

A photograph of a smiling woman and five children sitting on the ground in front of a brick building. The woman is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a colorful patterned skirt. The children are dressed in casual clothing, including a blue shirt, a pink and yellow dress, and several tank tops. The background features a red brick wall and a wooden door with a decorative window.

# NEHEMIAH NIGHT

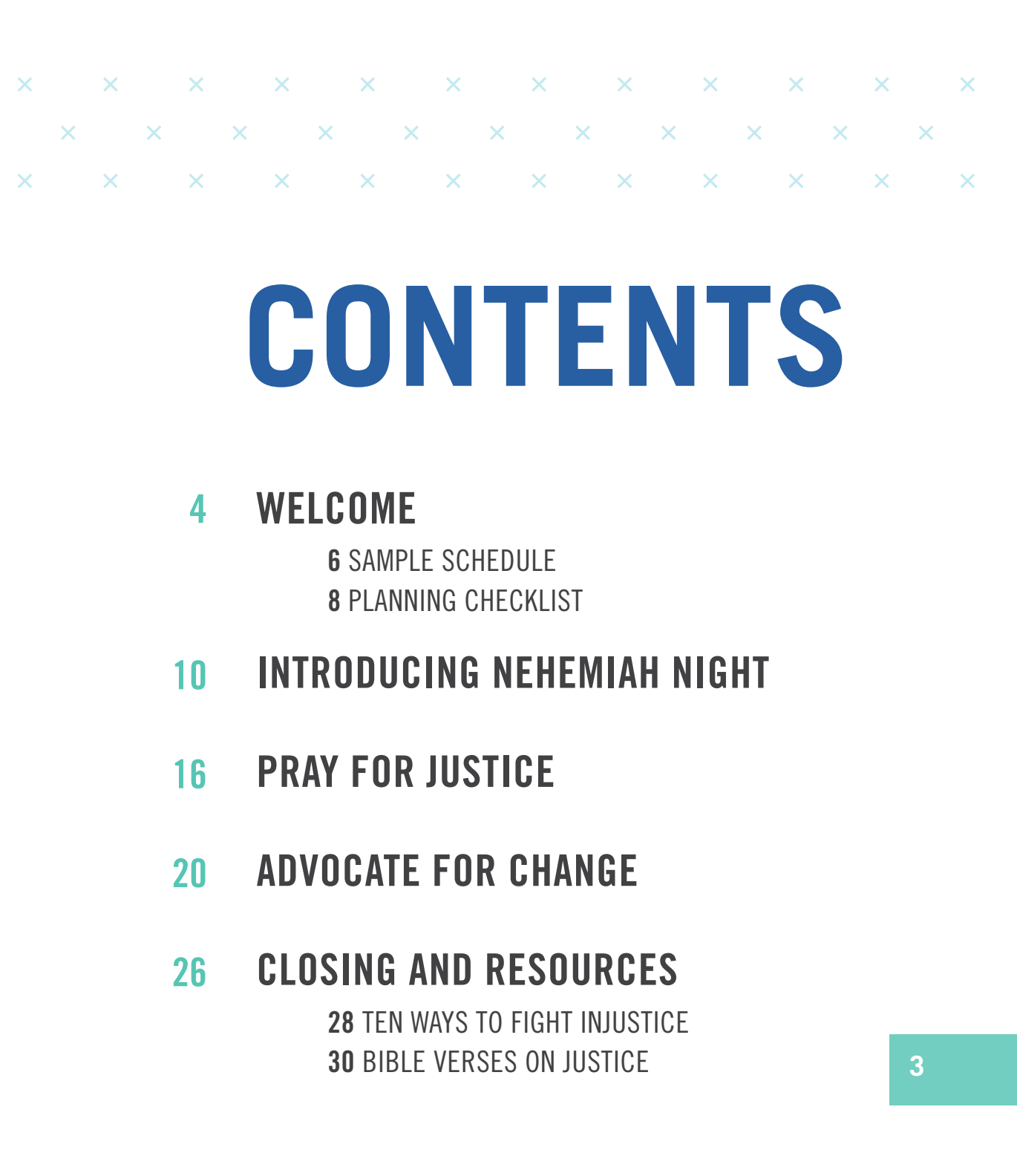
## EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION  
**DIVE**  
DO JUSTICE KNOW GOD

**IJM**  
INTERNATIONAL  
JUSTICE MISSION

Created for IJM's DIVE church  
partnership model.





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# WELCOME

“““

*O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night...*

Nehemiah 1:5



## NEHEMIAH NEVER ACTED WITHOUT PRAYING AND NEVER PRAYED WITHOUT ACTING.

He saw those suffering around him and took action: praying to God for mercy and advocating to his leaders for help.

At a Nehemiah Night, your congregation will actively raise their voices on behalf of the oppressed in these same ways:



**Lead your congregation in praying for justice**—lifting up those suffering under violent oppression, IJM staff and partners on the frontlines, and systems that exist to protect the poor and vulnerable.



**Empower your friends and congregation to advocate for change.** You will reach out to your elected officials and ask them to support the poor and vulnerable, just as Nehemiah did centuries ago.



### ARE CHURCHES ALLOWED TO ADVOCATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT?

*Churches and non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status are allowed to lobby in some ways—like asking an official to support a new bill—but are not allowed to endorse political candidates or spend more than 20% of their budget on lobbying.*

**SEE THE IRS GUIDELINES  
FOR CHURCHES HERE:**  
[IRS.GOV/PUB/IRS-PDF/P1828.PDF](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1828.pdf)



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## Injustice Today

## Lessons from Nehemiah

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## Calling Your Elected Officials

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## Bible Verses on Justice

Questions? Contact us at  
churches@ijm.org

# PLANNING CHECKLIST

1

## GET STARTED

- ☒ Download the kit.
- ☐ Ask a few people to help you plan and execute the event.
- ☐ **Pray that God would use you and your team to lead others against injustice.**

2

## SET A DATE

- ☐ Select your event date, location and other logistics.
- ☐ Ask church leadership if they can support you in Nehemiah Night.
- ☐ **Pray that God would bring the right people to your event.**

3

## PLAN YOUR EVENT

- ☐ Ask for volunteers to help with worship, set-up or other tasks.
- ☐ Design your event, using the tips in the Nehemiah Night guide, and the creativity of the planning team.
- ☐ Gather all the event materials.
- ☐ **Pray for your church and community to be impacted by your event.**

4

## INVITE YOUR FRIENDS & COMMUNITY

- ☐ Announce the event in your church bulletin, in person or online.
- ☐ Begin promoting your event to local media and social media.
- ☐ Reach out to nearby churches or groups to join your event.
- ☐ **Pray that God would work through you to invite a broad gathering of people to your Nehemiah Night.**

5

## PRAY AND ADVOCATE

- ☐ Host your Nehemiah Night!
- ☐ Send your advocacy cards and prayers to IJM, and mail letters to Congress.
- ☐ **Give thanks to God for using you, your team and the attendees to bring justice to the vulnerable.**

# INTRODUCING NEHEMIAH NIGHT

“““

*Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed,  
defend the orphan, plead for the widow.*

Isaiah 1:17

10 MIN

*Use these pages as a suggested script for your introduction to Nehemiah Night and lead your group into a deeper understanding of injustice today.*

Nehemiah never acted without praying, and never prayed without acting. This is why we have called this event a Nehemiah Night: It is an opportunity for us to pray, and to follow prayer with powerful action.

We will join together in prayer for millions of people around the world trapped in violent injustice. They are mothers and fathers, children and grandparents—innocent men and women working as slaves, sold into brothels or suffering at the hands of more powerful authorities. These are the people International Justice Mission rescues, and we will hear some of their stories tonight.



## AN ADVOCATE FOR THE OPPRESSED: NEHEMIAH'S STORY

Israel had been captured and destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar around 597 BC, and the Israelites were either taken captive or sent into exile.

About 150 years later, Nehemiah, an Israelite born into exile, secures a position in the most powerful king's household. From his position of security and comfort, Nehemiah hears news of Jerusalem's degeneration and is moved to extreme anger and sadness, fasting and praying for days (Neh. 1:1-11).



Through a combination of prayer and bold action (Neh. 2-6), Nehemiah reunited a scattered, oppressed community and successfully led them to rebuild and repair what historians believe was a 4.5-mile wall in merely 52 days (Neh. 6:15-16). Nehemiah achieved all of this under the threat of war from external enemies and deceitful plots from internal adversaries—ultimately restoring the city of Jerusalem and rededicating the formerly exiled people to God.

Nehemiah led Jerusalem with justice and righteousness. At one point, he confronts Jewish nobles and officials because they were enslaving fellow Jews. He demands that they return their fields, vineyards and homes to them. Nehemiah used his power as a leader to bless the people of Israel, rather than to oppress them (Neh. 5).

## INTRODUCTION TO INJUSTICE

In his time, Nehemiah pursued rebuilding the wall as one step in facing the crisis of his day: the exile, displacement, and abuse of the Israelites. Today a different crisis plagues our world: violent oppression against the poor.

## SLAVES

There are 27 million slaves in the world today—more than at any other time in human history.

## WIDOWS

Thousands of widows are literally fighting for their lives because their land and only source of provision has been violently stolen away from them.

## CHILDREN

Each year, nearly 2 million children are exploited in the global commercial sex trade, and they have no defender.

## INNOCENT PRISONERS

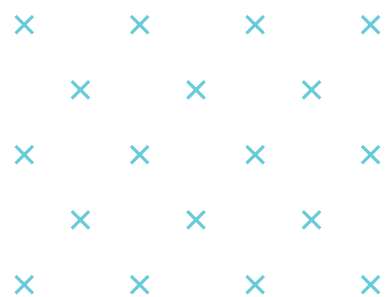
Innocent men and women are arrested, charged and falsely imprisoned for crimes they did not commit – all at the hands of law enforcement officers abusing their power.

## POLICE & JUDGES

Police and judges who try to act justly often feel alone and powerless against this rampant corruption.

Often lacking access to their own justice systems and unable to protect themselves or their families from those more powerful, it is overwhelmingly the poor who are the victims of these brutal forms of abuse.





## LESSONS FROM NEHEMIAH

God used Nehemiah to bring a great restoration to Israel, but it did not happen instantly. Nehemiah was called to rally the Israelites together with government leaders to accomplish a monumental task. Through their prayer and hard work, God's hand brought amazing results.



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## ***WE MUST BE WILLING TO BE MOVED BY GOD.***

Nehemiah was not directly affected by the fallen state of Jerusalem, but when he heard the story of the city's fall, he was overcome with grief and asked God for help.

## ***WE MUST NOT LIMIT GOD'S VISION.***

Historians estimate that Nehemiah's completed wall was about 4.5 miles long. Imagine deciding to repair and rebuild something this big.

## ***WE MUST VENTURE OUTSIDE OF OUR COMFORT ZONES.***

Nehemiah had to take several risks in difficult circumstances to rebuild the wall, but through his courage, he led others in accomplishing a God-sized task.

## ***WE MUST ASK THOSE IN POWER TO HELP.***

Nehemiah's boldness in approaching the king paid off. Not only did he secure the king's permission to act—he received the king's official endorsement, abundant timber for all of his needs and an army escort to Jerusalem.

## ***WE CAN WORK WITH OTHERS ACROSS GREAT DIVIDES.***

Nehemiah partnered with people from different regions, political spheres and social backgrounds. He worked with and influenced people who did not know God in order to achieve results that testified to God's power, goodness and faithfulness.

## ***WE MUST PROCEED HUMBLY.***

Even while in Jerusalem, Nehemiah sacrificed his position of privilege and chose to work tirelessly for another purpose.

## ***WE MUST THANK GOD FOR HIS PROVISION.***

Nehemiah led the people to finish this great task in merely 52 days! He attributed the success to the hand of God, so that all would know that the wall was rebuilt through God's grace alone.





# PRAY FOR JUSTICE

“““

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?*

Isaiah 58:6

30 MINUTES



Through prayer, God has given us a way to stand in the gap on behalf of those who need his help. He invites us to voice our needs and welcomes this conversation as a crucial discipline of our faith.

Nehemiah's prayer life is diverse, with prayer being incorporated and woven into all aspects of his personal life and public leadership. Nehemiah spoke frequently with God, and accomplished an enormous and historically significant task with God's leading.

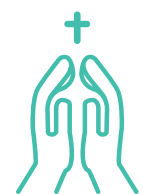
In the same way, we can be bold in our prayers and lift our voices on behalf of the oppressed. Silently and aloud, individually or as groups, we are invited to petition God for change that makes justice possible.



STAY UP TO DATE

*Get breaking updates and prayer needs from the frontlines as a Prayer Partner.*

[IJM.ORG/PRAYERPARTNER](http://IJM.ORG/PRAYERPARTNER)



# TAKE ACTION

Pray for injustice around the world and those fighting to end it. Use some of these activities, or plan other unique ways to pray.

## PRAYER ACTIVITIES

### Prayer Wall

Have participants write prayer requests about local needs or international injustice. Display them along one wall or around a room as attendees engage with and pray over them silently.

### Simultaneous Prayer

Display specific topics on a screen and have every attendee pray over that topic simultaneously—quietly or out loud—covering each issue in prayer before moving on to the next.



### Prayer Stations

Set up a room with stations for different prayer topics. Divide the room by regions of the world, types of injustice, or graces you want to pray over, such as survivors of violence.

### Encourage IJM Staff

Write prayers for IJM staff around the world, and mail them to IJM.

## PRAYER TOPICS

- ▶ Pray for victims of specific types of injustice—sex trafficking, slavery, child sexual assault, police abuse of power, and property grabbing. *Find details and stories at [IJM.org/resources](https://www.ijm.org/resources)*
- ▶ Pray that the U.S. government would use its power and resources to protect and rescue trafficking victims and encourage justice around the world.
- ▶ Pray against the powers and systems preventing justice being delivered to the poor.
- ▶ Pray for encouragement for IJM's staff and for our clients pursuing aftercare. Ask God to use IJM and its partners to protect the vulnerable.





# ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

“““

*O LORD, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth may strike terror no more.*

Psalm 10:17-18

25 MINUTES

Advocacy is not just about promoting a specific issue. At its root, advocacy is about holding those in authority accountable to use their power to protect the oppressed—just as God calls us as individuals to do with our own power.

Nehemiah took action in ways that those in Jerusalem could not, and he led ordinary people in accomplishing a God-sized task. He partnered with and influenced people in places of power in order to achieve results that testified to God’s power, goodness and faithfulness.

Like Nehemiah, we must bridge the gap to support the poor who desperately need an advocate.

IJM’s advocacy teams hear over and over from members of Congress that the voices that matter most to them aren’t from lobbyists, NGOs or the media. They need to hear from people in their own state or district when deciding their priorities. You can help educate your leaders—not only about the facts of global injustice, but also by making it clear that your community wants them to take these issues seriously.



## MORE INFORMATION

*Email for a free download of The Advocate’s Handbook – a blueprint for building your advocacy campaign! It’s packed with tips for making your efforts effective.*

JUSTICECAMPAIGNS@IJM.ORG



## TAKE ACTION

Lead the group in advocating on behalf of the vulnerable. Use some of these activities, or plan other unique ways to advocate with your leaders.

### ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Research your elected officials to see if they have taken a stand for the oppressed. Use IJM's FreedomCommons.org to see how your officials stand on anti-slavery legislation.
- ▶ Sign IJM advocacy cards (included in your e-kit) and mail them to IJM, so we can hand-deliver them to your representatives on Capitol Hill.



- ▶ Educate participants on how to call their Members of Congress. Make the calls at your event or have participants pledge to call within a timeframe.
- ▶ Write letters to Congress, asking them to support anti-slavery legislation.



## CALLING YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

When Nehemiah wanted to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem, he went to the person who had access to the most resources—the king. For us, that place is Congress.

Congressional offices keep track of how many calls they receive on different issues every day—this record helps elected officials understand what issues are important to their constituents.

Congressional offices say that all it takes are 10 to 15 calls on a specific issue to significantly raise its profile with that office. Calling only takes a few minutes, but can have a big impact on Congress' priorities and attentions.



### THE FREEDOM COMMONS

*Gather. Act.  
End Slavery.*

*FreedomCommons.org is  
your place to connect with  
other abolitionists and  
take action together against  
slavery in your community  
and around the world.  
Take real action, get the  
latest news, download  
tools from IJM's Justice  
Campaigns and make the  
movement your own.*



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PHONE CALL

**Keep the focus on your topic.**  
When we have the ear of someone in power, it’s tempting to give that person a laundry list of issues we care about. But the people we’re trying to help, however, will be best served if we stick to one topic.

**Keep the call short.**  
Because we care so much about this issue, we often have a lot to say about it. And while it’s tempting to share every statistic and story we’ve heard about human trafficking, Congressional offices are busy places! Our calls will be most impactful if we limit them to just 1 to 2 minutes.

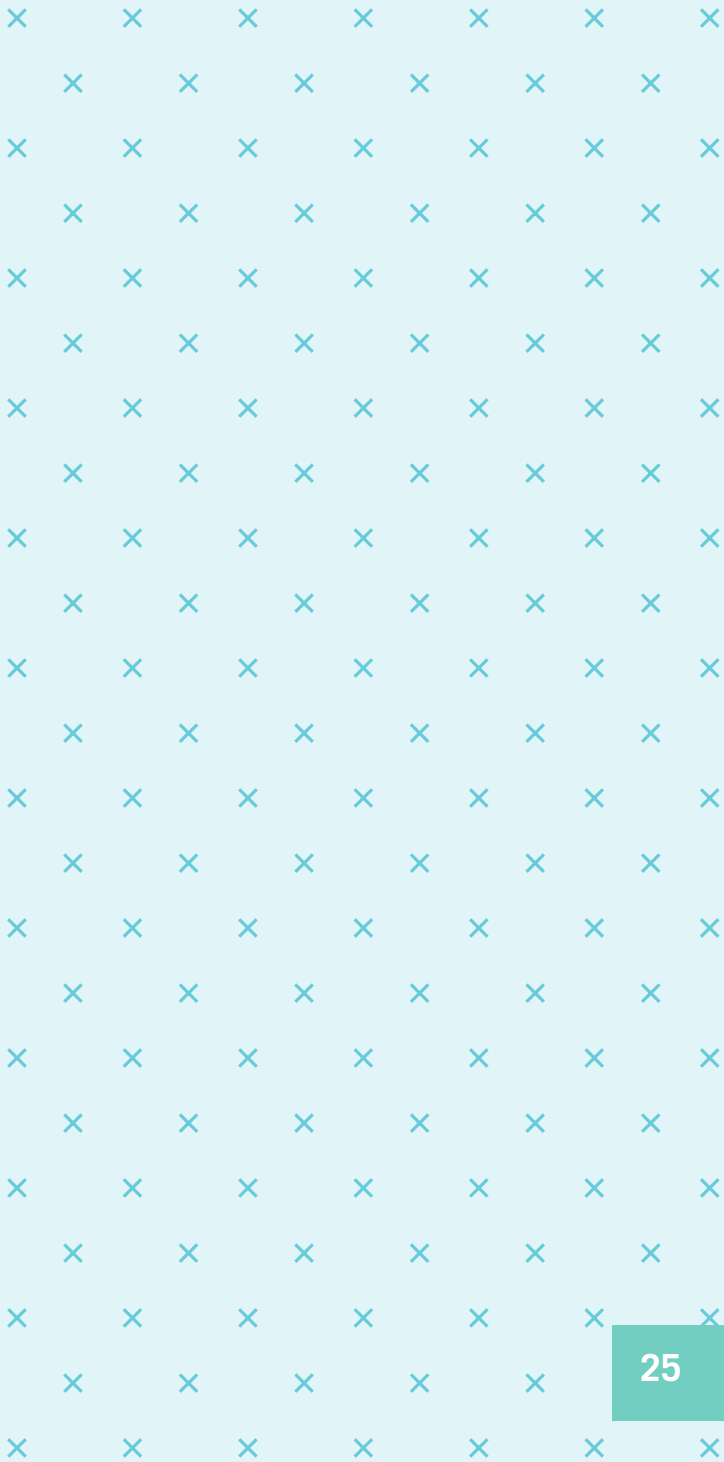
**Have a specific ask.**  
While it’s great to call and express your concern for human trafficking, your call will have even more impact if you ask for a specific action. Check out FreedomCommons.org for the latest legislation trying to be passed and ask Congress members to do their part to pass the bill.

**Be clear and cordial.**  
If you’re nervous about calling, take a moment and take a deep breath. When you call, speak clearly. When you’re wrapping up, remember to thank the person with whom you’re speaking.



SAMPLE SCRIPT

*“Hi, my name is [name] and I’m  
calling from [City, State]. I’m calling  
to ask Senator/Representative [name]  
to support [current anti-slavery advocacy initiative].  
Would you please pass my message on to  
the Senator? Thank you!”*



# CLOSING & RESOURCES

“““

*Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed.*

Isaiah 56:1

## 5 MINUTES

Thank your guests for coming, and encourage them to continue acting and praying against slavery, trafficking and injustice around the world.

### RESOURCES

#### Prayer

- ▶ Latest IJM stories and profiles:  
*IJM.org/news*
- ▶ IJM factsheets and downloads:  
*IJM.org/resources*
- ▶ Bible Verses on Justice
- ▶ Use IJM videos to inspire event participants:  
*YouTube.com/IntlJusticeMission*



#### Advocacy

- ▶ FreedomCommons.org
- ▶ Email [justicecampaigns@ijm.org](mailto:justicecampaigns@ijm.org) for The Advocate's Handbook
- ▶ Watch our "Your Voice Matters" series on YouTube

#### Follow

- ▶ IJM on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.



— 1 —

Respond to critical prayer needs for IJM's work around the world.  
*IJM.org/PrayerPartners*

— 2 —

Advocate with your elected officials and take action to fight slavery in the U.S. and abroad:  
*FreedomCommons.org*

— 3 —

Use social media to spread the word. Follow IJM on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram, and share with others.

— 4 —

Be a Freedom Partner. Give a monthly gift of \$24 or more, so IJM can show up, 24 hours a day.  
*IJM.org/FreedomPartner.*

10 WAYS

— TO FIGHT —  
INJUSTICE

— 5 —

Challenge your friends. Host a discussion group or book club about justice. Start with IJM's *Good News about Injustice, Just Courage, or The Just Church.*

— 6 —

Ignite students' passion to end slavery by hosting a 24-Hour Justice Experience. Your youth will serve their community, fund rescue and join the movement of students ending slavery in their lifetime—all in 24 hours.  
*IJM.org/24JE.*

— 7 —

Be an IJM FreedomMaker. Create a fundraising campaign to bring rescue to children and families around the world.  
*IJM.org/FreedomMaker*

— 8 —

Shop smarter. Visit [slaveryfootprint.org](http://slaveryfootprint.org) to find out how your spending habits might contribute to slavery around the world.

— 9 —

Learn how to spot trafficking right here in the U.S. with resources from [polarisproject.org](http://polarisproject.org). Report signs of trafficking in your community to the National Human Trafficking Hotline at *1-888-373-7888.*

— 10 —

Direct your career to make a difference for those living in violent oppression. Look out for job postings, or refer your friends, at *IJM.org/careers.*





# BIBLE VERSES ON JUSTICE

*\*Unless otherwise indicated, all Scriptures are taken from the New Revised Standard Version Bible.*

“““

For the Lord is righteous, he loves justice; the upright will see his face.

*Psalms 11:7, NIV*

“““

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

*Isaiah 9:7*

“““

I will sing of loyalty and of justice; to you, O Lord, I will sing.

*Psalms 101:1*

“““

Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

*Matthew 12:18*

“““

He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.

*Psalms 33:5*

“““

O house of David! Thus says the Lord: Execute justice in the morning, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed, or else my wrath will go forth like fire, and burn, with no one to quench it, because of your evil doings.

*Jeremiah 21:12*

“““

The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern.

*Proverbs 29:7, NIV*

“““

When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous, but dismay to evildoers.

*Proverbs 21:15*

“““

Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times.

*Psalms 106:3*

“““

But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream!

*Amos 5:24.*

“““

Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

*Psalms 45:6, NIV*

“““

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

*Isaiah 30:18*

“““

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war.

*Revelation 19:11, NIV*

“““

The Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing.

*Deuteronomy 10:17-18*

“““

He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

*Psalms 37:6*

“““

The Lord is known by his acts of justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.

*Psalms 9:16, NIV*

“““

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

*Isaiah 42:1*

“““

Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples.

*Isaiah 51:4*

“““

But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others.

*Luke 11:42*

“““

It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

*Psalms 112:5*

“““

I know that the Lord maintains the cause of the needy, and executes justice for the poor.

*Psalms 140:12*

“““

It is not good to be partial to the wicked and so deprive the innocent of justice.

*Proverbs 18:5, NIV*

“““

The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

*Psalms 103:6*

“““

Truth is lacking, and whoever turns from evil is despoiled. The Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice.

*Isaiah 59:15*

“““

For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

*Isaiah 61:8*

“““

Your righteousness is like the highest mountains, your justice like the great deep. You, Lord, preserve both people and animals.

*Psalms 36:6, NIV*





PO Box 58147 Washington, DC 20037 • 703-465-5495 • [IJM.org](http://IJM.org)

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International Justice Mission brings rescue to victims of slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of violent oppression in Africa, Latin America, South Asia and Southeast Asia. IJM answers the Bible's call to "rescue the oppressed" on the front lines, and partners with churches and individuals to manifest God's justice in a broken world.

The Nehemiah Night Guide was created as a resource for DIVE, a partnership program to engage you and your church in God's call to do justice. Learn more at [IJM.org/DIVE](http://IJM.org/DIVE)

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