

WEEK 3 LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God gives us support behind the scenes.

BIBLE

Scene III. Mordecai Asks Esther to Help:
Esther 3:8-4:17

WELCOME TIME

MUSIC | Showstoppers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** You can lead kids in worship with any songs of your choice, but here are some suggestions that go along with this month's theme. Make sure you have purchased any licenses required to play or perform these songs. For more information, [read this!](#)
 - "Praise You With My Song (Esther's Song)" (Little Big Heroes)
 - "This Little Light" (Ark Kids)
 - "God is So Good" (Yancy & Little Praise Party)
 - "Strong and Courageous" (Justin Graves Band)

ACTIVITY | Crossing the Stage

- Uh oh . . . you're in the middle of performing a play and a light falls from the ceiling! There's glass everywhere!
- The stage manager is going to help you get safely across the stage without stepping on any glass.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Designate a starting point and ending point on opposite sides of the room. Scatter some shredded paper or aluminum foil on the floor to be the broken glass. When you say, "Go!" have kids hold hands and walk together in a line, avoiding the "glass" with you leading the line of kids.
- It was hard to get across the stage and not step on any of the glass, right? But you worked together to get safely across!
- In today's story, we'll find out how one person was being asked to help a whole lot of people!
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** It might be difficult for younger kids to avoid stepping on the pieces. Instead, divide the kids into two-partner teams to get across the space with a leader's help.

ACTIVITY | You've Got It, Director!

- The director of a play tells everyone what to do. Today, we're all going to be directors!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have everyone stand in a circle and choose one kid to be the first director. Tell them to suggest an action the rest of the group has to mimic by starting a sentence with, "I want you to . . ." The rest of the group responds with, "You've got it, director!" before doing the action. Keep choosing kids to be the director until everyone has had a turn.
- **How did it feel to be the leader of the whole group?**

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Esther 3:8–4:17 (Scene III. Mordecai Asks Esther to Help)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the [stick-figure marionettes](#) for Xerxes, Esther, Mordecai, and Haman you used last week. Recruit one or two volunteers to help you as you tell the story behind a [cardboard theater](#). Use the puppets as you read Esther 3:8–4:17 (using a preschool Bible or kid-friendly Bible translation) or you may choose to use the script below.
- **Narrator:** Welcome, everyone, to the Behind-the-Scenes Theater! Last week, we heard all about how Esther's cousin, Mordecai, refused to bow down to anyone but God. That made Haman, the king's trusted adviser, really angry.
 - Also in last week's story, Mordecai heard some secret news that someone had a plan to hurt the king. Mordecai told the king of the plans and saved the day! The king ordered a celebration for Mordecai, including a big parade. That made Haman even more mad!
 - Let's see where our story picks up today.
- *[Enter Haman.]*
- **Haman:** King Xerxes, I have some disappointing news. There are some people — called the Jews — in your kingdom who will not follow your rules. I think they should be punished for breaking the law.
- *[Enter Xerxes.]*
- **Xerxes:** Do what you think is best. I trust you, Haman.
- *[Xerxes exits.]*
- **Narrator:** When Haman heard the king approved for him to carry out his mean plan against the Jews, Haman was happy. He left to go tell everyone about his plans.
- *[Exit Haman.]*
- **Narrator:** Now, I need to give you a little background about the people Haman mentioned — the Jews. The Jews were a very special family and God loved them very much. Queen Esther and Mordecai, her cousin, were a part of the Jewish family. Now, back to our story.
- *[Enter Mordecai.]*
- **Mordecai:** I can't believe Haman would do this to us. I have to do something — I have to tell Esther about this. Maybe she can help us!
- **Narrator:** So, Mordecai sent a message to Queen Esther about Haman's mean plans to hurt the Jews. You see, Esther was Jewish, too, and lived in the palace. But King Xerxes didn't know Queen Esther was Jewish. Mordecai asked Queen Esther to help save their family and friends even though it would be dangerous.
- *[Enter Esther.]*
- **Esther:** Oh, no! This is such bad news! I'm going to pray for God to give me the courage to go talk to the king about this. Mordecai, can you ask everyone to pray for me, too?
- **Mordecai:** You got it, Esther.
- **Narrator:** Even though Esther was scared, she was glad to know that Mordecai and all the people would be praying to God with her. When we continue our story next week, we'll see how God helps her!

BIG IDEA | God gives us support behind the scenes.

- God helped Esther become queen so she could be close to King Xerxes and one day, help all of her family and friends — the Jewish people.
- God helps us in special ways, too, even if we don't know how God does it. **Do you know any other words for "help?"** One word I know that means to help is "support."

- Let's learn these motions to say today's Big Idea together.
 - **God gives** (point up with both pointer fingers twice on both words)
 - **us** (point to self)
 - **support behind the scenes.** (crisscross arms across chest like a big hug and rock back and forth)

VIDEO | Behind the Scenes, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Cali's World](#).

ACTIVITY | Stagehand Soccer

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Divide the kids into two teams and have each team line up, hold hands, and face the opposing team. Choose a team to go first and give one person from that team a ball to kick and try to get past the other team. Instruct the other team to move together to block the ball. Keep playing until everyone on each team has a chance to kick the ball.
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Toddlers are still finding their balance at this age, so don't have them hold hands in this game.
- In today's story, we heard about how Haman made a law to hurt the Jews. That made them sad and scared.
- The Jewish people couldn't do anything to stop the new law without help, and they knew just the person — Queen Esther!
- But Queen Esther couldn't save her people all on her own — she was going to need God's help and the help of her Jewish friends and family to pray for her to be brave.
- Everyone in our story today had a part in helping the Jewish people to stay safe, just like everyone had a part to play in our game today, too.

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for always helping us. We feel safe and strong because we know you are always behind the scenes to support us. Amen.

SHARING TIME

SNACK | Intermission!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give each kid some Bugles snacks in a sugar cone or paper cone.
- These snacks look like a megaphone. A megaphone is something directors use to make their voices sound really loud so everyone can hear them when they're practicing a play.
- **What big announcement did Haman make that scared Mordecai and all the Jews?**

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Seat the kids in a circle and pass around a stuffed animal as you talk.
- **Who can tell me what "support" means?** That's right! It's helping! **What can we do to help someone else?**
- **Who gives support?** God! **Who else helps us?**
- **Who can we support?** Everyone! **Let's name people we know that we can help!**
- Even when we don't know it, God helps us! Getting support feels great, like a big, warm hug! **God gives us support behind the scenes.**

ACTIVITY | Sending Support

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out paper and drawing utensils to the kids. Have kids draw what they need God's help with. After the kids finish drawing, roll their papers like a scroll and tie them with pieces of ribbon. (See a worked example [here](#).)
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Write out "God" in large letters on a piece of paper and give kids dot stickers or dot markers to trace the lines of each letter. Have kids repeat the Big Idea after you or a simpler version like, "God helps me."
- In today's Bible story, Mordecai needed Esther's help to save the Jewish people, and Esther needed God's help to be brave.
- And just like Esther asked God for help, you can ask God for help, too.
- Draw something you want God's help with on your paper. It can be anything — you can ask God to help you be a big helper at home, to be more patient with your siblings, or to be more kind and loving to your friends.
- When you're done, you can take this paper home to remind you that God can help you with anything you need!

MEMORY VERSE | Philippians 2:13 (NIV)

- **"For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Assign each chunk of the memory verse to different kids. Have them practice their parts out loud a few times.
- We've been learning our memory verse each week, piece by piece. Let's review our memory verse again but this time, only focus on the line I give to you. When I point someone, only that person should repeat after me!
 - **For it is God** (point at kids to repeat)
 - **who works in you** (point at kids to repeat)
 - **to will and act** (point at kids to repeat)
 - **in order to fulfill** (point at kids to repeat)
 - **his good purpose** (point at kids to repeat)
 - **Philippians 2:13** (point at kids to repeat)
- Wonderful! Do you think you can say your part on your own?

PLAY TIME

ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute the coloring page along with crayons or markers. As the kids color, you can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse.

ACTIVITY | Shaving Cream Set Design

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Spray some shaving cream into plastic trays and encourage kids to use wooden popsicle sticks or paintbrushes to draw or paint on their trays.

ACTIVITY | Building the Set

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up an area in your space with blocks (like LEGO DUPLO blocks) and encourage kids to pretend like they're building a theatre set.