



ESTHER SAVES THE DAY

Preschool-K • #OT24 • November 19, 2023

Concept

God is always in control.

Goal

Children will learn that God is always in control. They will learn what it means to trust Him to give them courage to make a difference in the lives of others.

Passage

Esther 3:7-9, 4:1-17

Key Verse: "And who knows but that you, Queen Esther, have come to royal position for such a time as this?" Esther 4:14

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>2 crowns</i>• <i>2 tunics or robes</i>• <i>Jewelry</i>• <i>The Rhyme Bible, L.J. Sattgast</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Laminated, color "puppets-on-a-stick" – King Xerxes, Esther, Mordecai, Haman</i>• <i>Twin sheet</i>	<p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puppets printed on cardstock, 1 person/child• Craft sticks, 1/child• Glue sticks or tape• Crayons

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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“Esther tells the story of a plot to exterminate the entire Jewish nation in the days of the Persian king, Ahasuerus (Xerxes), and how it was thwarted. It also explains the origin of the Jewish Feast of Purim... The writer is unknown, but his nationalism and accurate knowledge of Persian ways make it likely that he was a Jew who lived in Persia before the empire fell to Greece.

Although the book does not mention God by name, it speaks plainly of his overruling in the affairs of men, and his unfailing care for his people.” [1]

“When a Persian king signed a decree, it became one of ‘the laws of the Persians and the Medes’ (Esther 1:19). This phrase describes the ironclad nature of the laws that governed the Persian Empire. Once a law was issued, it could not be changed or revoked—not even by the king himself. Thus, Ahasuerus could not revoke the decree calling for the Jews to be destroyed, which he had allowed Haman to make (Esther 3:7-15). However, he could and did authorize Mordecai the Jew to write a counter-decree (Esther 8:11).

An understanding of customs during Esther's time increases our appreciation of the amazing way in which God has worked behind the scenes of the most powerful human governments to protect His people. Be reassured that our all-powerful God is still at work in our behalf today.”[2] God is sovereign. He is in control of all of human history. Yet, God’s sovereignty is inextricably linked with man’s free agency. Hence, as Christians, we can have lives that are significant. What we do has eternal impact on others.

[1] David Alexander, *Eerdmans' Handbook to the Bible*, Lion Publishing, 1973, p. 313.

[2] *Children's Ministry Resource Bible*, 1993, Thomas Nelson Publishers, p. 587.

Set Up

The day of class: For Learning Activity #2, cut to separate the puppets printed on cardstock for the kids to cut out later. Pray with other teachers.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations:

- **Dramatic Play – The Royal Palace**
 - **Instructions:** Set out the provided crowns, jewelry, and tunics/robes to play Queen Esther and King Xerxes. Have children take turns being king, queen and subjects.
- **Story – "Esther Saves the Day"**
 - **Instructions:** Read the story on pages 198-209 of The Rhyme Bible. Discuss the story.
- **Game – Stand Up, Sit Down**
 - **Instructions:** We are going to learn about Esther today. Esther did something very important for God. God knows each one of you. If you are His child, He will someday ask you to do something important for Him. When I call your name, stand up, skip in a circle and sit back down. We will play until everyone has had a turn.

Introduction Lg. Group

Have you done something that made a difference in someone else's life? What? When? (Teachers should share their own personal examples to get the children to share.) Today we are going to learn about a very brave woman. Even though she was just like you and me, she chose to be brave and trust God to save others. She believed that God is in control and she made a difference in the lives of many people. Let's hear her story now.

Lesson Lg. Group

Drama – "Queen Esther Saves the Day," puppet show performed by the teacher

Instructions: Stretch the sheet between two chairs to make a puppet stage. Use the laminated puppets-on-a-stick to tell the story of Esther. Have children repeat the "Audience" words.

Narrator: The Bible tells us that long ago there was a powerful King named Xerxes. King Xerxes was searching for a new queen so he sent out a message to gather together all of the beautiful women and bring them to him. Esther, a young Jewish woman, was one of the women chosen. King Xerxes was so pleased with her that he made her his new queen.

In this country many Jewish people were slaves. King Xerxes did not know that Queen Esther was Jewish or she probably would have been a slave instead of a queen. Say "hello" to Queen Esther and King Xerxes.

Audience: "Hello, Queen Esther and King Xerxes."

Narrator: Queen Esther had a cousin named Mordecai. He loved God and always tried to do things God's way because he knew that God is always in control. Say "hello" to Mordecai.

Audience: "Hello, Mordecai."

Narrator: There was another man, named Haman. The king liked him better than all his other princes. Haman thought he was in control. He didn't know that God is always in control. Whenever Haman walked out of the king's palace, all the servants and princes had to bow low, with their faces to the ground. Haman thought he was more important than anyone else on earth. Say "hello" to Prince Haman.

Audience: "Hello, Prince Haman."

Narrator: There was one man who refused to bow down to Haman. That man was Mordecai. The royal officials told Mordecai to bow to Haman but Mordecai said, "I will not. I will only bow to God because I know that God is always in control."

Mordecai did not want to bow and pretend that someone else was more important than God. Of course, this made Haman very angry. When he found out that Mordecai was Jewish, Haman hated not only Mordecai, but all the Jewish people. Haman decided that he would figure out a way to kill all the Jewish people. Haman told the king that the Jewish people wouldn't obey the King's laws. Haman asked the king to make a rule that all the Jewish people be killed. The king said, "Do whatever you want."

Mordecai found out about Haman's plan to kill all the Jewish people. He told Esther about it. He said, "Esther, you must go to the king and beg for your peoples' lives."

Esther was afraid. If she went to talk to the king before he asked for her, he might kill her. Esther said, "I am afraid the king will kill me if I go to see him without permission."

Mordecai told Esther not to forget that she was Jewish. She would be killed too if the king found out that she was Jewish. Mordecai said, "And who knows but that you, Queen Esther, have come to royal position for such a time as this?" Don't you think Mordecai said that because he believed that God is always in control?

Esther was very frightened but she decided to believe that God is always in control. She decided to try to save her people.

She went to the king and he was not angry. He told her to ask him anything and he would do it. Esther asked the King to come and bring Haman to a fancy dinner she would make for them. When they came, the king asked her again to tell him what she wanted. She said, "Please don't kill me and my people."

Audience: Please don't kill Esther and her people.

Narrator: The king said, "Who wants to kill you?"

Esther pointed to Haman and said, "He does!"

Audience: Haman does!

Narrator: The king was so angry that he ordered Haman to be killed. Haman was killed that very day. King Xerxes also made a new law that the Jewish people would be allowed to defend themselves against those who tried to kill them. God is always in control and the Jewish people were not destroyed!

The End

Just as queen Esther saved her people, so did Jesus save people. Queen Esther was brave and trusted God with her life. But Jesus gave His life for us. He chose to die on the cross for all of our bad choices called sins so we can be God's children forever. You can thank Jesus for dying on the cross for your sins and ask Him to come live in your heart.

Let's pray now and thank God that He is always in control. He gave Esther courage so she could save her people. Let's ask Him to remind us that He is always in control and He will give us courage to make a difference in the lives of other people. Let's thank Him for taking care of us and loving us.

Discussion Questions

- Esther was afraid to talk to the king about saving her people – she thought that he might kill her if she talked to him without being asked. How do you think she was able to go and talk to the king even though she was afraid? (She knew that God would take care of her because He is always in control.)
- Is God always in control of our lives?

Let's make a puppet of one of the characters in the story of Esther to remind us that God is in control and He made Esther brave so He could use her to save the Jewish people from Haman.

Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

Optional Activity

Craft – Puppet

- **Instructions:** Give each child Queen Esther, Mordecai, Haman, or Xerxes puppet printed on cardstock to cut out, color and decorate. Give each child a craft stick and have each child tape or glue it to the back of the puppet.

Free Play

- Have children reenact the story of Esther with their puppets.
- Read "Esther Saves the Day" and have the children act it out.