



ESTHER

Esther Saves Her People

Welcome students.

Prayer Cards: Ask, “How can I pray for you?” Ask students to fill out the cards. Tell the students, “I will pray for you this week.”

Lesson Objective: God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth.

Activity: Cup Phone (supplies: plastic cups - 1 per kid/group, 6-foot lengths of string - 1 per 2 kids/group, tape, sharp pencil or thumbtack)

Create phone cups beforehand. First, use a thumbtack or sharp pencil to punch a hole in the bottom of a cup, just small enough for a piece of string to go through. Thread the string into the hole and tie a knot to keep the string from slipping out. Tape the end of the string in place. Thread the loose end of the string through the other cup and knot and tape that end. Then the partners can take turns holding one cup to their ear while the other kid talks into the other cup. Make sure the string is tight! Have the kids speak messages back and forth to each other.

Connect the Activity to the Lesson

How can you share a message with someone who is far away? Do you prefer talking to someone through messages or face to face? In today’s lesson, Mordecai had to get a very important message to Queen Esther. It was a message of life or death. And after receiving this message, Queen Esther had a very hard decision to make that put her life on the line as well.

Introduction:

We’ve learned in our past lessons how God’s people were taken into captivity and sent as exiles to Babylon. Many returned home after 70 years and began to rebuild their lives. But some were still scattered abroad. Some remained in Persia (modern-day Iran, which has been in the news a lot lately). Mordecai and Esther were two of these Jews that remained in Persia. The king of Persia had chosen Esther to be his queen but he did not know that she was a Jew. Let’s find out what important event took place during this time that Esther was queen.

Video Recap: “Esther Saves Her People” - Esther

One day, during the time that Esther was chosen to be queen to the king of Persia, a man named Mordecai heard that Haman, an important leader who worked for the king, was planning to kill all the Jews. Mordecai was a Jew, as was his cousin, Esther. He obviously did not want all the people he loved to be killed and it made him very upset. Esther sent a messenger to ask Mordecai why all the Jews were upset and he sent word back to her of Haman’s evil plan. He begged, “Ask the king to stop Haman. Ask him to save the Jewish people.” Esther sent word back to Mordecai, “No one can approach the king unless the king calls for that person first. The punishment is death – unless the king holds out his scepter; then you may live.” Mordecai reminded her, “You are a Jew. If you don’t stop Haman, he will kill you too. Maybe this is why you are the queen.”

So Esther asked Mordecai and all the Jews to fast and pray for three days. Then she 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 inquired. “What do you want to ask me? I’ll give you anything – up to half of my kingdom.” Esther replied, “Would you and Haman come to a feast?” So Haman and the king went to Esther’s feast and after eating,

the king again inquired what it was Esther wanted. Instead of making her request she invited them to yet another feast on the following day. The next day, Haman and the king went and after eating, the king once again asked what it was Esther wanted. Then she bravely spoke, "There is a plan to kill me and my people." The king replied, "Who is responsible for this plan?" Esther proclaimed, "This evil enemy – Haman!" 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.

Debrief: Questions to ask

How did Mordecai help Esther? *(He told Esther what Haman had planned. He encouraged her to take a step of faith. He prayed and fasted with her and helped her understand that God made Esther a queen to protect His people. He was a loyal friend and relative who helped Esther make the right decision.)*

How does Esther remind us of Jesus? *(God raised up Esther to save His people. Mordecai urged Esther to take action and she was willing to face death. In a greater way, God sent Jesus at just the right time and Jesus willingly died on the cross to save sinners. Jesus rose from the dead and one day he will come back to rule as King forever.)*

How can you be part of God's plan? *(Discuss ways they are uniquely gifted to serve and help others. Talk about how God has a purpose for our lives now – right where we are – to advance the gospel. We might not know God's exact plan, but we can help others and faithfully share with them the good news about Jesus.)*

Apply the Story

When Esther became queen of Persia, she did not know what her future would hold. But God had a plan for Esther and for His people. Esther was in a hard situation, but she had faith in God. Even when she wasn't sure what God's plan was, she trusted Him. She knew she could trust Him because God is in control of everything in heaven and on earth. And God had put Esther in the palace to save His people. 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. God sent Jesus at just the right time to save us from our sin by dying on the cross. He willingly gave his life for us. We can willingly give our life to Him by living in a way that honors and glorifies our Savior.

Bible Drills (supplies: Bibles)

Challenge the students to look up the following verses and stand up when they find it. Recognize the first person to stand and ask them to read the verse. After all the verses are read, discuss the theme each verse has in common (Underlined Words below)

God is in Control:

Proverbs 19:21

Isaiah 55:8-9

Deuteronomy 31:8

Psalms 73:26

2 Chronicles 2:17

Psalms 22:28

Romans 8:28