



# ESTHER THE QUEEN OF PERSIA

ESTHER 1-10

## GOAL

▶ To help children understand God's amazing protection of His people.

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## CHARACTERS

▶ **Esther:** She was a beautiful Jewish woman who was selected to be the king's bride. God used her to make the brave choice to protect her people.

**King Ahasuerus:** The king of Persia allowed one of his officials to carry out a plan to kill all of the Jewish people living in the kingdom. He didn't realize that his own queen, Esther, was a Jew.

**Haman:** He was a high-ranking official who hated the Jews and plotted to have them all killed.

**Mordecai:** He was Esther's uncle. He helped Esther protect the Jewish people from extermination.

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## MEMORY VERSE

▶ **John 10:29:** No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

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## OVERVIEW

▶ **Read the book of Esther:** The king was in search of a wife, and Esther's beauty qualified her for the position. She was also a brave woman and a Jew. Haman, one of the king's high-ranking officials, devised a way to kill off the Jews with the king's permission. Mordecai, Esther's uncle, figured out a way to stop Haman's plan from succeeding, and Esther played the key role in defending the Jews.



## SUGGESTIONS

- ▶ Though the name of God doesn't appear in the book of Esther, His presence is everywhere. God is the only reason Esther was successful. He is constantly protecting, supervising, and directing all of history.

## PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Word It! | Supplies:** paper and pencils or pens.

Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a piece of paper with "Esther the Queen" written at the top. Using the letters in the phrase at the top of the page, see which team can come up with the most words within the specified amount of time. Letters may not be used more than once. When time is up, tally up the points. Cancel out words that both teams have on their papers. The team with the highest remaining number of words wins.

## MEMORY VERSE MEANING

- ▶ **John 10:29:** Once we are saved, we cannot lose our salvation. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

## POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

- ▶ **Draw Esther | Supplies:** printouts of the outline of a faceless woman's head, crayons, markers, aluminum foil, art supplies, and glue.

Give each student a printout and have them draw and color the face of Esther. Give the students pieces of aluminum foil for them to fold into the shape of a crown that they can glue onto the picture they colored of Esther's face.



**TAKE  
HOME**



Sometimes it is hard to see God working in our lives, but that does not mean He isn't there. In the entire book of Esther, God's name is not mentioned once, but we can see His work throughout this story. Nothing that led up to Esther being put in the position to protect the Jews was a coincidence—it was God's plan.

God has a plan for each of us. His plans for our lives are good, and we can trust that God will help us to be successful. God is always with us.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 1



**Q1a:** Why were Israelites living in Persia?

**A1:** The Persians invaded Israel and took many of God's people as exiles to Persia.

**Q1b:** Have you ever spent the night at a friend's house?

**TN:** Even if we're just staying over for the night, we may experience a number of different things, such as new or strange foods for dinner or breakfast, or maybe we have to sleep on the couch or on the floor in a sleeping bag. These things are different from our normal day-to-day life, and it takes a bit of adjustment. The Israelites had much more to get accustomed to while living in Persia.

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### SLIDE 2



**Q2a:** How long did King Ahasuerus' party last?

**A2:** His party lasted for a whole week.

**Q2b:** What is your favorite way to celebrate your birthday?

**TN:** Whether its throwing a party and inviting all our friends or having a big dinner with our families, we all have ways we like to celebrate. King Ahasuerus celebrated his position and influence by hosting a celebration that lasted for an entire week!





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** How did Queen Vashti respond to the king's order?

**A3:** She refused to come to the party.

**Q3b:** How willing would you be to stand on a stage and let people throw pies in your face?

**TN:** That doesn't sound very fun, in fact, it sounds like it would be a pretty humiliating experience. Queen Vashti thought that standing in front of a bunch of drunken partygoers sounded like a terrible idea, so she refused to go.

### SLIDE 4



**Q4a:** What did the king do to Vashti for disobeying him?

**A4:** He removed her crown, stripped her of her title, and banished her from the kingdom.

**Q4b:** What would happen if you refused to do something your parent asked you to do?

**TN:** We'd get in trouble. Our parents are the authority figures in our homes, and we are to obey them. If we don't do what we're told, we can expect to be punished. The king was the authority in Persia, so when Queen Vashti refused to do what she was told, she was punished for her behavior.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** What plan did the king's counselors propose?

**A5:** They suggested that the king choose a new queen.

**Q5b:** If you could choose any video game system, how would you decide which one to pick?

**TN:** The best way to choose a video game system is to look at all of them and consider all of the things they can and can't do. Once we have all of that information, we can decide which one suits our needs the best. The king wanted a new wife, so his officials brought all of the best candidates to him so he could see who was the best.

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### SLIDE 6



**Q6a:** Why did Esther keep her identity as a Jew a secret?

**A6:** She kept it secret because some people in Persia hated the Jews.

**Q6b:** You just get home from a week-long camping trip to learn that you are going to meet the president. What do you need to do?

**TN:** At the very least, we would need to take a shower! To meet the president, we'd want to look our best. The women who were brought before the king underwent a number of beauty treatments so they would look their best when they met the king.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 7



**Q7a:** What was Haman's plan really meant to do?

**A7:** His plan was really meant to annihilate the Jews.

**Q7b:** You hate hip hop music so much that you decide not to be friends with anyone who listens to it. What problems will that cause?

**TN:** We'd be missing out on friendships with a lot of cool people! What if we found out that our best friends listened to hip hop? Would that change how we see the other things we really like about these people? No, they're still the same people we like to spend time with, they just like a different type of music. We aren't going to always agree with people and like all the same things, and that is okay.

### SLIDE 8



**Q8a:** What did Mordecai and all of the other Jews do after hearing about the new law?

**A8:** They tore their clothes and placed ashes on their heads.

**Q8b:** How would you get tickets to a sold-out concert or sporting event?

**TN:** If it's sold out, we'd have to know someone who has tickets or access to the place where the event is being held. Without that kind of connection, we wouldn't be able to attend. Mordecai had a connection within the palace—his niece, Esther. Through her, he could alert the king to Haman's evil plan to wipe out all of the Jewish people.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 9



**Q9a:** What did the king do when he saw Esther in his court?

**A9:** He held out his scepter to her.

**Q9b:** Why do superheroes protect normal people?

**TN:** In comic books, cartoons, and movies, superheroes protect normal humans out of a sense of responsibility and duty. They have extraordinary powers that enable them to help in ways normal humans are unable to on their own. Even though going up against the forces of evil poses a threat to themselves, they are able to see that it is less of a threat for them than it would be for a normal person to take on a villain. Esther found herself in a position that allowed her to do something other Jews could not do. Going in to talk to the king would put her in danger, but it was a risk she felt was her duty.

### SLIDE 10



**Q10a:** How many banquets did Esther hold for the king and Haman?

**A10:** She held two banquets.

**Q10b:** Your friend borrows and then loses your bike. Would you want to throw her a party after that?

**TN:** Throwing a party for a friend who just treated something of ours so carelessly is not likely our first response. But that is what Esther did. She went through a lot of trouble to honor Haman, the man who had plotted to kill her and all of her fellow Jews.





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 11



**Q11a:** What happened to Haman's plan after he was executed?

**A11:** Haman's plan was still in motion and could not be stopped.

**Q11b:** When playing a board game, have you ever made a move you wished you could take back?

**TN:** When playing games, we often fixate on a good move and fail to see that it makes us vulnerable to attack from our opponents. The king made a mistake by trusting Haman and not looking into the consequences of this plan. Once the king made and sent out his edict, there was nothing he could do to take it back.

### SLIDE 12



**Q12a:** What did the king's new edict allow the Jews to do?

**A12:** The edict allowed all the Jews to defend themselves against the coming attack.

**Q12b:** A parade has made it impossible for you to take your normal route to school. How do you get to school?

**TN:** Take a different route! Surely there is more than one way to get to school. The king couldn't reverse his edict, but he could help to change its intended outcome. We must act much in the same way when we face unexpected obstacles in life. We may have a plan to achieve certain goals, but we shouldn't give up at the first sign of opposition. There will be another way, and God will help us!



**MEMORY  
VERSE**

▷ **John 10:29:** No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

**BIG IDEA**

▷ The evil plans of men will never defeat the plans God has for those who love Him.

**CLOSING  
PRAYER**

▷ Dear God, You rescued Esther and protected a whole nation of people because You are loving and merciful. Help us to rest in Your protection and to be brave for You. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 1



The Persian Empire was a glorious kingdom full of riches, splendor, and majesty. The Persians had conquered the world. They invaded Israel and took many of God's people as exiles to Persia, so there were many Jews living there.

### SLIDE 2



The king of Persia was a mighty ruler named Ahasuerus. To celebrate his vast power and kingship, he hosted a banquet that lasted a whole week. People ate the finest food, drank the most expensive wine, and had all the entertainment they wanted.

### SLIDE 3



In the middle of the crazy party, Ahasuerus asked his beautiful wife, Vashti, to come before the people. He wanted to show off her great beauty. So the king's servants were sent to Vashti to tell her that the king had requested her presence at the banquet. Queen Vashti did not want to be disgraced by being put on display at a drunken party, so she did something unheard of: She refused the king's order. No one refused the king.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 4



When the king heard of this, he was furious. How dare she refuse the king? This would set an example to all the wives in the kingdom to disrespect their husbands. He had to put a stop to this kind of behavior. Following the advice of his law experts, King Ahasuerus removed her crown, stripped her of her title, and banished her from the kingdom.

### SLIDE 5



When the king's anger finally subdued, he remembered Vashti and missed her. When his counselors saw his turmoil, they came up with a plan. They told the king to send out men to gather all the young, beautiful women in the kingdom so he could choose his new queen. The king liked this plan, and soon news spread throughout the kingdom.

### SLIDE 6



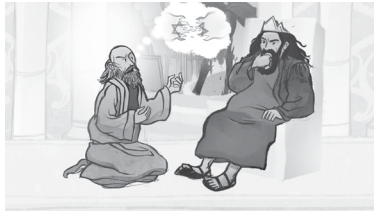
Throughout the empire, beautiful young girls were taken away. After many days of beauty treatments, they were brought before the king. One such girl, Esther, lived with her uncle Mordecai. She was beautiful indeed, but she was also a Jew. Out of all the young girls the king met with, he decided that Esther was the most beautiful woman in all the land. He chose her to be his wife. Esther the Jew was now the queen of Persia. Esther was wise about her new position and kept her Jewish identity a secret, as there were some people in the land who hated the Jews.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 7



One of the king's most important officials was a man named Haman. He was a wicked man who hated the Jews. One day, Haman came before the king and presented a plan that made it sound like he was protecting the kingdom from potential enemies, but really, the plan would annihilate all the Jews in the Persian Empire. Haman knew that once this edict was signed by the king, it would be irrevocable. The king believed Haman, and the edict was signed. Because Esther kept her Jewish identity a secret, Haman did not know that she was part of the race he wanted to annihilate.

### SLIDE 8



When Mordecai, Esther's uncle, heard about the horrible new law, he was devastated. He and all the Jews across the land tore their clothes, placed ashes on their heads, and went into mourning. But God knew of all these things, and He helped Mordecai come up with a plan. Even though the law could not be changed, the queen of the empire was a Jew, and the king would never let his wife be killed. Mordecai then pleaded with Esther to make her identity known to the king. But Esther was afraid, as no one was allowed to appear before the king without an invitation or they would be put to death.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 9



Esther asked Mordecai to command all the Jews to pray and fast on her behalf. Knowing this could cost her life, she proceeded to dress in her finest royal clothing and went and stood in the inner court of the king's palace. When the king saw Esther, she found favor in his eyes, and he held out his scepter to her. This was the signal that the king allowed Esther to approach his throne.

### SLIDE 10



“What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? I'll give you anything, even half my kingdom!” the king said. Esther's request was simple. She wanted to have a meal with Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and the king. She was going to find a way to tell the king about Haman's evil plot. Twice, Esther held a banquet for the king and Haman. Finally, on the second night, she revealed her Jewish identity to the king. She explained to him the consequences of the terrible edict that would annihilate her and her people. When the king heard this, he was furious. He stormed out to the palace gardens. When he came back, he found Haman falling on the couch where Queen Esther was sitting. To the king, it looked like Haman was assaulting the queen. Immediately, the king's guards grabbed Haman and took him away.

### SLIDE 11



The king ordered Haman's execution. Though this wicked man was dead, his evil plan was still set in motion. There was nothing the king could do to stop it.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 12



Once again, the Queen risked her life and went before the king uninvited. She wept and pleaded with him, for the edict would still destroy her people. The king then issued a new edict that gave all the Jews in the Persian Empire the right to take up arms and defend themselves against this coming attack. When that day finally came, the Jews rose up against their adversaries and took control of them. Even the palace officials and governors helped the Jews, and they were victorious. The Jewish people celebrated God's victory and instituted a festival that is observed every year. During the festival of Purim, the Jewish people recall God's provision and Esther's bravery. This festival stands as a reminder that God will always protect His covenant people. Even though there have been and will be many evil men who try to annihilate them, God will never let His people be destroyed.