



Week of May 13, 2018

Unit 18, Session 1: Esther Became Queen

Dear Parents,

This week we began a two-part session on Esther and how God used her to save His people. The Babylonian captivity had ended while Cyrus was king of Persia. Some of God's people—now referred to as 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, also known by his Greek name, Xerxes. Esther was a young Jewish girl whom Ahasuerus had chosen to be his queen. The former queen had defied the king and was promptly replaced. Esther did not reveal to the king that she was a Jew.

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 about Mordecai's defiance, but instead of just punishing Mordecai, he planned to kill all the Jews in the kingdom.

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. Esther could be killed for approaching the king without permission. But Esther was willing to take the chance and explain her people's plight.

God's plan all along was to send the Messiah through Abraham's family. Haman's evil plan might have stopped God's plan, but God was in control. He was working out a plan to use Esther to rescue His people and make the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

Help your kids understand that the survival of God's people was essential to God's plan and that Satan tried to stop God's plan any way he could. But God used Esther to rescue His people and make the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world.

Check this session's Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- **Babies and Toddlers**

- God keeps His promises.
- God made Esther queen.
- Esther asked God's people to pray for three days.
- Jesus hears us when we pray.
- **Preschool**
 - Does God keep His promises? Yes, God is always faithful.
 - Esther became queen.
- **Kids**
 - Does God keep His promises? Yes, God is always faithful even when we are not.
 - Esther agreed to help her people.

NEXT WEEK

- **“God Brought His People Home”** (Ezra 1:1–2:2; 2:64–3:13)

Check out the Gospel Project for Kids Family App or the Big Picture Cards for Families for more ways to interact with the Bible content each week.

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