**Lesson 91: Responding to a Broken World**

# Teacher's Prep

* **Games**
	+ **Pretzel Spelling**
		- Materials:
			* A bag of mini pretzels (about one inch wide). Each child will need about 30 pretzels
			* Tables
			* Bowls to hold pretzels for each table group
			* Optional: plates or paper on which to put pretzels
	+ **Fishing with Magnets**
		- See this website for the basic concept of the game
			* <https://www.doodlecraftblog.com/2013/01/pocket-sized-magnetic-fishing-set-in.html>
		- Note: for this game, it would be good to have long sticks, like broomsticks. One can buy broomstick shafts at the dollar store.
		- Magnets do not need to be ring shaped, though a ring shape would be ideal for attaching a string securely to the magnet. If you have a different shape, you will probably want to use tape to tie the magnet securely to the string that functions as a “fishing line.”
		- Instead of fish, you can save time by simply having multicolor paper clips, and you can ask the children to target just one color, e.g. the red paper clips.
		- You may want to attach some paper cutouts of fish to some paper clips, and say those special fish are worth extra points.
		- Materials:
			* Broomsticks -- one per group of five
			* Strings -- one per broomstick, about one meter long each, so that the magnet will swing from side to side to make the game more challenging.
			* One magnet per broomstick (you can buy magnets at Home Depot, or maybe the dollar store)
			* Tape to attach string securely to the magnet.
			* A bag of multi-colored paper clips (200-400 paper clips would be good).
			* A small bucket or container for each team to drop off the paper clips that children gather
	+ **Stick Note Challenge**
		- Materials:
			* two pads of sticky notes per group of four (You can buy the cheap no-name type from the Dollar store, as quality is not important. You may also be interested in buying mini sticky notes if they are cheaper)
* **Main Activity (T-shirt Making):**
	+ Concept:
		- Get blank T-shirts, and decorate them with fabric paints and fabric markers
	+ Materials:
		- Blank T-shirts (these can be found in bulk on Amazon)
		- Fabric paints
		- Fabric markers, or possibly, permanent markers
		- Optional: cardboard or other material to put into the t-shirt during the crafting process, so that fabric markers do not bleed through to the other side.

# Intro

**SLIDE 1**

* **Gathering**
	+ Teacher: before the lesson, ensure that the tables and materials for the pretzel spelling game are set up.

**SLIDE 2**

* + *How was your week?*

**SLIDE 3**

* **Intro Game: Pretezel Spelling**
	+ Instructions
		- *Let's start this lesson with a game! It's called Pretzel Spelling!*
		- *In a moment, you'll all get a bunch of pretzels and some space on a table, and you'll get a chance to chew your pretzels into letters!*
		- *We'll take five minutes to try to chew as many different letters of the alphabet as you can. They can be small letters or big letters. But, try to make every letter different, so if you’ve already made an A, you can make a B or a C, and so on.*
		- *Now, let's all find a spot on a table, and I'll tell you when to start!*
		- Teacher: give the children about five minutes to chew different letters of the alphabet

**SLIDE 4**

* + **Debrief**
		- *We played this game because it makes us really slow down and work on our letters. And, the game would be even slower if we wanted to spell words with our letters. So, this game reminds us that sometimes words can take a lot of time.*
* **Relevance**

**SLIDE 5**

* + *But, that’s okay! Sometimes in life it's not important to say a lot of words.*
	+ *And, one of those times is when we are praying.*
	+ *Jesus taught us that when we pray, we don't need to keep saying a lot of words, because our heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask Him.*
	+ *But, Jesus also taught us to keep praying and not give up, because God listens to our prayers, and He answers our prayers if we ask for the right things.*
	+ *And, one of the best times to ask for things is when we see trouble in the world.*
	+ *That's what our lesson is about.*
* **Big Question**

**SLIDE 6**

* + *Our big question today is:*
		- *What should we do about the trouble we see in the world?*
* **Big Idea**

**SLIDE 7**

* + *Our big idea today is: We should pray.*
		- *1. We should pray about what GOD is doing*
		- *2. We should pray about what WE are doing*
* **Bible Reference**

**SLIDE 8**

* + *We'll learn this lesson from a person named Nehemiah, who was a very good man. His story was put in the Bible so that he could show us the right way to do things.*
	+ *Let's watch the cartoon version of his story first.*

**SLIDE 9**

* + Teacher: play this video:
		- God's Story: Nehemiah, by Crossroads Kids' Club
		- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fifL0TcGrY>
	+ *Today we're going to focus on the start of the story when Nehemiah first heard about the way his people were in trouble, and he started to pray.*

**SLIDE 10**

* + *Nehemiah 1:1-11 (ICB)*
		- *These are the words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah.*
		- *I, Nehemiah, was in the capital city of Susa. It was in the month of Kislev. This was in the twentieth year.*

**SLIDE 11**

* + - *2 One of my brothers named Hanani came from Judah. Some other men were with him. I asked them about the Jews who lived through the captivity. And I also asked about Jerusalem.*

**SLIDE 12**

* + - *3 They answered, “Nehemiah, those who are left from the captivity are back in the area of Judah. But they are in much trouble and are full of shame. The wall around Jerusalem is broken down. And its gates have been burned.”*

**SLIDE 13**

* + - *4 When I heard these things, I sat down and cried for several days. I was sad and did not eat food. I prayed to the God of heaven.*

**SLIDE 14**

* + - *5 I said, “Lord, God of heaven, you are the great God who is to be respected. You keep your agreement of love with those who love you and obey your commands.*

**SLIDE 15**

* + - *6 Listen carefully. Look at me. Hear the prayer your servant is praying to you day and night. I am praying for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites have done against you. My father’s family and I have sinned against you.*

**SLIDE 16**

* + - *7 We have been wicked toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, rules and laws you gave your servant Moses.*

**SLIDE 17**

* + - *8 “Remember what you taught your servant Moses. You said, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations.*

**SLIDE 18**

* + - *9 But if you come back to me and obey my commands, I will gather your people. I will gather them from the far ends of the earth. And I will bring them from captivity to where I have chosen to be worshiped.’*

**SLIDE 19**

* + - *10 “They are your servants and your people. You have saved them with your great strength and power.*

**SLIDE 20**

* + - *11 Lord, listen carefully to my prayer. I am your servant. And listen to the prayers of your servants who love to honor you. Give me, your servant, success today. Allow this king to show kindness to me.”*
		- *I was the one who served wine to the king.*

# Point 1

**SLIDE 21**

* *We should pray about what GOD is doing*

**SLIDE 22**

* **Game: Fishing with Magnets**
	+ Instructions
		- Teacher's setup
			* See Teacher's Preparation section of the lesson above for preparation details.
			* Split the children into teams--as many teams as there are fishing rods.
			* Each team should go to a corner of the room
			* Give each team a bucket or container in which they can put the paper clips they collect.
			* Spread out paper clips so that one magnet can only pick up one or two at a time.
		- *Let's start this point with a game! We will be fishing with magnets! It's a simple game. We'll split into teams. Each team will have one corner of the room as their main base. And, each team will have a fishing rod. To play, you’ll all take turns using the fishing rod to get as many of the RED paper clips as you can.*
		- *Once your magnet is full and can't pick up any more, you can go back to your corner, and drop off the paper clips into a bucket, and the next person can go get some more.*
		- Teacher: run several rounds so that each one gets a chance to use the fishing rods. You may consider keeping score, depending on how competitive you want the game to be.

**SLIDE 23**

* + **Debrief**
		- *In this game, you were all looking for the red paper clips. And, you might have picked up some other colors along the way. But, what happens if you pick up too many other colors? Then your magnet gets full, and you can’t pick up the red paper clips anymore!*
		- *And that's what it's like with us and God too. Some people's hearts are so full of other things that they don't have space for God. That's what happened to the people of Israel, and that's why they lost their land and their enemies came and burned their city down.*
* **Bible Reference**

**SLIDE 24**

* + *So, Nehemiah starts his prayer by talking about all these terrible things that had happened. Let's read the first part of his prayer again.*
	+ *Nehemiah 1:5-9 (ICB)*

**SLIDE 25**

* + - *5 I said, “Lord, God of heaven, you are the great God who is to be respected. You keep your agreement of love with those who love you and obey your commands.*

**SLIDE 26**

* + - *6 Listen carefully. Look at me. Hear the prayer your servant is praying to you day and night. I am praying for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites have done against you. My father’s family and I have sinned against you.*
		- *7 We have been wicked toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, rules and laws you gave your servant Moses.*

**SLIDE 27**

* + - *8 “Remember what you taught your servant Moses. You said, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations.*

**SLIDE 28**

* + - *9 But if you come back to me and obey my commands, I will gather your people. I will gather them from the far ends of the earth. And I will bring them from captivity to where I have chosen to be worshiped.’*
* **Explanation**

**SLIDE 29**

* + *So, Nehemiah started his prayer by remembering who God was. God is the great God, and He is the promise keeping God. God had told His people if they turned away from Him, God would take away their land. God had warned His people over and over again. But, God’s people kept doing what was evil, so God did exactly what He said. God took away their land, and it was very sad.*

**SLIDE 30**

* + *But God had made another promise -- that if His people turned back to God and obeyed Him, then God would bring them back again.*
	+ *Nehemiah remembered all these things when he prayed. So, when he prayed, he understood why things were so difficult, but he also found hope.*
* **Application**

**SLIDE 31**

* + *And, we can pray like that too. Nehemiah's story is in the Bible to teach us, so that we would do the same thing. When we hear of bad news, and when we see terrible things happening, we should pray. And, when we pray, we don't need to start off by telling God what to do. He already knows what to do. But, it’s good to start by remembering who God is. We can remember His words and His promises to us. Then, we will pray better, and we will be better friends with God.*

**SLIDE 32**

* **Discussion Question**
	+ *Let's pause for a discussion question*
		- *What is a problem outside this church that bothers you?*

# Point 2

**SLIDE 33**

* *We should pray about what WE are doing*

**SLIDE 34**

* **Game: Sticky Note Challenge**
	+ Instructions
		- *Let’s start this point with a game -- it's called the sticky note challenge!*
		- *It's really simple: we'll have teams of about four people each. Each team will have two pads of sticky notes. Someone will need to volunteer to have sticky notes all over them, and your goal as a team is to stick all the sticky notes to one person. When all your sticky notes are on the person, you win.*
		- *Now there’s a very important rule for this game: stay away from private parts!!! You can stick the sticky notes on a person’s arms and legs and their back. But none of the swimsuit areas.*
		- Teacher: divide the group into teams. Each team will have two pads of sticky notes to share, and to stick on a single person. Afterwards you can play a follow up game in which teams collect all the sticky notes that have been used, and stick them in a single stack, allowing for easy cleanup.

**SLIDE 35**

* + **Debrief**
		- *We played this game because it helps us to think about the things we need to do. Sticky notes were invented to help grown-up people remember all the things they had to do. Sometimes grown-ups like to write down things they need to do on sticky notes. They’re really handy if you only have a few things to remember. But, sometimes life gets really complicated, and sometimes there are so many things to do, it's like we're covered with sticky notes and it's one big mess.*
		- *But, one of the best ways to figure out what's really important is to pray about what we should be doing, and that's what Nehemiah did. Let's read the last bit of his prayer.*
* **Bible Reference**

**SLIDE 36**

* + *Nehemiah 1:11*
		- *11 Lord, listen carefully to my prayer. I am your servant. And listen to the prayers of your servants who love to honor you. Give me, your servant, success today. Allow this king to show kindness to me. I was the one who served wine to the king.*
* **Explanation**

**SLIDE 37**

* + *The last verse tells us that Nehemiah served wine to the king. That was actually a really important job. It's because back then lots of people wanted to be king, but there could only be one king. So, if someone else really, really wanted to be king, they would try to kill the king, so they could have a chance at being king. Now, the king had a lot of soldiers protecting him all the time, so it was hard to kill a king with a weapon like a sword or or a bow and arrow. So, some people had a terrible idea. They would put poison in the king's wine, and the poison would kill the king. But, Nehemiah protected the king from people like that. Nehemiah's job was to take a sip of the wine first before the king ever drank it. That way, if there was poison in the wine, it would kill Nehemiah first, and the king would be safe. So, Nehemiah had a special job. And, because of his job, Nehemiah spent his days close to the king, and the king trusted him.*

**SLIDE 38**

* + *Nehemiah must have known how lucky he was. Because of his job, he got to work at the palace, which was one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. He got to listen to the most interesting ideas that people talked about in the palace. And, Nehemiah could drink the best wine, and eat delicious food every day.*
	+ *But, when Nehemiah heard that his people were in trouble, he knew what he had to do. He had to pray and remember how great God was. But also, Nehemiah knew it was time to talk to the king and ask for help. So, Nehemiah asked God for help, so that the king would understand how important his problem was.*
* **Application**

**SLIDE 39**

* + *And, that's how it works for us. When we see the trouble in the world, it's good to pray and remember that God is in control and He's bigger than any problem. But, sometimes, we shouldn’t just leave the problem with God. A lot of the time, God actually wants us to help fix the problem. So, when we pray, we should ask God for help so that we can do God's work.*

**SLIDE 40**

* **Discussion Question**
	+ *Let's pause for a discussion question:*
		- *If you really, really tried, what is a big thing you could do to help someone?*

# Conclusion

**SLIDE 41**

* *Let's wrap up this lesson by going over the big ideas again.*
* *Our big question today was: What should we do about the trouble we see in the world?*

**SLIDE 42**

* *Our big idea was: We should pray.*
	+ *1. We should pray about what GOD is doing. We should remember that God is bigger than every problem, and that He always keeps His promises.*
	+ *2. We should pray about what WE are doing. Nehemiah reminds us we shouldn't just try to be comfortable all the time, but sometimes we need to do something really hard. So, let’s ask God for help so we can do the right thing, even when it's really hard.*

# Main Activity: T-shirt Making

**SLIDE 43**

* *And now, it's time for our main activity. Today, we are making t-shirts! In a moment we'll all get a t-shirt with nothing on it. And, we'll spend time making designs on our t-shirts.*
* *T-shirts like this remind us, we might not be able to change everything around us, but we can change ourselves. We can have a good attitude and we can trust God. And, we can do the right thing with God's help. If we just do what we can, God can do amazing things with us just like He did with Nehemiah.*
* Teacher: distribute a t-shirt to each child, along with fabric paint and/or fabric markers.