

Mordecai Is Honored

Esther 6:1-14

MEMORY VERSE

PROVERBS 16:18

“Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A nametag for each child in your class and one small ball.

Masking tape.

Yellow/gold and purple construction paper, markers, stickers, sequins and/or craft precious stones.

ATTENTION GETTER!

A Moment of Honor

This game will be a great way for the children in your class to get to know one another as well as be introduced to the lesson today.

You will need a nametag for each child in your class. Have all of the children sit in a circle. Choose one child to stand in the middle. The teacher will begin by calling out the name of one of the children sitting in the circle. That child is to name their favorite Bible hero and then call out someone else's name. But this has to be done before the child in the center tags them. The child speaking must remain seated. The catch is that they must say their favorite Bible character before they get tagged. If the child from the center tags the child called on before they say their favorite Bible character then that child becomes the center child and the center child will take that person's place.

Rotate so everyone has a turn to speak. Optional: To spice it up a bit, you could have a small ball for the children to pass around as they call out the names. This will also help the center person to pinpoint quicker who to tag if they are finding it difficult. It's fun when it's our turn. We all enjoy a chance to be noticed and heard. In today's lesson, someone will have his turn to be honored.

LESSON TIME!

Do you remember our lesson last week? Proud Haman, carried away by his anger with Mordecai the Jew—the man who would not bow to him—built a gallows 75 feet high. Will Mordecai hang on that gallows? And, what about the Jewish people? Remember, Haman had persuaded the king to sign a decree that all the Jewish people be destroyed on a certain day. It did not look good. Yet, God is the defender of His people, and the story will continue to unfold.

Remember, from a previous lesson, Mordecai had heard of a plot to kill the king and had taken immediate action to warn him. Mordecai asked for no reward for his deed, and no reward was given. The matter seemed to have been forgotten. However, one night the king could not sleep, and he asked that the “records of the chronicles” (a sort of daily journal or history of the kingdom) be read before him.

ESTHER 6:1-3

That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king.

And it was found written that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, the doorkeepers who had sought to lay hands on King Ahasuerus.

Then the king said, "What honor or dignity has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" And the king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him."

When the record was read to the king, he wanted to know how Mordecai had been rewarded for his loyalty and action to protect him.

Though it may have seemed Mordecai's good deed would go unnoticed by man, God saw everything. God does not forget the actions of the upright in heart. Though no one else may observe our heart-felt labors or good deeds, God will reward us in His time and way.

ESTHER 6:4-5

So the king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to suggest that the king hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him.

The king's servants said to him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." And the king said, "Let him come in."

When the king learned that Mordecai had not been rewarded at all, he wanted to know who was in the court. He probably wanted to consult his leaders to see what could be done—"what honor or dignity" could be bestowed upon Mordecai? Haman "just happened" to be in the king's court. He had come to ask the king's permission to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had built. The king ordered the attendants to bring Haman in.

Do these events seem planned? Haman, filled with pride and love for himself, had come in to the court to present his selfish request to the king—to see Mordecai hung on the gallows he had built. The king also had Mordecai on his mind at just that time, but for quite a different reason. Our God is awesome and able to deliver us!

ESTHER 6:6

So Haman came in, and the king asked him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king delights to honor?" Now Haman thought in his heart, "Whom would the king delight to honor more than me?"

When Haman came into the court, the king asked Haman's opinion on what would be a good reward for someone who pleases the king—"...The man the king delights to honor." Naturally, Haman thought the king was referring to him. Captive to his own pride, Haman always thought of himself. Who else would the king be so pleased with and desire to honor? **Pride goes before a fall.**

ESTHER 6:7-9

And Haman answered the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honor,

"let a royal robe be brought which the king has worn, and a horse on which the king has ridden, which has a royal crest placed on its head.

"Then let this robe and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that he may array the man whom the king delights to honor. Then parade him on horseback through the city square, and proclaim before him: 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!'"

Since Haman thought the honor was to be his, he suggested that this person wear the king's clothes, ride the king's horse, and be led through the city, proclaiming how the king honors those who please him. Imagining himself as the one being honored, Haman loved this plan! This would show everyone how important he really was. Little did Haman know that one he most despised, Mordecai, was the one the king had determined to honor. **Pride goes before a fall.**

Honor Race

The object of this game is for the children to work together as a team and honor others. They will have a race without dropping their passenger.

Have the children divide into teams of three children. Have them make a "human pyramid." Do this by having the two largest children get on their hands and knees and the lightest as a passenger on their back. Have all of the teams line up together in their pyramids. When you say "go" see who can get to the finish line first (set a finish line with masking tape prior to starting).

You can race a few times and have the winners serve the others in the class in some way. Be careful not to let this game get too wild, since someone could get hurt.

ESTHER 6:10

Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robe and the horse, as you have suggested, and do so for Mordecai the Jew who sits within the king's gate! Leave nothing undone of all that you have spoken."

Much to Haman's surprise and dismay, the person to be honored was Mordecai, the very one he was seeking the king's permission to hang on his gallows. To make matters worse, the king ordered Haman to be the one to lead Mordecai through the streets and honor him in the manner that Haman had suggested.

Can you imagine? After all of the evil that Haman had planned for Mordecai in his heart, he now must honor Mordecai! God had certainly turned the tables! Could God have been trying to teach Haman a lesson about pride and humility? **Pride goes before a fall.**

ESTHER 6:11-12

So Haman took the robe and the horse, arrayed Mordecai and led him on horseback through the city square, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor!"

Afterward Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered.

So Haman got the robes, the horse, and led Mordecai through the streets, calling out to everyone that this is how the king honors those who please him. Haman returned home, humbled, embarrassed, and very upset. Does it make you wonder how enthusiastic he was as he gave his proclamation?

ESTHER 6:13

When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his wise men and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is of Jewish descent, you will not prevail against him but will surely fall before him."

When he returned home and told his wife, friends, and advisors what had happened to him, their tone was quite different. It did not look so good for Haman, now. It looked as though his evil plan could backfire on him.

He was now in a very tough spot. How could he ask the king to kill Mordecai, now, after the king had honored him? Things were about to get even worse for Haman! **Pride goes before a fall.**

ESTHER 6:14

While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs came, and hastened to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

While Haman's wife and friends were giving him advice, the king's men came to pick him up for the banquet that Esther had prepared.

Haman was a proud man—he felt the world revolved around him. Indeed, he had a position of great power and prestige. He loved the praise of men as they acknowledged his greatness. Mordicai, the Jew, honored God above any man and would not bow as Haman passed by. Consumed by his pride, anger, and hatred, Haman sought to destroy Mordacai and all the people who worshipped his God. But, Haman's wicked deeds are turning on him. How foolish Haman was! As it says in Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

May we be cautious and guard our lives against pride, anger, hatred, bitterness—the things God hates. It is not a wise thing for one to be at odds with God, especially when you consider, God desires we have a meaningful, fruitful, abundant life as we yield to Him. A life dominated by our fleshly nature, centered on ourselves, will only bring us misery. Haman was miserable. Even

when it seemed he had it all, he could not be satisfied because one little person would not bow. Now, he will reap the consequences of his self-centered life. **Pride goes before a fall.**

The Bible says God sees everything. He saw the situation of Mordcai and His people. God protected Mordecai from Haman's wicked plot and God will protect the Jewish people. God also saw Haman and observed his ways. Psalm 18:27 states, "For You will save the humble people, but will bring down haughty looks."

The Royal Crest

In Esther 6:8 we see Haman's idea to honor the one who pleases the king. One of the things he states is that there should be a royal crest placed on the horse's head to signify that this was a royal procession. The king that we serve is Jesus, and we are subjects in His kingdom. To help us always remember, we will make a royal crest.

You will need yellow/gold and purple construction paper. Allow the children to get as creative as they want to. The crest should be round and using markers they can write inside of the crest. As a suggestion they can write, "Jesus is King" on the crest or they can write out James 4:10 which goes with today's theme, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up."

Provide stickers, sequins or stones for the children to glue to the crest for decorations. Gold or metallic foil may also be used.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of praise and adoration to God. Ask the Lord to protect them from pride and to give them a humble heart. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.