



UNIT 18 | SESSION 1 | FEBRUARY 1-2, 2020

4s-5s 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.

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

**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 arrival 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. Let's listen carefully during our Bible story to find out what happened after the special meal.

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 in the Old Testament 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 invited, that person would be punished 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. 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 God's people 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 used 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, God’s people suffered because they were afraid. But God used Esther to help them and keep them safe.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • Our big picture question asks, *Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.* God’s plan was to send Jesus into the world through Abraham’s family. Haman’s evil plan could not stop God. Nothing can stop God’s good plan.

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.

Big Picture Question: Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

ACT OUT WAYS TO HELP

(No Supplies Needed)

Encourage the children to think of ways they can help their families. Invite one child at a time to act out one way to help for the other children to guess. Whisper ideas (sweeping, dusting, folding towels, putting clothes in drawers, taking care of a younger sibling, and picking up toys) to children who have a hard time thinking of a way to help.

SAY • God gave us families! We can help our families in many ways. Today we learned about a woman who helped her family in a very special way. She did not just help her family; she

helped all the Jewish people in her country. Can anyone tell how Esther helped God's people?

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. God wants to use you to help people too.

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*).

REVIEW AND PRAYER

(Bible Story Picture, 1 per group)

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

What would happen to people if they came to the king uninvited? (*He or she would be punished.*)

What would the king hold out to keep a person from being punished? (*a scepter*)

Who did God use to save His people from their enemies? (*Esther*)

How can you obey God and help your family today? (allow responses)

Who is in control of everything? God is in control of everything.

SAY • The king chose Esther to be his queen, but God chose Esther for something even better. God used Esther to save God's people from their enemies. Esther risked her life to go before the king, and she saved her people. By saving the Jews, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world. Jesus gave His life when He died on the cross, saving people from their wrong choices.

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have.

SAY • God, you are in control of everything. You used Esther to help your people, and you can use us to help our families. Help us love you and obey you. Amen.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Preschool Activity Page, 1 per child and crayons)

Preschoolers may color the Story Point coloring page as parents arrive. Encourage them to do the activity page at home with their family this week.

