

TEXT Esther 2:8-11,15-20; 4:4-9,12-17; 7:1-6; 8:1-8

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to relate the story of Esther and give a reason why she qualified to be used of God.

MEMORY VERSE Ye that love the LORD, hate evil. — Psalm 97:10

Esther

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

YE — Point to others.

THAT LOVE — Cross fists over heart.

THE LORD — Make an L with thumb and first finger of the right hand. Touch thumb to left shoulder, bring across in front of body touching right waist.

HATE EVIL — With hands in front of face and palms out, forcefully brush an imaginary object to the right. Look like you hate the object.

Psalm 97:10

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

This week the visualization of our memory verse shows two children pointing to a portion of the verse. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Place the parts of the visualization on a display board as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Ahead of class time, make a crown from silver or gold foil. (If you wish, make one for each of your students.) Put the crown on yourself, or on one of the students, and open your class session by asking if they have ever imagined what it would be like to suddenly be made a prince or princess. Tell them that your Bible story today is about a good woman that God allowed to become a queen, because He had a special purpose for her and He knew that she would allow herself to be used by God.

1. Esther is chosen from among many to become queen.

2. The wicked Haman makes plans to destroy the Jewish people, who are Esther's people.

3. Esther is courageous and goes before the king at the risk of her own life to intercede for her people.

Climax: The king grants Esther her request. Subsequently Haman is hung for his conspiracy and the Jews are given liberty to defend themselves and consequently are not destroyed.

Conclusion: God is able to use Esther to provide deliverance for her people because of her courage.

Response: The students should be able to describe how God was able to use Esther because of her courage and compassion for her fellow man. They will recognize that God is looking for people in our day, too, whom He can use.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Esther's ancestors had been taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar and subsequently she had been born in captivity to Abihail the uncle of Mordecai. Because of her beauty, Esther was chosen to take the place of Vashti, the queen of Ahasuerus. However, it was not her beauty but her strength of character, courage, faith, and resolution that God used to save the Jewish people when they were threatened with destruction.

The man next to the king was offended because Mordecai would not bow to him. He determined to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom. He went to the king and persuaded him that there were people in his province that were undesirable and he offered to put up a large sum of money to have them destroyed. The king signed an unalterable decree to carry out Haman's program. Mordecai told Esther what had happened and asked her to intercede for her people. It could have cost her life to go unto the king uninvited, but she determined to do so. The king received her and though he could not change the edict to destroy the people, he gave them the permission to defend themselves and thus the nation of the Jews was spared.

To this day, the Jews annually celebrate the feast of Purim in remembrance of their miraculous deliverance through the courageous Queen Esther.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Draw and cut out a crown for each child (see Patterns), so they can wear them in class while you are talking about kings and queens.

Esther was obedient to her cousin, Mordecai, who raised her. Compare her obedience to the children's obedience to their parents, guardians, grandparents, or baby sitters.

For each child cut a scepter from gold tagboard or posterboard, using a paint stick or large craft stick for an 11" or 12" handle (see Patterns). The circle could be

sprayed gold or covered with gold foil. Put small spots of glue on the circle so the children can put sequins on for jewels, while you tell the story. When the scepters are dry, the class can use them to pretend they are kings and queens.

King Ahasuerus was very rich and had a beautiful palace. Read Esther 1:6 and then have the children draw a picture of the garden court of the king's palace. Be sure they use the appropriate colors.

Let each child have a set of the paper dolls of the king and Esther (see Patterns). Have them use them at the appropriate times as you tell the story.

QUESTIONS

Why did Esther obey Mordecai? He wasn't her father, but just her cousin.

Why does God not want us to worship men? What about Rock stars or TV heroes?

What does it mean to be humble?

In God's sight, do the wicked people ever win?

What was so special about Esther that God could use her to save His people from death? Can God use you?

Describe how Mordecai responded to the commandment regarding the destruction of the Jews? What did he want Esther to do?

What was Esther's response?

What did Esther want the Jews to do before she attempted to go in unto the king?

Did Esther tell the king right away what the wicked Haman planned to do? What did she do?

What was God's judgment against Haman?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Make crowns for each of your girl students and bow ties for each of your boy students (see Patterns). Let the girls pretend to be Queen Esther and the boys to be her cousin, Mordecai.

Focus on the thought of helping others, rather than a complete retelling of the story which would likely be beyond the understanding of the little ones. Explain simply that Esther was a good queen who wanted to help her people. We may not be queens, but we can be helpers. Bring some objects to illustrate ways a child

can help: toy (share), BandAid (help hurt friend), cereal box (help Mom carry the groceries), money (give to someone in need), etc.

Dress a doll as a queen (bride or wedding attendant dress works well). Make a tiny crown from foil. Let this represent Esther. Tell your little ones that the best thing about Esther was that she had a kind heart. (Add a heart with a Jesus sticker.) Show several other dolls — give them names if you wish. They are not kings or queens, but they can have a heart with Jesus in it too. Pin on each child a heart with a picture of Jesus on it and tell them that it is to remind them to always try to be a kind helper as Esther was.

REVIEW IDEAS

Write and tape a make-believe interview with Queen Esther. Try to emphasize her relationship with God, and also historical information connected with this story.

Dress as a queen or royalty, including crown, scepter, rich robe, and throne. Label each piece with traits that Esther showed — willingness to obey God, readiness to use talents, and a desire to see fairness and justice done.

For this last lesson of the quarter, gather all the traits of the people God used and write them on parts of a body made from paper (see Patterns). Pass out the pieces to different students and then put the figure together with tape, brads, felt strips, or pins. Remind the students they have these traits of character which they need to use for Jesus. Esther used what she had for the Lord — position, beauty, hostess abilities, culinary arts. We need only use what we have for the Lord. We can sew for Sunday school; make cookies for seamen or open house; clean the church, mow the lawns of the church or parsonage; baby-sit for mothers who sing or play for church. These duties show such godly traits as were portrayed by the people God used in our Bible lessons — faithfulness, willingness, helpfulness, etc.

COORDINATING SONGS

"Where He Leads Me I Will Follow"

"Anywhere With Jesus"

"All for Jesus"

"Trust and Obey"

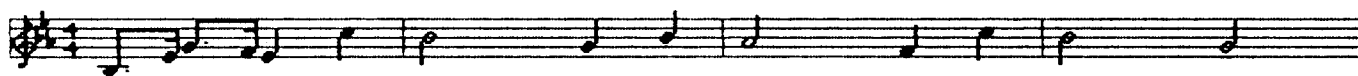
SUPPORT MATERIAL

Up From Captivity — Book, Augsburg

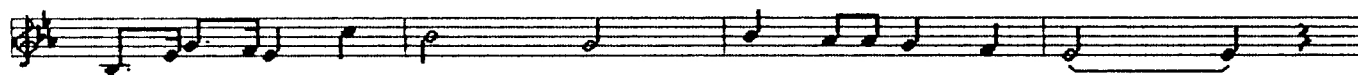
The Queen Who Saved Her People — Arch Book, Concordia

Good Queen — My Bible Story Card, Concordia (Picture on the front/story on the back)

MEMORY VERSE SONG



Ye that love the Lord, hate e - - vil, hate e - - vil hate e - - vil.



Ye that love the Lord, hate e - - vil.

Psalm ninety se - ven: ten.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

