God,

*Thank you for telling me how to live the best possible life. Sometimes it is hard to do. Sometimes people want me to do things you've said are wrong. Those things can hurt me. But sometimes I do them anyway. Please forgive me and help me to live more like Jesus. Then my life will become more like the way you want it to be. And then I will be showing other people a better way to live too. I ask you for these things because I believe in Jesus.*

*Amen.*

Just like the Jews rebuilt the wall of their city, we also need to lay down bricks to build our best life possible. In the blocks below, write six things that can help you live the best life possible.



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Week 13, Day 6

# Do Something About It

NEHEMIAH

God's people started to be like the people who lived around them. Those people didn't believe in God! Nehemiah told God's people they had to be different. They had to show other people a better way to live. That's the way of life God had told them about.

Use the space below to write your plan for living the way God wants you to live. Your plan might include ways you will praise God or help other people. There are all sorts of things you can do! These things will show other people the better life God wants for them too.

It is important to follow up. After a few days, ask yourself how your plan is working out.

**I will ask God to help me to**

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## PRAYER CARDS

### STUFF YOU NEED:

- Prayer Card Insert Activity Sheet (see next page)
- sturdy, colorful paper
- markers
- glue
- scissors
- hole punch
- string, ribbon or yarn

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Cut sturdy paper into half sheets.
2. Share with your child, Esther got ready for her challenge by making sure her heart was close to God. She fasted and prayed for three days. Briefly explain the concept of fasting—giving up food or something else important to you so you can devote your energy to hearing from God. Give your child a half-sheet of paper.
3. Ask them to fold it in half again.
4. Give your child an activity sheet to have them cut out the inserts on the bold lines.
5. Glue the insert inside the card.
6. Hole punch both parts of the card.
7. Thread string, ribbon, or yarn through the holes so the card ties shut.
8. Children can use markers to decorate the prayer card as they like.
9. When the projects are finished, look at the insides together and allow a few minutes to consider how they would fill out the first half.
10. Discuss the following questions:
  - What did Esther do that took courage?
  - Tell me something you have to do that takes courage.

Share with your child to follow Esther's example when they face something tough. Encourage them to get their heart ready by getting close to God.



# PRAYER CARD INSERT

Follow the directions your teacher gives you for creating Prayer Cards.

<p><b>Something hard I have to do is...</b></p>	<p><b>This is when I prayed to get my heart ready ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
<p><b>Something that keeps me from getting close to God is ...</b></p>	
<p><b>Something hard I have to do is...</b></p>	<p><b>This is when I prayed to get my heart ready ...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
<p><b>Something that keeps me from getting close to God is ...</b></p>	

## COURAGE CLUTCH

### STUFF YOU NEED:

- Deflated balloons
- Flour
- Funnels
- Scoops or large spoons

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read Esther 3:8-4:17 from the Bible if your child is unfamiliar with the story of Esther.
2. Share with your child that sometimes we have to be brave even when we are also nervous.
3. Explain that they are going to make a Courage Clutch to have something to squeeze when they are nervous.
4. Have your child insert a funnel in the neck of the balloon.
5. Scoop flour into the funnel.
6. Fill the balloon until it's the size of a fist.
7. Tie it closed.

As your child works on this activity, talk about how they might use the Courage Clutch to help them pray when they have to do something hard.

### Also discuss:

- What kinds of situations make them nervous?
- What can they learn from Esther about how to handle those situations?

Share that Esther is a great example of being brave enough to do something hard. She knew she could help a lot of other people, and she asked God to help her be brave.

## HEROES NEED HELP TOO

### STUFF YOU NEED:

- Heroes Need Help Too Activity Sheet (see next page)
- Pencils
- Bible

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Read Esther 3:8-4:17 from the Bible if your child is unfamiliar with the story of Esther.
2. Give your child the Heroes Need Help Too activity sheet.
3. Talk to your child about heroes in general and start with Bible-time heroes.
  - Where does the bravery and determination come from?
  - How do they ask for God's help?
  - Is asking God always automatic?
4. Then talk about heroes of today, concentrating on questions such as where their bravery comes from and do they think these people also rely on God's love.
5. On the activity sheet, have your child write down questions that they would ask Esther about her actions and feelings as she approached the king and how she may have felt afterward.
6. Discuss your child's questions together.

# HEROES NEED HELP TOO

Think about Bible heroes and today's heroes. Where does their bravery come from? Write 8 questions you might ask Esther if you were a reporter writing an article about her actions to save her people. Then interview Esther. Write her answers on the back of the handout.

1. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Question: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## FACING DIFFICULTY

### STUFF YOU NEED:

- 3-5 small notecards
- Pen or pencil

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Have a talk with your child about the fact that no matter who you are, you will face difficult situations; most of the time, people need some type of help or guidance in hard times.
  - What kinds of difficult situations does your child (or others their age) face?
  - Name some that their siblings, parents, grandparents, or other adults face?
  - What helps people get through tough situations?
  - Do you think the same things work for everyone? Why or why not?
  - How could a person's faith in the Lord help in a difficult situation?
2. Share about a time when you were faced with a difficult situation.
3. Ask them to talk about their faith and how knowing God helped them through the tough time. Were there specific Scripture verses or prayers that were inspirational? Share them as well.
4. Have your child write down prayers that ask God for his help in tough times.
5. Post them in their room or bind them with a staple to make a prayer book.

**MORE HEROES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

.....

For each hero on the left, draw a line to the matching deed on the right.

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Ehud (Judges 3)       | defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel           |
| Jephthah (Judges 11)  | kept praying though he was threatened with hungry lions |
| Elijah (1 Kings 18)   | used a hidden sword to kill an enemy king               |
| Elisha (2 Kings 4)    | redeemed Ruth's life by marrying her                    |
| Boaz (Ruth 4)         | rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem                       |
| Samuel (1 Samuel 16)  | anointed David to be king of Israel                     |
| Esther (Esther 4)     | saved a widow's sons from being taken as slaves         |
| Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2) | defeated the Ammonites but lost his daughter            |
| Job (Job 1)           | stayed faithful to God after losing everything          |
| Daniel (Daniel 6)     | risked her life to save all the Jews in Persia          |

**MORE HEROES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT** *Answer key*

For each hero on the left, draw a line to the matching deed on the right.

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Ehud (Judges 3)       | defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel <b>[ELIJAH]</b>           |
| Jephthah (Judges 11)  | kept praying though he was threatened with hungry lions <b>[DANIEL]</b> |
| Elijah (1 Kings 18)   | used a hidden sword to kill an enemy king <b>[EHUD]</b>                 |
| Elisha (2 Kings 4)    | redeemed Ruth's life by marrying her <b>[BOAZ]</b>                      |
| Boaz (Ruth 4)         | rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem <b>[NEHEMIAH]</b>                     |
| Samuel (1 Samuel 16)  | anointed David to be king of Israel <b>[SAMUEL]</b>                     |
| Esther (Esther 4)     | saved a widow's sons from being taken as slaves <b>[ELISHA]</b>         |
| Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2) | defeated the Ammonites but lost his daughter <b>[JEPHTHAH]</b>          |
| Job (Job 1)           | stayed faithful to God after losing everything <b>[JOB]</b>             |
| Daniel (Daniel 6)     | risked her life to save all the Jews in Persia <b>[ESTHER]</b>          |

## HEROES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

.....

For each hero on the left, draw a line to the matching deed on the right.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Samson (Judges 16)   | led an army whose commander was afraid                     |
| Gideon (Judges 7)    | destroyed a Philistine temple by pushing over pillars      |
| Moses (Exodus 12)    | saved many people from starving during a famine in Egypt   |
| Joshua (Joshua 3)    | led the Israelites into the Promised Land after Moses died |
| Joseph (Genesis 41)  | defeated a giant warrior named Goliath                     |
| David (1 Samuel 17)  | helped people and animals survive a great flood            |
| Deborah (Judges 4)   | used a tent peg to kill the commander of an enemy army     |
| Abraham (Genesis 12) | helped the Israelite spies in Jericho                      |
| Noah (Genesis 6)     | led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt                 |
| Jael (Judges 4)      | left his country to go live in an unknown land             |



**HEROES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT** *Answer Key*

.....

For each hero on the left, draw a line to the matching deed on the right.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Samson (Judges 16)   | led an army whose commander was afraid <b>[DEBORAH]</b>                    |
| Gideon (Judges 7)    | destroyed a Philistine temple by pushing over pillars <b>[SAMSON]</b>      |
| Moses (Exodus 12)    | saved many people from starving during a famine in Egypt <b>[JOSEPH]</b>   |
| Joshua (Joshua 3)    | led the Israelites into the Promised Land after Moses died <b>[JOSHUA]</b> |
| Joseph (Genesis 41)  | defeated a giant warrior named Goliath <b>[DAVID]</b>                      |
| David (1 Samuel 17)  | helped people and animals survive a great flood <b>[NOAH]</b>              |
| Deborah (Judges 4)   | used a tent peg to kill the commander of an enemy army <b>[JAEEL]</b>      |
| Abraham (Genesis 12) | helped the Israelite spies in Jericho <b>[RAHAB]</b>                       |
| Noah (Genesis 6)     | led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt <b>[MOSES]</b>                  |
| Jael (Judges 4)      | left his country to go live in an unknown land <b>[ABRAHAM]</b>            |