

June 13, 2021 Elementary

Bible Passage: Esther Saved Her People / Esther

Story Point: God made Esther a queen to protect His people.

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:10 "God... will himself restore you... after you have suffered a little while."

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

Christ Connection: *God was in control over Haman's evil plan to destroy the Jews. Like Haman, Satan wants to ruin God's plan and destroy believers. Satan thought he had won when Jesus died on the cross, but God raised Jesus from the dead and defeated Satan once and for all. All who believe in Jesus are rescued from sin and death.*

*** WELCOME & ACTIVITY:**

Each week we will provide activity pages and coloring sheets for children to do at their own stations + at least one activity as children arrive.

We will also provide a list of activities that can be used in the beginning or end of class.

ACTIVITY PAGE & COLORING SHEETS

Invite kids to complete "The Queen Bee" activity page. Kids will examine the different women pictured and circle the woman they would choose to be queen. Invite a few kids to explain their thinking.

Say • Our story today is about an unlikely girl who became a queen. We will learn how all of this happened according to God's plan so that His people would be safe. God is always in control.

Invite kids to complete "When I'm in Charge" on the activity page. Kids should use the blank area to draw a portrait of themselves as a king or queen. Then they can use the lines to list the top three rules they would enforce in their kingdom.

Say • It's fun to pretend to be in charge! Today we are going to learn about a woman who became queen and had the chance to save the Jewish people from harm.

Host a dinner party discussion

Invite the kids to throw a pretend dinner party. Allow them to share what they would

Say • If you could invite anyone you want to your dinner party, whom would you invite?

What would you talk about? Do you think you would invite your greatest enemy? Today we'll hear how Queen Esther hosted a dinner party for the king, and she invited her enemy. Let's find out more!

Queen (or king) for a day

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. The first kid will say, "If I were queen (or king) for a day I would _____," and complete the sentence with one thing she would do if she were a queen. The next kid will say the same phrase and repeat what the first kid said as well.

Say • It might be fun to imagine what we would do if we were kings and queens. People naturally want to be in control. Sometimes it's hard to realize that we're ultimately not in control at all! ***God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.*** We'll hear a story about Queen Esther today. Her people were in danger, and God had put her in a place to help them. God was in control of the situation, but He still called Esther to step out in faith.

*** WORSHIP:**

We'll now be including two songs in our worship time each week.

***eTown @ Home RULES:**

You can choose to give examples of what this means to follow the rules at home.

1. **Be kind to yourself and others.**
"Be kind and tender to one another. Forgive one another, just as God forgave you because of what Christ has done." Ephesians 4:32
2. **Take care of your home and all that God has given you** (*used to be take care of eTown*)
"The earth belongs to the LORD. And so does everything in it. The world belongs to him. And so do all those who live in it." Psalm 24:1
3. **Listen to each other.**
"My dear brothers and sisters, pay attention to what I say. Everyone should be quick to listen. But they should be slow to speak. They should be slow to get angry." James 1:19
4. **Respect each other.**
"Love one another deeply. Honor others more than yourselves." Romans 12:10

"Now we're going to take some time to watch a bible story together. Check it out..."

*** BIBLE STORY:**

Additional bible story notes are at the end of the document, feel free to use the loose script or come up with your own intro and outro for the story!

INTRO:

Hey, everyone! My name is [your name], and I'm so glad to see you today.

Have you ever built something or has your house been renovated?

One of the most important things people have for their renovation project is a blueprint. The blueprint is the plan for the house—what it's supposed to look like and all the things needed to consider when tearing out walls and rebuilding new ones. In any project, it's necessary to have a plan.

Did you know that God has a plan too? Since the beginning of time, God planned to rescue His people from sin. Even before God created us He knew that we would sin and be in desperate need of a Rescuer. There is nothing that can stop God's plan from happening. I

have a Bible story for us today that tells us more. Do you want to hear it? Great! Let's get started.

As we listen to our Bible story, it's also useful to have a big picture question to help us understand how the individual story fits in to the overall story of the Bible. Today let's try to ask the question: **who is in control of everything?** Think about this question as you listen to the story and we'll find out the answer in a few minutes.

Long before our story took place, God made a promise to Abraham. God chose Abraham to become the father of a great nation, the nation of Israel. God promised that through Abraham's family God would bless the entire world. For hundreds of years the Israelites battled against sin. Sometimes they followed God, but most of the time they were unfaithful to Him. Eventually, God disciplined the people by exiling them to Babylon. God promised that after 70 years in captivity the Israelites would finally return to their home. We've learned that the captives came home and the temple was rebuilt. But not all of God's people returned to Israel. Some stayed in the nation of Persia. That's where our story picks up today.

The **BIBLE** Story

Esther Saved Her People

Esther

King Ahasuerus (uh haz yoo EHR uhs) was the king of Persia. Many years earlier, when Cyrus was king, he sent some of God's people back to Judah to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Some of God's people stayed in Persia. God's people were called Jews because they were from Judah. **The king of Persia chose Esther to be his queen. Esther didn't tell the king that she was a Jew.**

One day, Mordecai heard that Haman, an important leader who worked for the king, was planning to kill all the Jews. Mordecai was upset! He was a Jew; he didn't want all the people he loved to be killed. Mordecai and all the Jews cried.

Esther didn't know what was wrong. She sent a messenger to ask Mordecai why all the Jews were upset. Mordecai told Esther about Haman's evil plan.

"You have to do something!" Mordecai said. "Ask the king to stop Haman. Ask him to save the Jewish people."

Esther sent a message back to Mordecai. **"No one can approach the king unless the king calls for that person first," Esther said. "The punishment is death—unless the king holds out his scepter; then you may live."**

"You're a Jew," Mordecai said. "If you don't stop Haman, he will kill you too. Maybe this is why you are the queen." Maybe God put Esther in the palace to save her people! **Esther asked Mordecai and the Jews to fast for three days.** Then Esther would go to the king, even if it meant she might die. **On the third day, Esther went to the king. He**

saw Esther and held out his golden scepter. “What is it, Queen Esther?” the king asked. “What do you want to ask me? I’ll give you anything—up to half of my kingdom.” Esther said, “Would you and Haman come to a feast?”

So Haman and the king went to Esther’s feast. After eating, the king said, “What do you want, Queen Esther? I’ll give you anything—up to half of my kingdom.” “Come to my feast tomorrow,” Esther said.

The king agreed. The next day, Haman and the king went to Esther’s feast. After eating, the king said, “What do you want, Queen Esther? I’ll give you anything—up to half of my kingdom.”

Esther spoke up, “There is a plan to kill me and my people.”

The king replied, “Who is responsible for this plan?”

“This evil enemy—Haman!” Esther said.

The king was angry! He punished Haman and made a law to keep the Jewish people safe from their enemies.

Christ Connection: God was in control over Haman’s evil plan to destroy the Jews. Like Haman, Satan wants to ruin God’s plan and destroy believers. Satan thought he had won when Jesus died on the cross, but God raised Jesus from the dead and defeated Satan once and for all. All who believe in Jesus are rescued from sin and death.

OUTRO:

We often think of queens as powerful women who live in the lap of luxury, surrounded by riches and nice things. However, becoming a queen in Persia was may not have been a luxurious or nice prospect for Esther. She would have been forced to become queen whether or not she wanted to marry the king. Esther’s life likely would have been much easier if the king never decided to bring her in as a possible queen. But **God made Esther a queen to protect His people.**

The Jews needed someone to speak up for them—to rescue them. Approaching the king without being called in could have led to Esther’s death. Although she was afraid, she was willing to do whatever it took to protect her people. God’s plan was to send Jesus through the family of Judah. God cannot be caught by surprise, and His plans cannot be stopped. By saving His people from death, God made His own name great throughout the land of Persia.

Esther’s life reminds us of Jesus, who was also willing to die to save God’s people according to God’s plan—and He really did die! Do you remember our big picture question? ***Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.***

God was not surprised by Haman's plot against the Jews. God was in control over Haman's evil plan to destroy the Jews. Like Haman, Satan wants to ruin God's plan and destroy believers. Satan thought he had won when Jesus died on the cross, but God raised Jesus from the dead and defeated Satan once and for all. All who believe in Jesus are rescued from sin and death.

***GOSPEL PLAN:**

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

*** KEY PASSAGE / MEMORY VERSE:**

1 Peter 5:10 "God... will himself restore you... after you have suffered a little while."

God will - fist pump
himself- point up
restore you- bring arm down from pointing up to in front of you
after you have suffered a little while- fists rolling over each other - like wheels on the bus
go round and round
1 Peter 5:10 - close hands and open like a book

Leader • God planned the events in Esther's life, and He is still in control of what is happening now. God is the one who restores, establishes, strengthens, and supports us. He will never leave you on your own.

***BIG PICTURE QUESTION:**

Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

***QUESTIONS FROM KIDS:**

Show the "Unit 18, Session 1" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about whether or not some things happen just by chance. How does it give us hope to know God is involved in all parts of history and our lives?

***PRAYER**

Dear God, thank You for making a way for us to live forever in Your kingdom. Help us be faithful to You. Amen.

***ACTIVITY:**

Paper people puppets

Assist the kids in cutting out the Bible story people from the printable. Instruct the kids to glue each person onto a craft stick. Form small groups of three to five kids and allow them to use their puppets to retell the story within their groups.

Say • **God made Esther a queen to protect His people.** At the time, it seemed like all hope was lost for the Jews. They fasted to show they were depending on God's faithfulness, and God acted. God showed Himself to be faithful to His people and protected them from their enemies.

Group demonstration (5 min.)

Say • I have an idea to show kids how Satan tries to wear us down!

Show the class a small jar with small items, such as buttons, candies, or marbles. Select a volunteer to step into the hallway with another adult helper. Explain to the remaining kids that when the volunteer returns, she will be tasked with counting items. Their job in the audience is to shout out random numbers to try and distract the volunteer. Call for the volunteer to return. Ask her to count the items by removing them from the jar. Is she able to count them with the audience distracting her? After a few moments, let her start again, but without distractions.

Say • Sometimes no matter how hard you try, it feels like everything is working against you. Kind of like when our volunteer tried to count those objects. Esther and Mordecai may have felt that way when Haman's plan seemed like it would happen.

Satan always tries to sabotage God's plans. Satan tries to distract us from the things God has commanded us to do. Satan is our enemy and wants nothing more than to see us fail. As God's people, we too may feel frustrated when Satan tries to stop God's plans in our lives. But we must remember that God is in control; Satan's plots are no more than

background noise. Satan will never win because Jesus already won the victory through the cross.

Answer “Who am I?”

Say the following statements and invite children to guess the person. When a child knows the answer, she should remain quiet and put their hand on the top of their head. Say the answers together.

- The king chose me to be his queen. Who am I? (*Esther*)
- I made a plan to destroy the Jews. Who am I? (*Haman*)
- I told Esther that God may have made her queen to help her people, the Jews. Who am I? (*Mordecai*)
- We did not eat or drink for three days. We hoped God would use Esther to save us from Haman’s evil plan. Who are we? (*the Jews*)
- I held out my scepter so Esther could talk to me. Who am I? (*King Ahasuerus of Persia*)
- I kept My promise to My people and saved them through Queen Esther. Who am I? (*God*)
- God sent Me to earth as part of the Jewish people. I died on the cross and rose again to rescue people from sin. Who am I? (*Jesus*)

Say • God’s plan was to send the Messiah into the world through Abraham’s family. Haman’s evil plan could not stop God. **God used Esther to rescue God’s people from their enemies.** This was part of His plan all along. By saving the Jews, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

The plan

This game will help kids understand that, while they may not initially understand God’s plan, they can trust that His plan is good because He is good. Choose a volunteer and quietly assign her a task involving the rest of the class. Consider these tasks:

Organize kids by the color of their clothing.

Group kids based on style or color of shoe.

Without speaking, guide the class to make paper airplanes.

Line up kids in alphabetical order by their first name.

Allow time for the volunteer to arrange the class. When she finishes, challenge the kids to figure out what the plan was.

Say • God has a plan for our lives, but His plan does not always seem obvious. In our Bible story today, we see that **God made Esther a queen to protect His people.** Esther did not realize that at first. One day, we will understand God’s plans and see that everything He did was for His glory and our good.

*** POSSIBLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- What secret did Esther keep from the king? (*She was a Jew, Esth. 2:10*)
- Why was Mordecai upset? (*He learned that Haman planned to kill all the Jews, Esth. 4:1-3*)
- What could have happened to Esther as a result of her going before the king uninvited? (*She could have been put to death, Esth. 4:11*)

- Why do you think Esther was willing to die to save her people? *Help the kids see that Esther understood that she had been made queen for this reason. She understood that God was working through her life and spent days fasting and praying about the issue. God gave her courage to stand up for her people.*
- Esther spoke up for her people. Who speaks up for us today? *Explain that when we trust in Jesus, He speaks to God the Father on our behalf. When we are joined to Jesus, He gives us His perfect righteousness and obedience. (Heb. 7:25)*
- How can you speak up for a friend in need? *Guide kids to think about situations where they may see people being mistreated, such as bullying at school. Remind them that God has commanded us to treat everyone with love and to protect those in need. Brainstorm things they could say to help others.*

NOTES FOR STORYTELLER:

Leader Bible Study

The Babylonian captivity ended when Cyrus, the king of Persia, took over Babylon and let God's people go home. Some of God's people—now called Jews (people from Judah)—traveled back to Judah to rebuild the temple, the city, and their lives. Others, however, stayed in Persia where life among the pagans was relatively comfortable.

The king of Persia was now Ahasuerus (uh haz yoo EHR uhs), also known by his Greek name, Xerxes (ZUHRK seez). Esther was a young Jewish girl who became queen of Persia. The former queen had defied the king and was promptly replaced.

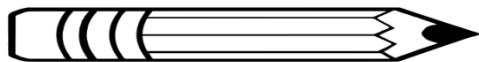
Esther had been an orphan, so her cousin Mordecai adopted her. Mordecai kept in touch with Esther while she lived in the palace. One day, the king gave Haman the Agagite a very important position in the kingdom. The king even commanded the people to bow down to Haman. But Mordecai refused.

Haman was a descendant of Agag, king of the Amalekites. The nations of Israel and Amalek did not get along. Haman was angry, but instead of just punishing Mordecai, he planned to kill all the Jews in the kingdom.

In today's Bible story, Mordecai turned to Esther for help. After all, she was in a position of power, and the Jews were her people. The stakes were high, but Esther approached the king and explained her people's plight. Review the details in Esther 7.

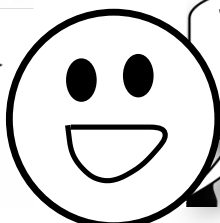
Note how Esther described Haman: "The adversary and enemy is this evil Haman" (Esth. 7:6). We too have an adversary—the Devil. He prowls around like a lion, seeking people to devour. (1 Pet. 5:8) He loves nothing more than to destroy believers and hinder the work of God. Satan thought he had succeeded when Jesus died on the cross, but God—working frequently behind the scenes—raised Jesus from the dead and defeated Satan once and for all. (See Heb. 2:14-15.)

Sermon Notes FOR KIDS



As you attend church services with your family, use this sheet to help you pay attention and learn. We want you to worship with us by singing to God and listening to the message.

Date: _____



who is speaking?



words you heard but don't know...



what are we learning about God from this passage?

what is the main passage we are reading today?

Book: _____

Chapter: _____

Verse: _____



Favorite song today was:

write or draw something you heard in the sermon

Questions?



How does today's message apply to your life?

The most important thing you learned was:

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN for US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



GOD RULES. Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



WE SINNED. Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



GOD PROVIDED. Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



JESUS GIVES. Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



WE RESPOND. Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



**God ... will himself
restore ... you after you
have suffered a little
while.**

1 Peter 5:10



The Queen Bee

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle who you would choose to be queen. Share your choice with a friend.



Younger Kids Activity Pages
Unit 18 • Session 1
Esther Saved Her People

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- The king of Persia chose Esther to be the new queen.
- Haman, an advisor to the king, had an evil plan to kill God's people.
- Esther risked her life to stop Haman's plan.
- God made Esther a queen to protect His people.

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Peter 5:10

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Does anything ever surprise God?
- How do you feel knowing God is in control of all things?
- Have you ever felt like God is not in control of your life?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

- Use empty paper towel tubes, yellow construction paper, plastic adhesive gems and tape to make royal scepters. Discuss Esther's bravery in approaching the king. Remind your kids that we can approach King Jesus at anytime.



DOWNLOAD the
LIFEWAY KIDS APP

When I'm in Charge | Use the blank area to draw a portrait of yourself as a the king or queen. Then use the blank lines to write down the top three rules you would enforce in your kingdom.



_____'s Rules

1

2

3

Different Plans | Read each sentence. If the sentence is part of Haman's plan, draw a big X through it, but if the sentence is part of Esther's plan, draw a crown around it.



I will hurt the queen.

I am one of the king's most powerful leaders.

I will save my people.

I will host a feast.

I will trust God's plan.

I will send a message to Mordecai.

I want all of the Jewish people killed.

I was invited to the feast.

We will fast for three days.

