2s-3s Lesson

Esther Saved Her People

Bible Passage: Esther
Story Point: God used Esther to rescue God's people from their enemies.
Key Passage: "God … will himself restore … you after you have suffered a little while." 1 Peter 5:10
Christ Connection: By saving the Jews, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

**KID CONNECT:
30 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
15 MINUTES**

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.)

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME
(VIDEO: ARRIVAL MUSIC)

Play intro music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow the KidCity check-in procedures. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

MAKE A PLAY DOUGH MEAL
(Play Dough, Cookie Cutters, and Toy Dishes per class)

Provide play dough, food-shaped cookie cutters, and toy dishes to play out serving a meal. Remind preschoolers not to eat the play dough. Talk about the Bible story as preschoolers play.

SAY • God made Esther queen of Persia. Esther found out that someone wanted to hurt God's people. God used Esther to save His people. Esther had a special meal for the king, and she asked him for help. Nothing can stop God's good plan.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN
(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as the children clean up and transition to Large Group.

WORSHIP
(VIDEO: WHEN I LOOK UP, VIDEO: GOD WILL!)

Sing "When I Look Up" and "God Will!"

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY
(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)
(Bible, Bookmark, Scepter)

Place a bookmark at Esther in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Display the open Bible.

SAY • We know the Bible tells true stories about His people. The Book of Esther tells about a time that God used a queen to save His people.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God saves people through His Son, Jesus.

Show preschoolers the scepter.

SAY • Do you know the rules in your home? [*Invite responses.*] In today's Bible story, there was a rule that the king could never be interrupted. If a person came to see the king without being asked, that person would be in big trouble unless the king held out his scepter, like this. [*Show children.*] Esther, one of God's people, needed to talk to the king, but she wasn't invited to see him. Let's learn what happened!

Show the Bible story video.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY
(VIDEO: ESTHER SAVED HER PEOPLE, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)
(Scepter)

SAY • The King chose Esther to be his queen. Esther wanted to help her people, but no one could go to the king unless the king asked for that person. The only way to not be punished was if the king held out his scepter (*hold out scepter*).

Esther went to the king. The king saw Esther waiting and held out his scepter to her (*hold out scepter*). Esther asked the king to come to a special meal. At the special meal, the king said to her, "I will give you whatever you ask." Esther said, "Please save my people!" The king made a plan to save the Jews from their enemies!

CHRIST CONNECTION
(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

SAY • God's plan was to send Jesus into the world. Haman's evil plan could not stop God. God had a plan for Esther to save His people. By saving the Jews, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE
(CG: KEY PASSAGE)
(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

Place the key passage marker at 1 Peter 5:10. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying.

SAY • "God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)" 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*). In our Bible story, the God's people suffered because they were afraid. But God used Esther to help them and keep them safe.

PRAY AND TRANSITION TO SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Esther
Story Point: God used Esther to rescue God's people from their enemies.
Key Passage: "God ... will himself restore ... you after you have suffered a little while." 1 Peter 5:10
Christ Connection: By saving the Jews, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

READ ABOUT ESTHER
("God Helped Esther Book" printable, 1 per group)

Invite preschoolers to sit with you as you read the book. Remind preschoolers that Esther's story is true because it comes from the Bible.

SAY • God used Esther to save His people. God wants to use you too! Nothing can stop God's good plan.

COUNT AND DIVIDE IN HALF
(Several equal groups of items per group, such as Crayons, Blocks, or Pom-Poms)

Set out groups of items such as crayons, blocks, or pom-poms. Invite children to sort the items—one in this pile, one in that pile—until the objects are divided in equal piles.

SAY • The king told Esther he would give her whatever she wanted up to half his kingdom. Esther did not ask for any of his kingdom. Instead, she asked to save her people. God used Esther to save God's people from their enemies. God planned to send Jesus to save us.

KEY PASSAGE WITH MOTIONS

Say the key passage using motions. Repeat several times and encourage children for trying. "God will (*pump fist upwards*) himself (*point up*) restore you (*display same arm in front*) after you have suffered a little while (*roll fists in front*)" 1 Peter 5:10 (*open hands like a book*).

GOSPEL GEMS
(Key Passage Card, 1 per group, Bible Story Picture, 1 per group, small Bibles)

Provide small Bibles for preschoolers to handle. Say the Bible is God's words. Read the key passage card. Open your Bible to the Book of Esther. Show the Bible story picture as you tell the Bible story. Say the story point and gospel gems. Pray for the preschoolers.

- God made Esther queen of Persia.
- God used Esther to save His people.
- Jesus saves us from our wrong choices.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS
(Big Picture Card & Story Point Coloring Page (optional), 1 per child)

Two & Three-year olds may color the optional Story Point coloring age as parents arrive. Encourage parents/influencers to review the Preschool Christ Connection with their child this week.