

July 13, 1997

Nehemiah 1-7

4's, 5's & K

3NEH43PK

Nehemiah Completed the Jerusalem Wall!

Materials I Need:

Memory Work:

The Prophet - Nehemiah

The Principle - Nehemiah prayed and the families finished the wall.

The People - Israelites in Jerusalem

God's Attribute - The God of Heaven keeps His promises.

Aim Questions:


1. Ezra and Nehemiah were not prophets of God. What did they do for God? (Ezra was a teacher of the law who took a group of exiles back to Israel to rebuild the temple. Nehemiah was a cupbearer for King Artaxerxes who went to Jerusalem to rebuild the city wall.)
2. What did Sanballat and Tobiah do to try to keep Nehemiah from building? (They made fun of him and tried to attack the workers.)
3. What did Nehemiah do each time his people were afraid of the threats? (He prayed and kept working.)
4. What was Nehemiah's plan for rebuilding the wall? (Each family built a section of the wall in front of their house.)
5. Who has power to help you do God's work? (The God of Heaven)
6. What do you do when people are mean to you? (Pray to the God of Heaven.)

 Hook:


**Trace a Child Center:** Today would be a fun day to make a big artistic "statement" on the walls around the room about the "family of families" of our church. Begin by tracing around each child's body on butcher paper, cutting them out if time permits, and taping them each on a section of the wall around the room. Write the child's name on his or her own outline and, in large letters above the outlines, write "Family of Families." In today's Bible Adventure, we will see how the Israelite families all worked together to build the Jerusalem wall and honor God's name.


**Broken Wall Activity Center: (3NEH43ECGF1)** If you want to do a more quiet version of the above activity, let the children tear off brown pieces of construction paper and glue them to the GF1 wall or glue Styrofoam "peanuts" (used as package filler) to the page. Talk about Nehemiah being sad because the Jerusalem wall was broken down and needing repair.


**Building a Wall with Blocks:** Request the large red cardboard blocks from the Children's Department. These blocks will build a higher wall than regular building blocks but either would be good for this activity. Let the children build a wall around Jerusalem. When the "Babylonians" knock the wall down, the rest of the children groan and lament. One child might pretend to be Jeremiah crying in Egypt. One child might pretend to be Ezekiel tied with ropes in Babylon. One child can be Daniel praying in Babylon or in the lions' den. The teacher can pretend to be sad Nehemiah, King Artaxerxes' cupbearer, in Susa, the capital city of Persia.

 **Tape the Brick on the Wall Game:** Ask children to tear brick shapes from large pieces of construction paper. Using double stick tape, blind-fold one child at a time and have them tape a brick on the wall. See what the wall looks like when they are done! Boy, do they need help. Maybe they can get some ideas from the Adventure today!

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 **Jerusalem Review: (3NEH43ECGF13--See 3NEH43ECGF5 for city locations.)** On a long piece of butcher paper, draw a grouping of stones to represent a broken down, burnt wall that was similar to the Jerusalem wall at the time of Nehemiah. Ask one child to blacken one of the stones on the paper by rubbing charcoal or a black crayon on it. After he has blackened the stone on the paper, put a picture of Jeremiah in the region west of Jerusalem and call it Egypt. Jeremiah was sad because he knew the wall was burned down and that it would be seventy years of captivity for the Israelites. Place a picture of Ezekiel (and Daniel) around Babylon as another child blackens a stone on the paper. As a child blackens another stone, place a picture of Ezra back in Jerusalem building the temple, but the city wall was still broken down. Put a picture of Nehemiah in the city of Susa, hearing the news that the wall was still not rebuilt. You may want to review more of the prophets in this way. End with Nehemiah as a lead-in to today's Bible Adventure.

 **Playdough Wall: (3NEH43ECGF2)** As the children color the GF2 picture and name the buildings of the town, talk about what buildings are on our own streets. Talk about Jerusalem and how Ezra had brought exiles back and had built the temple. Let the children pretend that the town on their page is Jerusalem and draw a temple on the street. Then let the children form "bricks" with playdough and make a wall around the city block. In our Bible Adventure today, we will hear about the wall that needed to be repaired around Jerusalem.


 **"I Am God's Helper" Rhyme:** Using your hands to point to the appropriate body parts in the rhyme, say, "Head, shoulders, knees and toes. Ankles, legs, neck and nose." Do the rhyme slowly at first, then faster each time. In our Adventure today, you will hear about someone who helped God with his head, shoulders, knees, toes, ankles, legs, neck and nose!


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### **Book:**

#### **Presentation Ideas -**

 **(3NEH43ECGF3)** Tape a picture of Nehemiah on your knee. Throughout the story, wiggle your knee as you say Nehemiah's name.

 **Nehemiah Puppet: (3NEH43ECGF3 & 3NEH43ECGF4)** Glue the GF3 & GF4 pictures of happy Nehemiah and sad Nehemiah back to back, inserting a paint stick between them to make him like a puppet. Throughout the Bible Adventure, turn from one side to the other, depending on whether Nehemiah is happy or sad.

 Act out the Bible Adventure. Assign children to be the king, Nehemiah, some helpers, Sanballat and Tobiah.

#### **Bible Adventure -**

*(Show a picture of Ezra.)* What was the name of the man who was a teacher of the law of Moses and led exiles back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple? Ezra was a priest and loved God's Word more than anything.

Today I want you to meet Nehemiah. *(Show his picture.)* I am going to tape his picture to my knee to remind us that his name starts with "nee"! Nehemiah was a nice guy like Ezra. You would have liked him for a friend. He loved the God of Heaven and loved God's people. Whatever he was doing, he worked very hard and did the best job he knew how to do. He always had a smile on his face while he was working. I wonder if he whistled, too? Do you know anyone who loves their job, smiles, works hard and whistles all the time?

Nehemiah had wanted to go back to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel's group. He was so glad the temple would be rebuilt, but he had really wanted to go along and help. Then Ezra's group went to Jerusalem and again it didn't work out for Nehemiah to go along to help. He thought about the temple the people

were rebuilding for the God of Heaven who was keeping His promise. He thought about the city wall that had been destroyed, too. It made him smile to think of all that rebuilding. He thought to himself, "It has been long enough that they probably have it all done by now. They are probably worshipping God in the temple and the city is secure with a sturdy wall all around it. I am so glad!"

Nehemiah was happy where he was, working for the king. The king knew hardworking Nehemiah and trusted him to do a good job. He made him his cupbearer. A cupbearer tasted the king's food and drinks first to make sure no enemy was trying to poison him. Nehemiah did a good job for King Artaxerxes every day.

One day Nehemiah's brother, Hanani, came from Judah to Susa. He had just been in Jerusalem. Nehemiah had a lot of questions to ask him. "Is the temple built? Are they worshipping the God of Heaven and offering sacrifices in the temple? Is the city rebuilt with strong walls around it to protect it?" What Nehemiah heard made him very sad. Nehemiah's brother Hanani said, "The temple is rebuilt but the wall around Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire. The people are in great trouble." When Nehemiah heard this news, he sat down and cried. For several days he fasted and prayed to the God of Heaven. He said, "Oh, God of Heaven, You are the great and awesome God. You have kept Your promise to bring Your people back to Jerusalem. Now, please help King Artaxerxes send me back to help my people."

It was time for King Artaxerxes to eat so Nehemiah took him his drink as usual. This time he went to work without a smile. The king said, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not sick? What's wrong?" Nehemiah told the king all about the problems in Jerusalem. King Artaxerxes said, "What do you want me to do about it?" First Nehemiah quietly said a prayer to the God of Heaven. Then he said, "If you have been pleased with the work I have done for you, would you be willing to send me to Jerusalem so I can help rebuild the city wall?" King Artaxerxes was pleased with Nehemiah's work and so he sent him on his way, along with a few Israelite men he trusted and some soldiers to protect him.

Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem and had a plan for rebuilding the wall. He didn't tell anyone the plan. First he took a few trusted friends out at night to look at the wall. He had heard right. It was a sad sight of broken down walls and burned gates. Jerusalem couldn't be strong this way. The very next day, Nehemiah went to the priests and officials and said, "The Most High God of Heaven has told King Artaxerxes to send me here to help rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. Come, let us rebuild the wall so the name of our God will be praised." The priests and officials were happy to have Nehemiah help them build a new wall. "Let's get started," they said.

There were men living around Jerusalem who didn't want the Jews to rebuild the wall. Two of their names were Sanballat and Tobiah. When Sanballat and Tobiah heard that the Jews were planning to build, they made fun of Nehemiah. They said, "Ha! Ha! What do you think you are doing?" Nehemiah knew who his Helper was and was not discouraged. He said to Sanballat and Tobiah, "The God of Heaven will keep His promise to help us rebuild the wall and gates."

It was a big job but Nehemiah had a plan. He asked each family to build the part of the wall by their house. If each family did its part, it wouldn't be long before the job would be done! The men in each family cleared away the charred stones and brought in new stones for the wall. They got out their tools and hung the gate by their own house. Sanballat heard that the wall was being built and he became very angry. Again he made fun of the Jews and said, "What are you sissies doing? Can you clean up this mess in a day?" Tobiah made fun, too and said, "This wall is so weak that if a fox climbed up on it, he would break it down." Nehemiah heard their angry complaints and insults, but he prayed to God. With all their hearts, the Israelite people kept working very hard. They were strengthened by God because they prayed. They were encouraged by others doing their part of the job.

When asked to do a job, do you work at it with all your heart? Do you work really hard to do the best job you can do? Let's pretend you are asked to clean up the family room before you go outside to play with a friend. Do you grumble and very slowly pick up the toys and other things on the floor with a pained look on your face? Do you gladly work at picking things up quickly and well? If your friend is told to put the bikes away before he and you can leave to go to a movie, do you help him do the job with a smile on your face? The Israelites living in Jerusalem prayed, asked for God's strength, worked as hard as they could and helped each other get the job done.

When the wall was about half built, Sanballat and Tobiah had another plan. They decided to get some men together and fight against the Jews working on the wall. "That will stop the work," they thought. But Nehemiah and the Jews prayed to the God of Heaven and kept working. They set up guards to watch for enemies who were coming to attack. They had guards on the wall at all hours of the day.

Some of the guys working on the wall started to say, "We are getting tired. There is so much rubble! We can't keep working! We are tired!" Let's use our whiny voices and say together, "We are tired! It is too hot! We are afraid!" Nehemiah walked around the wall to see how the families were doing. He put watchmen with their swords at the places where the enemies might attack. He said, "Don't be afraid! Remember the God of Heaven who is great and awesome! Fight for your families and keep working!"

From that day on, half the men stood guard with their spears while the other half worked on the wall. (*Show the GF9 page.*) They worked from the first light of dawn till the stars came out at night. They never took off their work clothes. They slept in them for fifty two days while they were building, in case the enemies came and they had to fight. They carried their swords wherever they went, even to get a drink of water. It took a lot of courage, but finally the wall was finished! It took fifty two days to fix the wall and hang the gates. It was a job well done because they loved God and prayed. It was a job well done because they were strengthened by God as each one did his part.

The Israelites had a great celebration! What a happy day for Nehemiah and the other Israelites who wanted to honor and praise the God of Heaven.

**Prayer:** Most High God of Heaven, You are great and awesome. You keep Your promises and help us not be afraid. I want to love and serve You with my whole heart, like Nehemiah. Amen.



### Look:



**Knee-high-miah:** Tape a picture of Nehemiah on each child's knee. March around the room, lifting the Nehemiah knee high as you sing the Nehemiah song to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Ne--Ne--Nehemiah built the city wall.  
Nehemiah prayed to God and built the wall up tall.



**Night Walk with Flashlight:** Pretend to be taking a walk around the wall at night to inspect the damage. Let different children lead with a flashlight. Ask them what they see. "Is the wall burned and black? Is it broken down? Are the stones broken or strong? What would it take to rebuild this wall?" Use rulers and measuring tapes to measure the stones that need to be replaced. "How many people would it take to clear away the rubble? Let's pretend to be moving these heavy stones away. Push! Push! How many people would it take to bring in new stones? Pull! Pull!"



**Inspecting the Wall: (3NEH43ECGF7)** After you have taken the "Night Walk with a Flashlight," (see above) let the children complete the GF7 worksheet. They can stick stars in the sky because Nehemiah checked out the wall by night. They can tape or glue bits of grass, bark and construction paper bits to the broken down wall. Talk about how Nehemiah felt when he saw the wall. "Did Nehemiah get discouraged? No, he knew that he had to work hard and get all the families working hard together."



**Paper Doll Family: (3NEH43ECGF10)** The children can choose the number of paper dolls that equal the adults and children in their families. They choose a large blue person to represent their dad, a large pink person to represent their mother, a small blue person to represent their brother and a small pink person to represent their sister. The children will glue the number of people in their family to the GF1 wall background and then tape the entire page to their "Trace a Child" outline hanging on the wall (if they made them during the Hook time). Talk about how their own family is part of the "family of families" in our church. When we all work together, God's work gets done quickly. It takes each of our families doing its part. The children must each do his or her part to help the family, too.



**My Family and the Wall: (3NEH43ECGF1 or 3NEH43ECGF8 & 3NEH43ECGF11)** Complete the GF1 brick wall picture (see Hook time) or the GF8 picture. Provide GF11 accordian people for each child according to the number of people in his or her family. Let the children color them and glue

them to the front of the wall. Talk about how each family did its part to build the wall and how each of our families does its part in our church. When we all work hard, God's name is honored.

**Relay Game:** Place an equal number of cardboard bricks in two garbage cans. Divide children into two teams. The first team to move their bricks to the other end of the room and places in the shape of a wall is the winner!

**Item Review:** Place several items that would pertain to the Bible Adventure in a pillowcase. As the child pulls out an object, he is asked to share how this might have been used or seen in the Adventure. Use items like a glove, hammer, flashlight, praying hands, knife, rock, smiley face, etc. Ask the children if they think Nehemiah and the Israelites slept on soft pillows with pillowcases like this one. "Did they have clean pajamas to wear at night? No, they slept in their clothes on the hard ground by the wall, to protect the city from enemies."

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**Snack Time:** Give each child a graham cracker to represent a Jerusalem gate, six or more large marshmallows that represent stones, and peanut butter or frosting to "cement" the gate and wall together. Let the children build the Jerusalem wall with the marshmallows first without frosting. Then they can try it with a little frosting. If the children eat some of the Jerusalem wall, that is fine. The rest can go in a baggie and be labeled to be sent home. The label could say, "Jeremy's section of the Jerusalem wall."

### Songs:

**Family of Families** (Tune: FBC "Family of Families")  
We are a family of families,  
We are a family of families,  
We are a family of families  
Under the Word of God.

**"Making the Brick Wall" Song:** Provide children with blank pieces of construction paper to represent bricks for building the Jerusalem wall. The children can decorate them as desired and tape them to the classroom wall. These individual bricks are taped side by side to form one big wall. As each child stands in front of his or her part of the wall sing, "(Name) gathered one stone, two stones, three stones. (Name) gathered many stones. She built the wall." Use the tune of "Johnny Works with One Hammer." Or, sing the "Family of Families" song from the song section.

**"Nehemiah Went" Song:** To the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell," use appropriate hand motions, such as walking with fingers, praying hands, pounding fists, raising hands, etc. Make up your own verses.

**Verse 1:** Nehemiah went, Nehemiah went, Nehemiah heard the news and Nehemiah went.

**Verse 2:** Nehemiah prayed, Nehemiah prayed, Nehemiah saw the walls and Nehemiah prayed.

**Verse 3:** Nehemiah worked, Nehemiah worked, Nehemiah built the wall. Nehemiah worked.

**Verse 4:** Everyone praised God. Everyone praised God. All the people clapped and sang. Everyone praised God.


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### Took:

**Family of Families:** Each child can go stand in front of his or her outline or picture that was taped on the wall. Let each child pretend to be hammering a nail as they say, "Nehemiah built the city wall." Sing the song "Family of Families" together.

**Nehemiah's Praying Hands: (3NEH43ECGF12)** Fold card stock in half and cut out the large and small hands on the fold so that the sets of hands open and close as though praying. Cut and glue Nehemiah's prayer inside the large hands. Open and close Nehemiah's hands as you pray his prayer. Write each child's name on his or her small praying hands. Let them say a little prayer of their own as they fold their hands. Send both sets of prayers home with the child. Nehemiah prayed when he was afraid and when he needed strength. We want to pray to God for help, too.

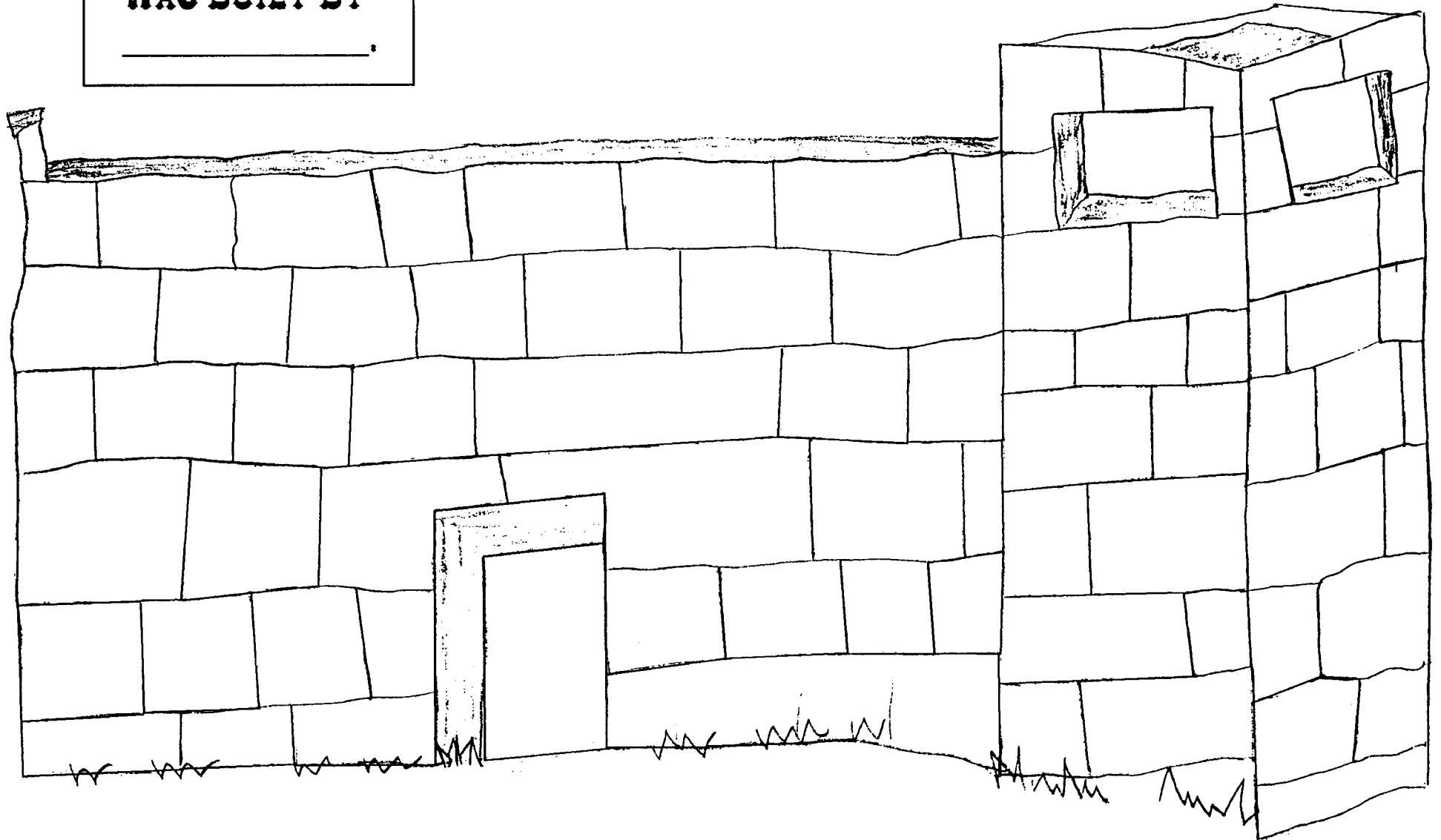
 **Jobs at Home:** Pull the children's names out of a basket and ask them to tell about a job they have to do at home. How do they do a good job? How could they do a better job? What are some other jobs they could do to be helpful? Each member of the family is important in praising God with their work.

 **Ball Toss:** Divide children into two teams, each standing alongside a bed sheet on the floor. Toss a ball (Nerf-type) into the center of the sheet. Try to get the ball to go off the sheet onto the floor on the other team's side. No one may touch the ball except the teacher. The children must keep their hands on the edge of the sheet. When the ball goes off, the teacher puts it back in the center to start again. Talk about the following: "Was it hard or easy to get the ball onto the floor? How did you help your team? How is this like our Bible Adventure today? How is this like you helping at home with a hard job that needs to be done?"

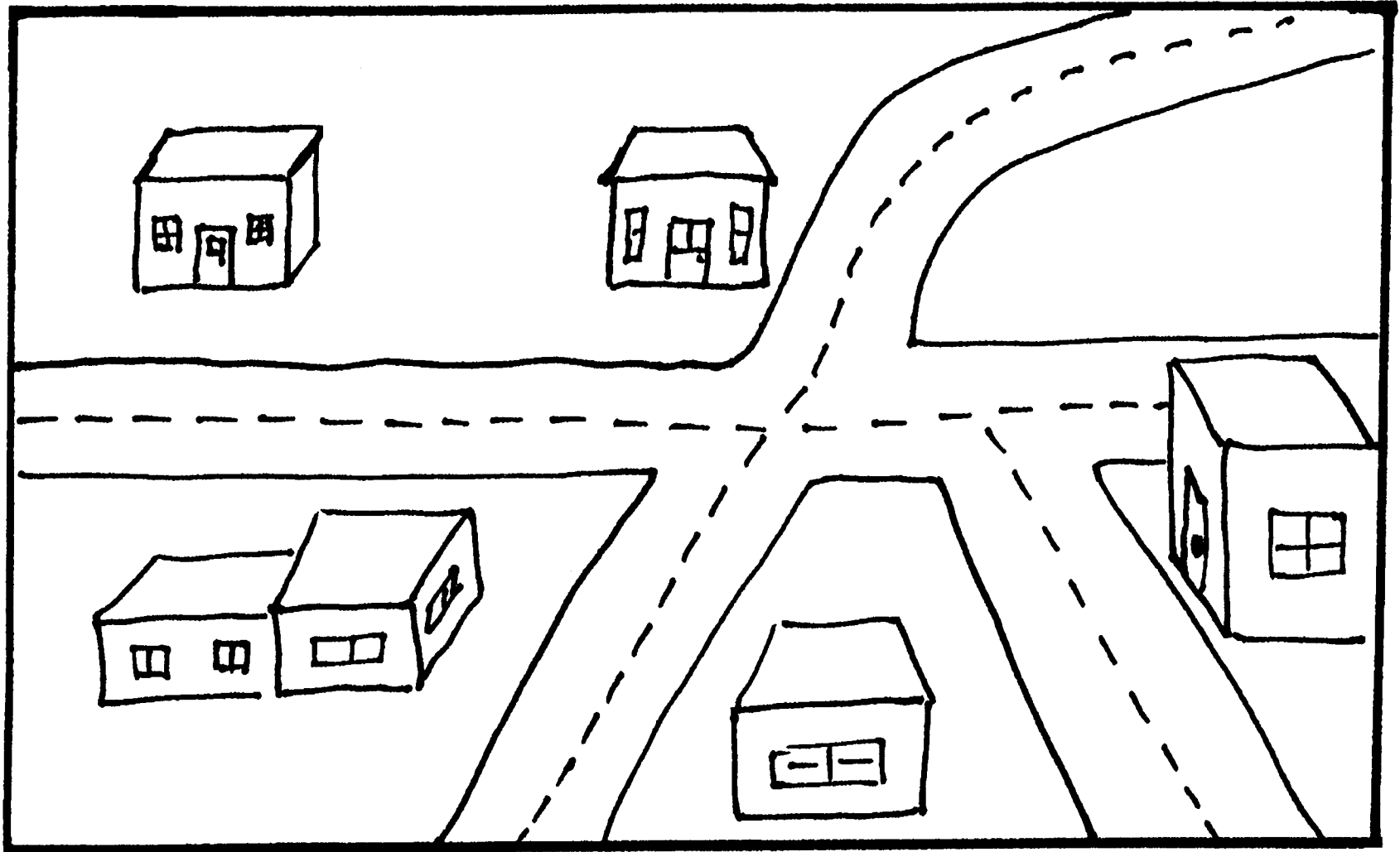
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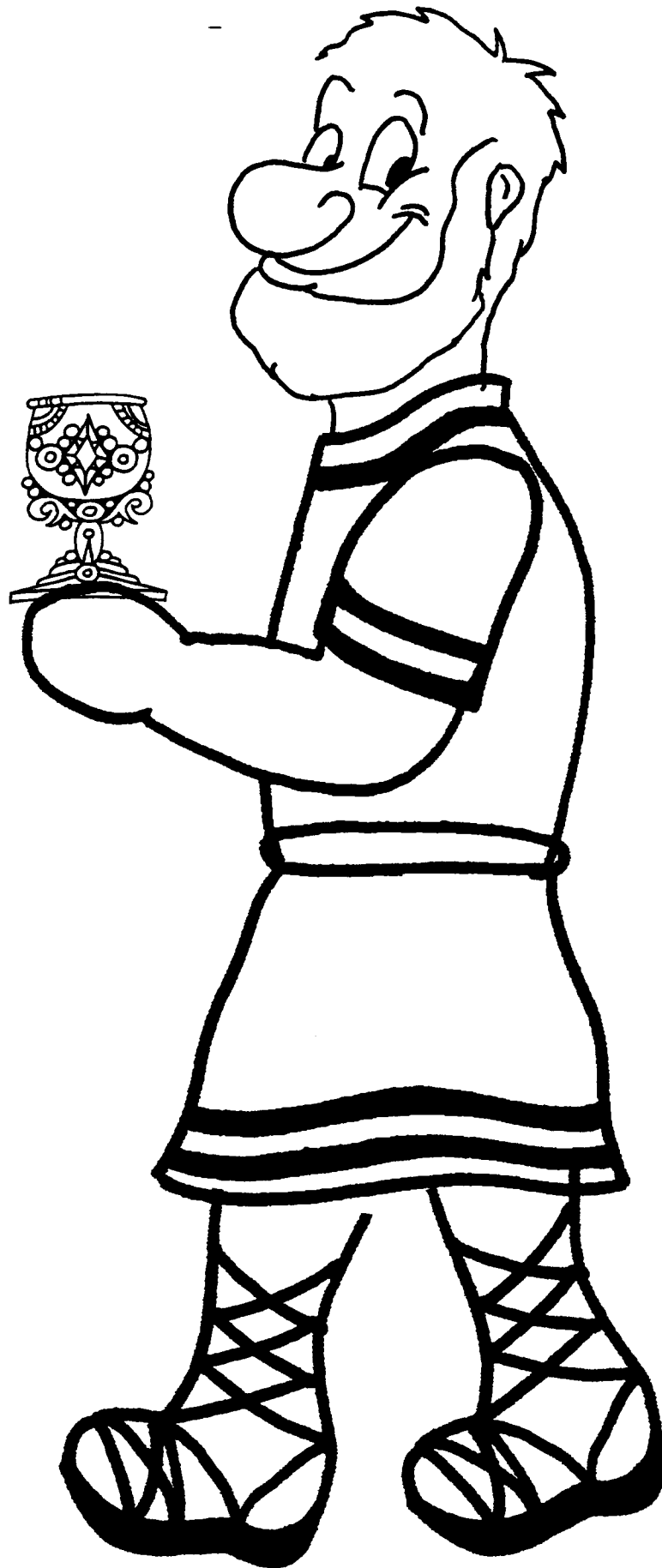
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## THE WALL AROUND JERUSALEM

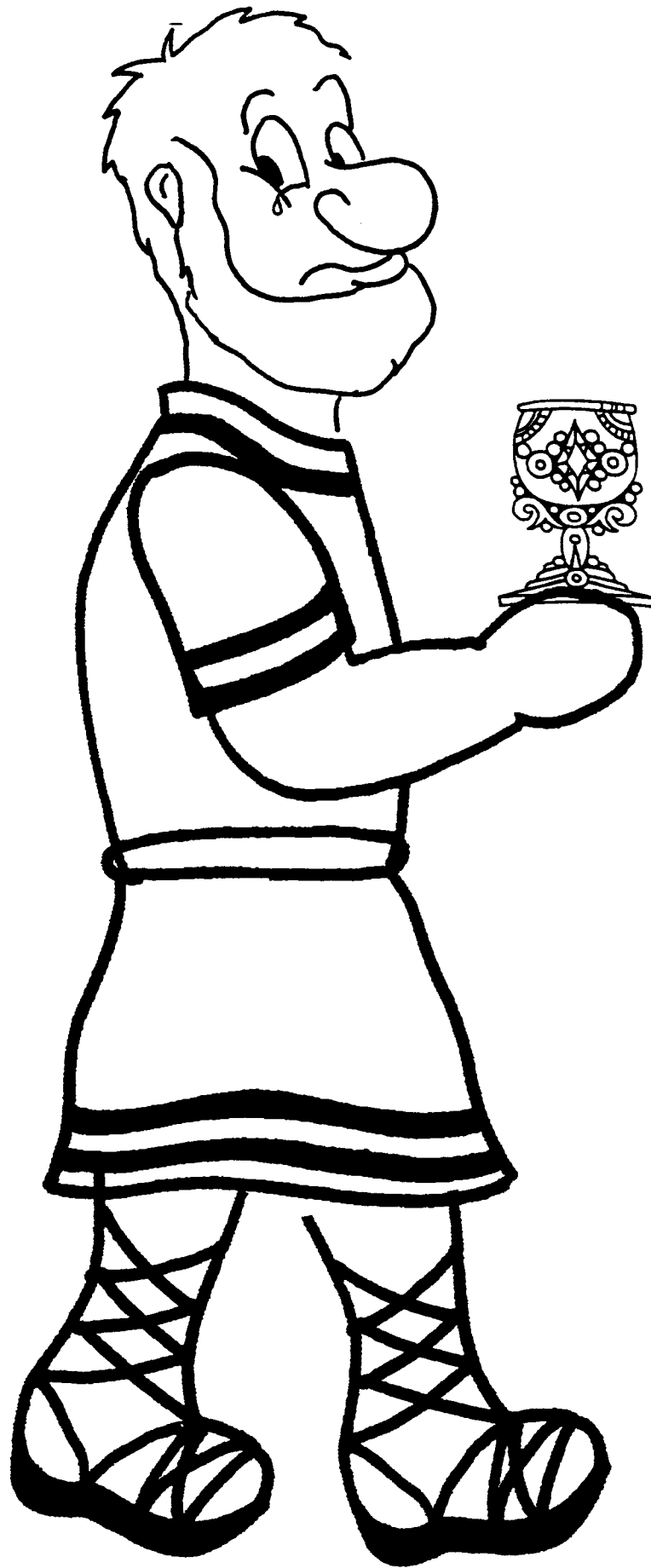


# Wall Around the Neighborhood

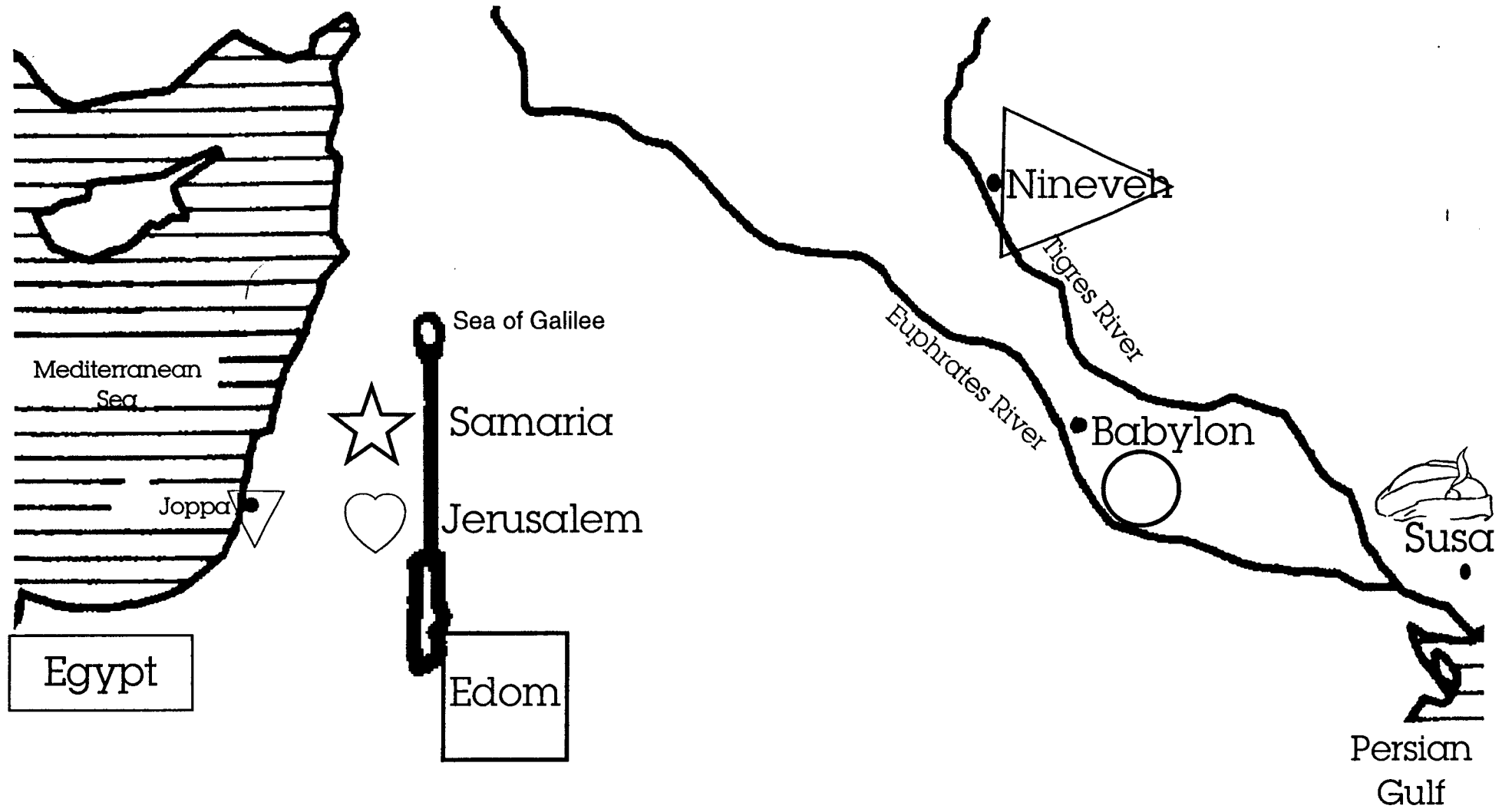


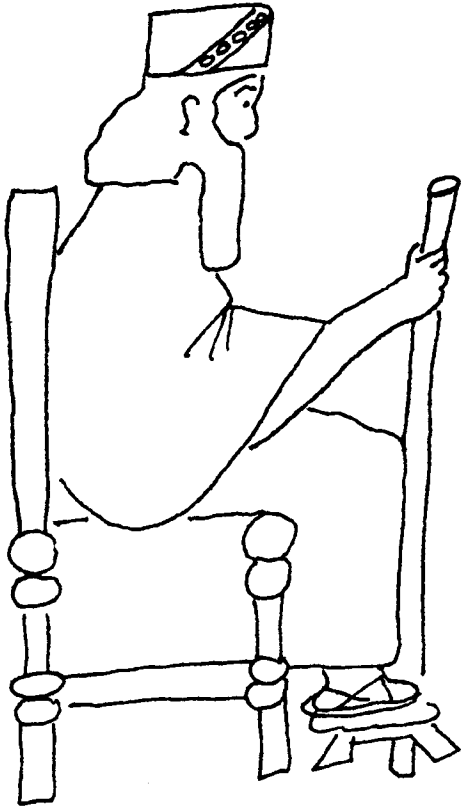


3NEH43ECGF3

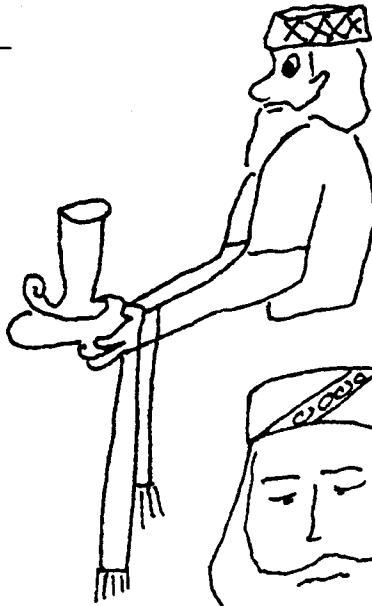


# Map of the Middle East during the time of the Prophets





King Artaxerxes  
noticed that Nehemiah  
was not happy.



Nehemiah was the  
cupbearer to  
King Artaxerxes.



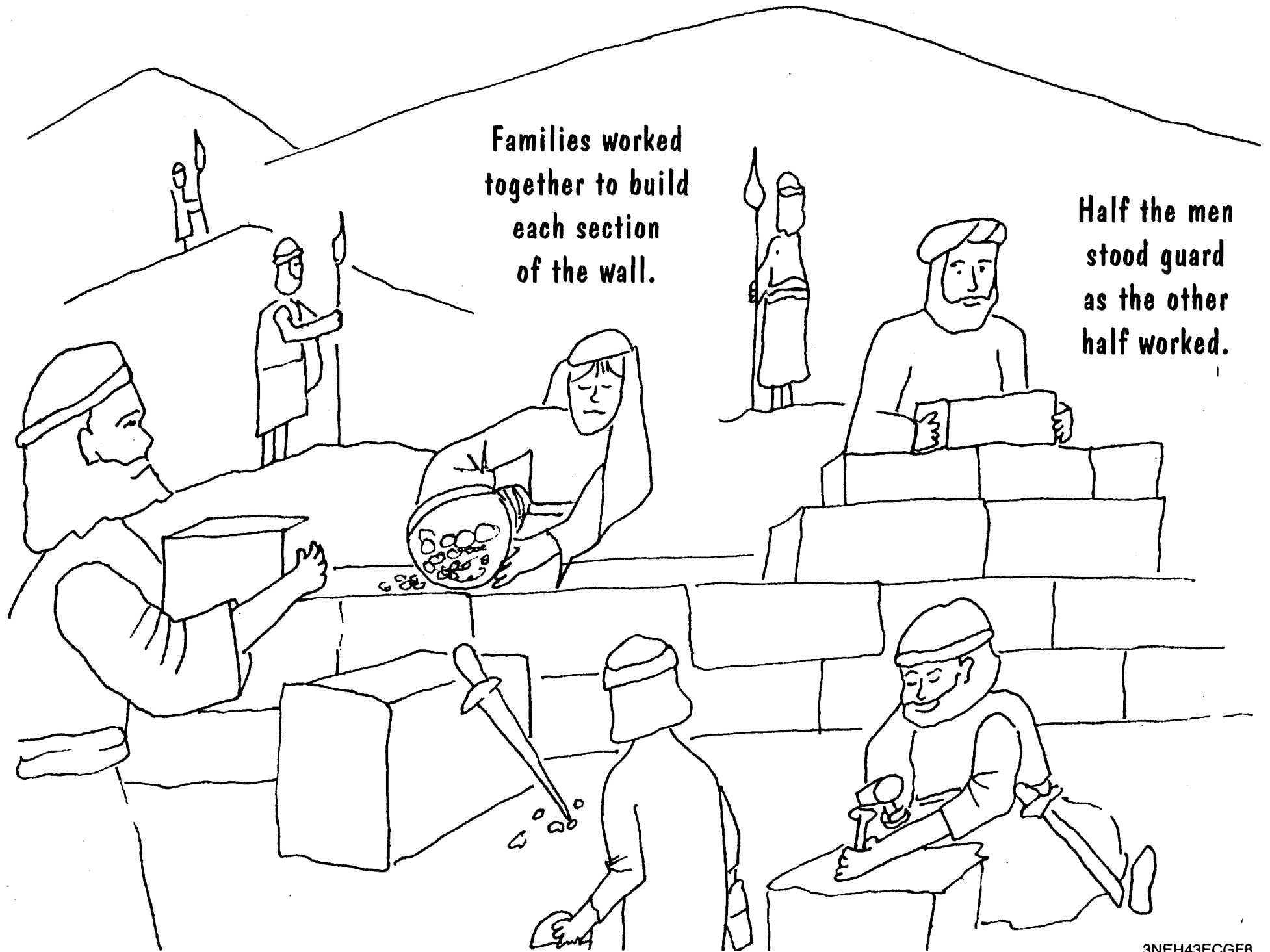
King Artaxerxes gave  
Nehemiah permission  
to go to Jerusalem.  
He sent soldiers  
to protect him  
along the way.

Nehemiah asked the king  
for permission to go to  
Jerusalem and help  
his people rebuild  
the city wall.



**Nehemiah and his friends inspected the ruined Jerusalem wall at night.**

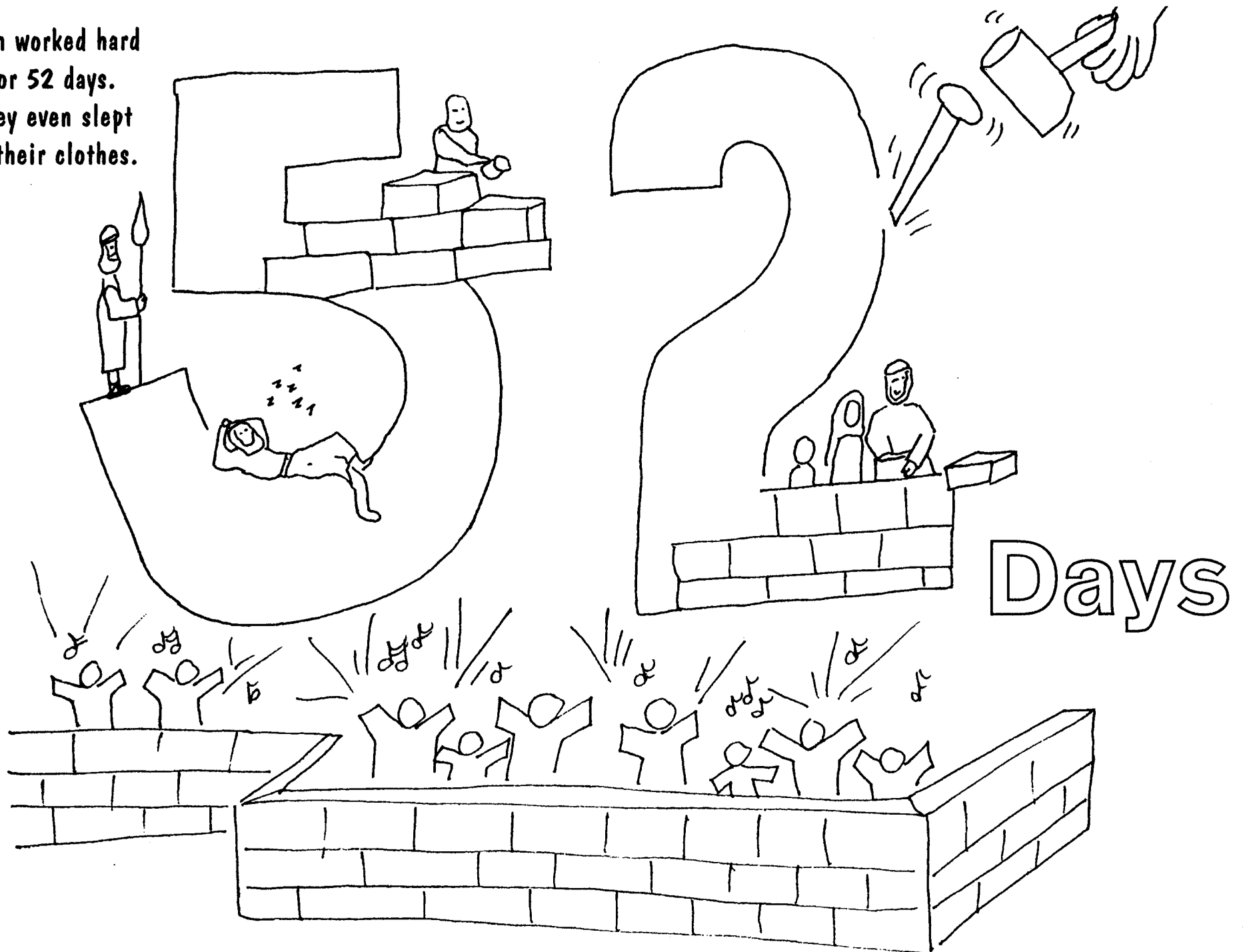
3NEH43ECGF7



Families worked  
together to build  
each section  
of the wall.

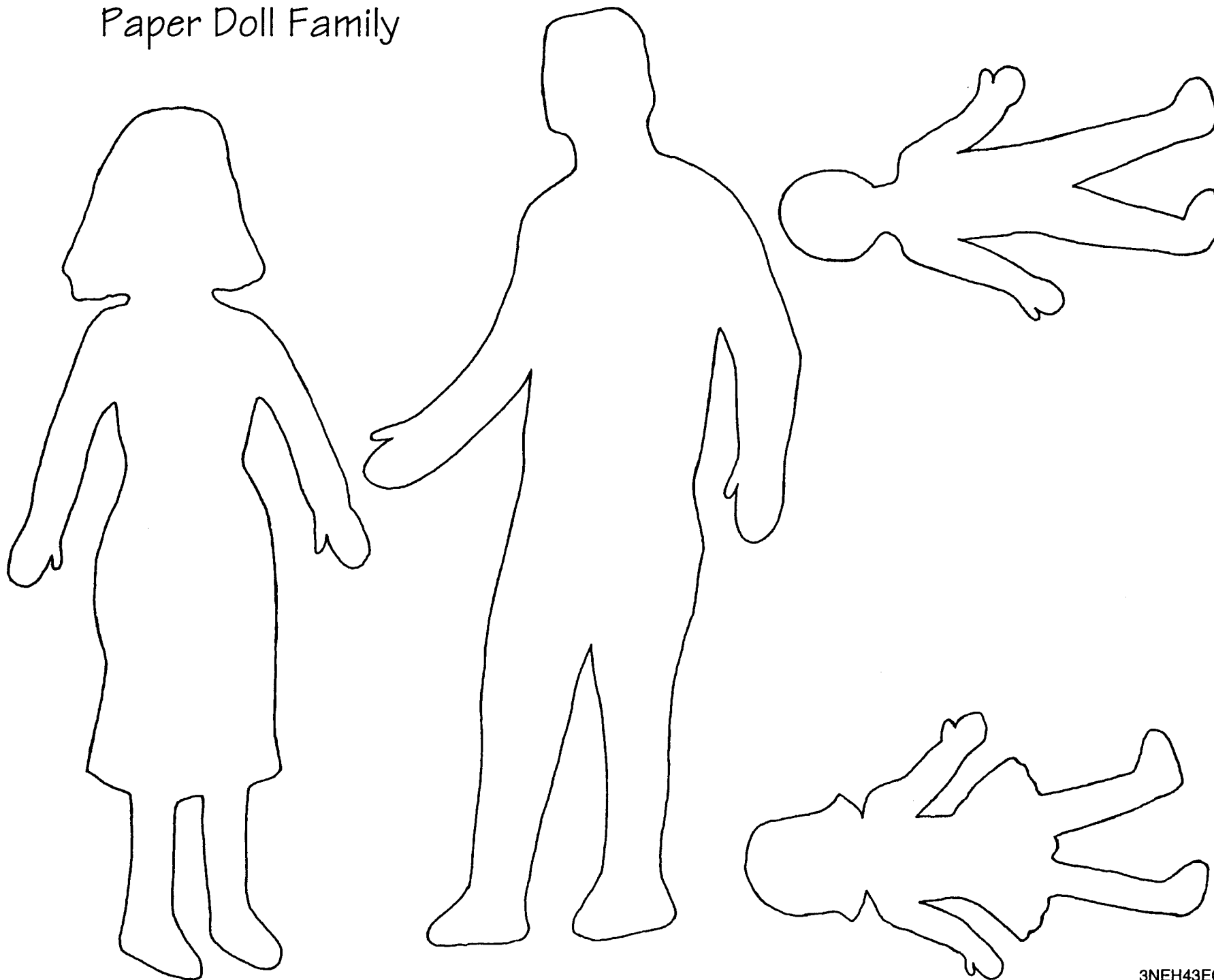
Half the men  
stood guard  
as the other  
half worked.

Men worked hard  
for 52 days.  
They even slept  
in their clothes.

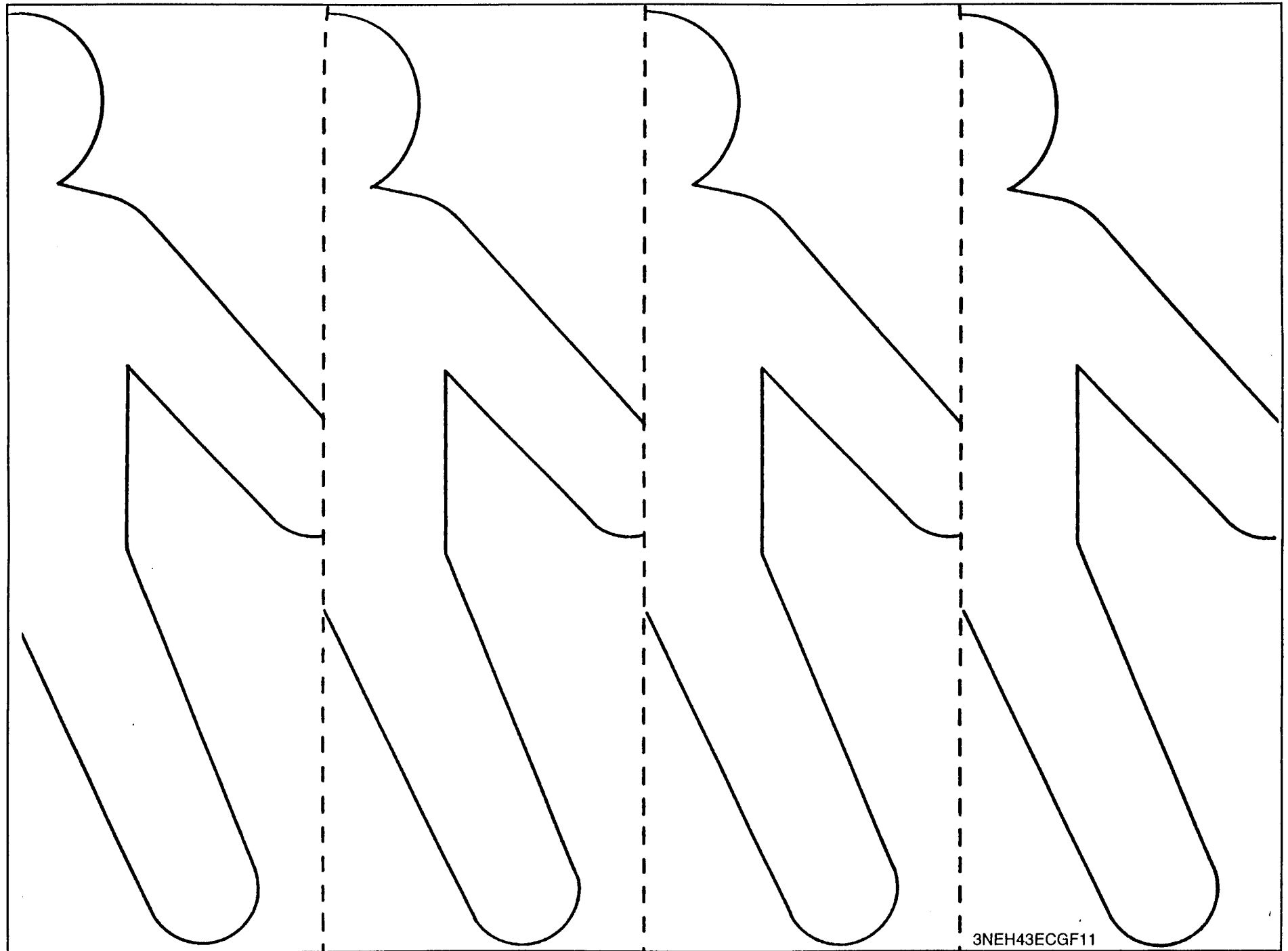


When the wall was complete, the Israelites praised the God of Heaven.

# Paper Doll Family



# Accordion Family



# Nehemiah's Praying Hands

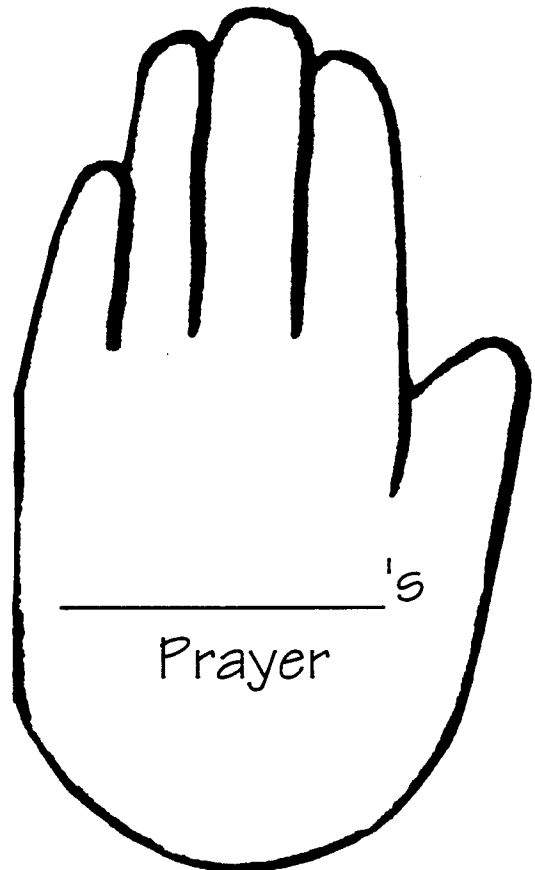
Fold card stock in half and cut out the large and small hands on the fold so that the sets of hands open and close as though praying. Cut and glue Nehemiah's prayer inside the large hands. Open and close Nehemiah's hands as you pray his prayer. Write each child's name on his or her small praying hands. Let them say a little prayer of their own as they fold their hands. Send both sets of prayers home with the child.

Oh, Lord, God of Heaven,  
the great and awesome God,  
who keeps his covenant...  
We have acted wickedly toward you.  
We have not obeyed your commands.

Oh, Lord, let your ear be attentive  
to the prayer of your servant.  
Give your servant success today.

I was cupbearer to the king,  
Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1:5-7, 11



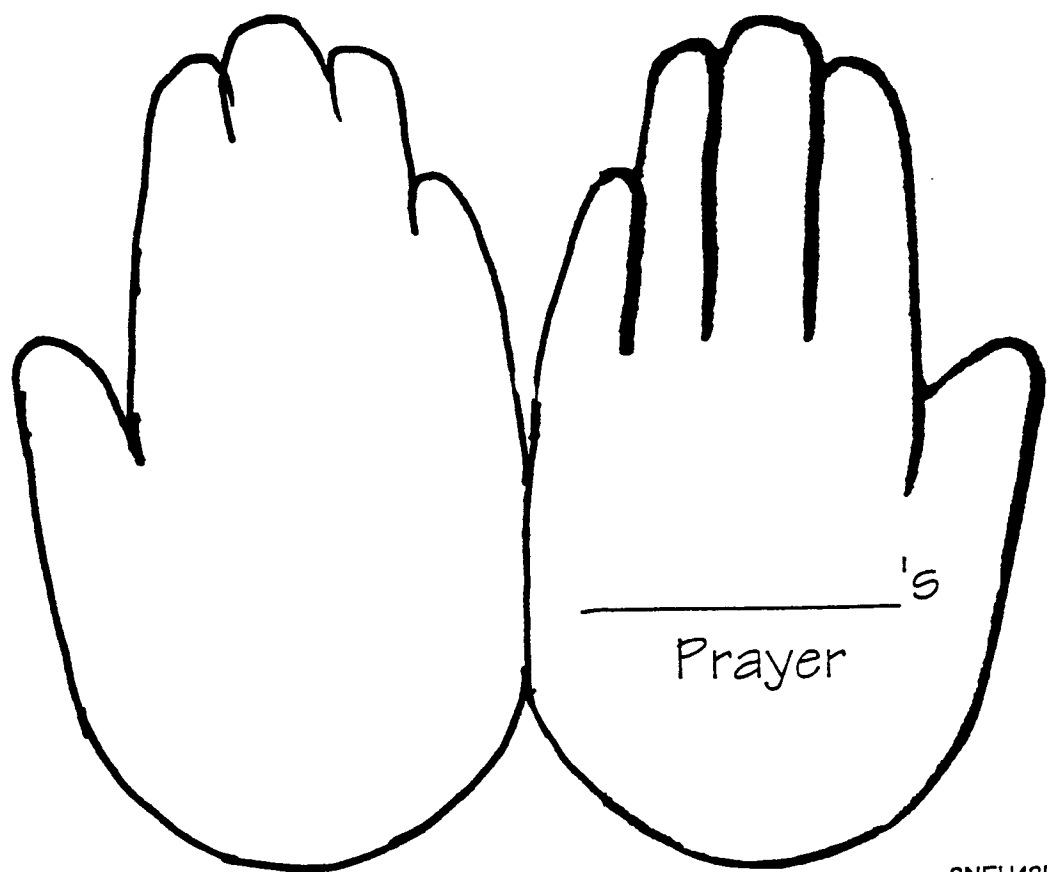
Oh, Lord, God of Heaven,  
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who keeps his covenant...  
We have acted wickedly toward you.  
We have not obeyed your commands.

Oh, Lord, let your ear be attentive  
to the prayer of your servant.  
Give your servant success today.

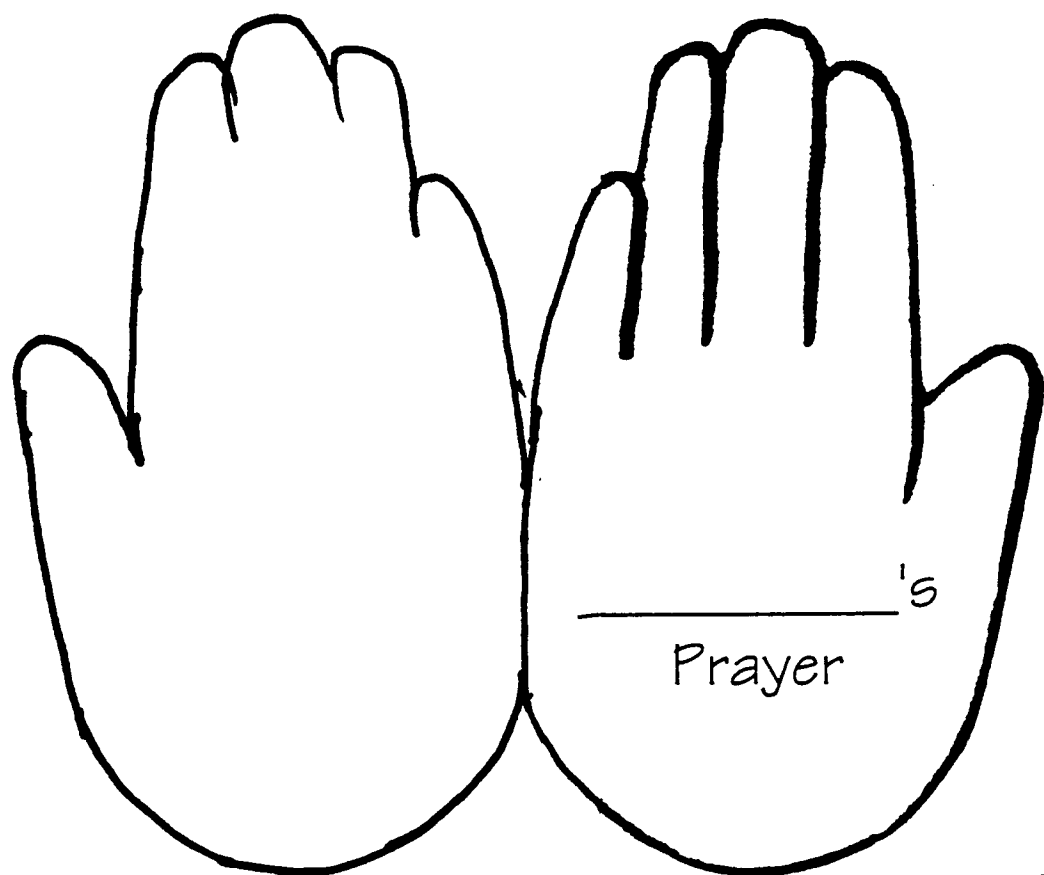
I was cupbearer to the king,  
Nehemiah

Nehemiah 1:5-7, 11

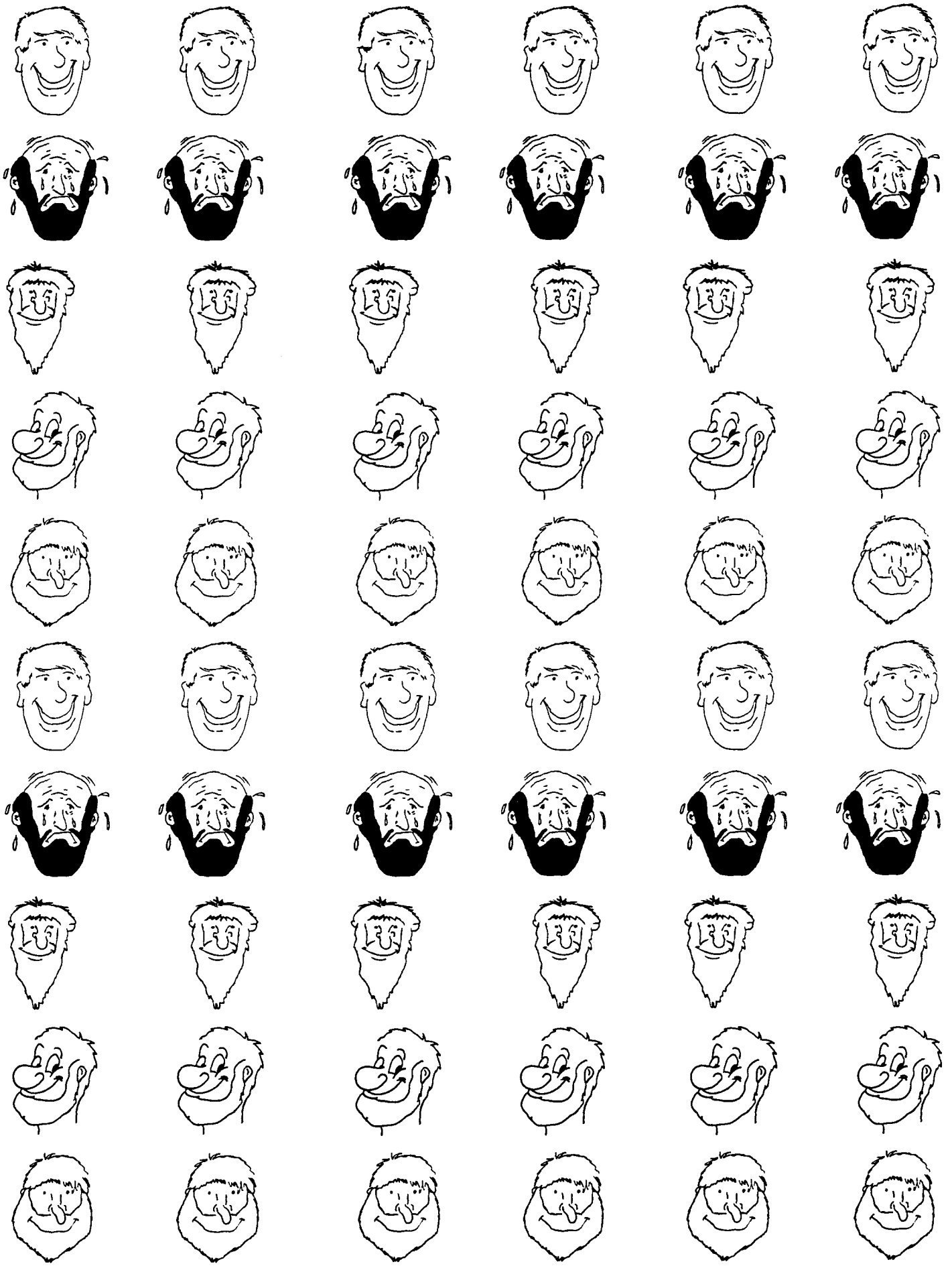




3NEH43ECGF12



3NEH43ECGF12



# NEHEMIAH PRAYED

I WILL SING UNTO THE LORD

FOR HE HAS TRIUMPHED  
GLORIOUSLY

THE WALLS WERE DOWN AND  
NEHEMIAH PRAYED. (CLAP, CLAP)  
(REPEAT)

THE LORD IS GOD AND (CLAP)  
I WILL PRAISE HIM

MY FATHER'S GOD AND I WILL  
EXALT HIM

THE LORD IS GOD AND (CLAP)  
I WILL PRAISE HIM

MY FATHER'S GOD AND I WILL  
EXALT HIM.

**VERSE 2:** THE WALLS WENT  
UP AND GOD WAS TRULY PRAISED!