

WEEK 4 LESSON GUIDE



BIG IDEA

God gives us peace behind the scenes.

BIBLE

Scene IV. Esther Talks to the King:

Esther 5:1-8, 7:1-6; 8:1-8

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 | Be Our Guest

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Gather some play food and toy dinnerware and seat kids in a circle. Play the song, "[Be Our Guest](#)" from the movie, "Beauty and the Beast." As the song plays, start passing items of play food and dinnerware around the circle clockwise. Instruct kids to only hold one item at a time. Pause the music every so often to call out an item (like salt shaker) and whoever is holding that item has to say, "I'm so full!" while patting their belly. Have that kid lie down in the middle of the circle (or outside the circle if you have a smaller group). Keep playing until only a few kids are left.
- Do you know what a dinner party is? It's where people get together to celebrate something while eating dinner together!
- Today, we'll hear a story about not just one dinner party, but two! Let's pretend we're having a dinner party.
 - ✳ **TODDLER HACK:** Pass around one item of play food. Whoever is holding the item when the music stops, have them say, "I'm so full!" and lie down in their spot instead of in the center (or outside) of the circle.

ACTIVITY | Peace Freeze Dance

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Turn on some fun, upbeat music for this game of "Freeze Dance." When the music stops, kids have to freeze into a quiet, peaceful position. Repeat this as time allows.

✳ **TODDLER HACK:** *Instead of using the word, “freeze,” just say “stop” when the music stops and “go” when you start the music again.*

- **What’s it like when everyone freezes? Is it loud?** No. **Is it crazy?** No. **Is it calm?** Yes. **Is it quiet?** Yes!

STORY TIME

SCRIPTURE | Esther 5:1–8, 7:1–6; 8:1–8 (Scene IV. Esther Talks to the King)

- **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 5:1–8, 7:1–6; 8:1–8 (using a preschool Bible or kid-friendly Bible translation) or you may choose to use the script below.
- **Narrator:** Welcome, everyone, to the final showing of our play at Behind-the-Scenes Theater! It’s time to watch the final scene in this amazing story about Queen Esther.
- *[Enter Haman.]*
- **Haman:** Esther? No, this is my story. Do you remember me? I’m Haman. I’m so mad at Mordecai for not bowing down to me. He’s disrespecting the king! And me! It’s like he’s making fun of me. I will not stand for this. I already talked to the king, and I have something special planned for Mordecai and all his little friends! *[Evil laugh.]*
- **Narrator:** That’s right, Haman had a terrible plan that would hurt Mordecai and his people, the Jews. Mordecai asked his cousin, Queen Esther, to help. She said she would do everything she can, even though it would be dangerous for her.
- *[Enter Esther and Xerxes.]*
- **Esther:** Dear king, thank you for seeing me today.
- **Xerxes:** My dear Queen Esther, it’s always a pleasure to see you. Now, tell me why you’ve come.
- **Esther:** Well, king, I was wondering if I could throw a big dinner party at the palace. I’d like to invite Haman to come, too.
- **Haman:** A dinner party with the king, queen, and me? Count me in!
- **Xerxes:** That sounds like a wonderful idea! Do what makes you happy, my queen.
- **Narrator:** So, they had a wonderful dinner together. But Esther wasn’t ready to ask the king what she really wanted yet. So she invited the king and Haman to a second party.
- **Haman:** You see how important I am around here? The queen holds a special dinner party for just me and the king. And not just once. Two times! And soon Mordecai and all the Jews will be gone, too. Everything is going my way for once!
- **Narrator:** But at the second party, Esther says something that shocks everyone.
- **Esther:** Your majesty. I need to ask you to help me stop a truly bad thing from happening. Someone out there is trying to hurt me and my family. You see, I’m a Jew.
- **Xerxes:** What? Who dares hurt you and your loved ones, my queen? Who is it?
- **Esther:** Actually, it’s Haman, King Xerxes. Haman tricked you into passing a rule to hurt my people.
- **Haman:** What? Little ol’ me? Um . . . Ahh! Save me! *[Runs off stage.]*
- **Xerxes:** Come back here! *[Chases after Haman.]*
- **Narrator:** So, King Xerxes put an end to Haman’s mean plan immediately. Queen Esther was so brave and she trusted God, even though she was afraid. Because of what she did, Esther, Mordecai, and all the Jews were at peace . . . they didn’t need to be afraid anymore!

BIG IDEA | God gives us peace behind the scenes.

- God helped Esther feel calm even though she was feeling scared on the inside. That's what it means to feel "peace."
- Our Big Idea reminds us that God gives us peace and helps us to feel safe. **When do you feel at peace?**
- **Let's learn these motions together to help us remember today's Big Idea:**
 - **God gives** (use both pointer fingers to point up on both words)
 - **us** (point to self with both thumbs)
 - **peace** (peace sign with both hands)
 - **behind** (point back behind yourself with both thumbs)
 - **the scenes.** (spread arms out in front of you)

VIDEO | Behind the Scenes, Episode 4

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

ACTIVITY | Peace Parachute

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Spread out a parachute or a large sheet on the floor. Place the kids around it and have them lift it gently. Have the kids make gentle, peaceful waves with the parachute or blanket. Toss a small stuffed animal onto the blanket as they're making the waves.
 - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Instead of using a parachute or blanket, give each toddler a small stuffed animal to hold gently and ask them how they show soft, gentle care to their stuffed animal.
- **How can we take care of this stuffed animal as gently and peacefully as possible?**
- **Who needed peace in today's story?**
- **Did they get peace?**
- **Who gave them peace?**

PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for being our safe place. You show us what peace looks like in how you care for us. Amen.

SHARING TIME

SNACK | Intermission!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give a handful of Goldfish crackers to the kids. Before they begin eating, have them form the shape of a heart on their plates or napkins out of the crackers.
- **Does the heart on your plate remind you of God's love for Queen Esther and her people?** It should remind you that God loves you, too!

ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Bring in an item to share with the kids that represents God's peace to you. Maybe a picture of your family, a special Bible or gift that was given to you, a picture of a sunset, or your favorite place in nature. Begin your circle time by showing how God's peace is real in your life as their leader. You can pass it around as you review today's story.
- **Who did Queen Esther go and ask to help save her people from Haman?**
- **Show me on your face and using your body how you think Queen Esther felt about talking to the king.**
- **Show me how you think the king felt when he saw Queen Esther come into the room.**

- **Show me on your face how you think Haman felt when he found out the queen knew everything!**
- **Show me how you think the Jews felt when they heard Esther saved the day!**
- God's peace was with Queen Esther as she asked King Xerxes for help. And in the end, God used her to help save all the Jewish people.

ACTIVITY | Magnificent Marionettes

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this video](#) to recap the story of Esther. Next, have the kids create their own puppets using popsicle sticks, glue, coloring utensils, and scissors (or cut out all the materials beforehand). Check out these puppet templates ([here](#) and [here](#)) for examples to replicate. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#) (See a worked example [here](#).)
- ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Have all the puppets pre-made and give toddlers easy-to-grip crayons to color them (or use fingerpaints!). Help kids remember who each puppet is. Make sure you make your own set to show them. Then as you play the video, pause it each time a character comes on and help toddlers identify the puppet version.
- In today's story, we heard all about how God helped Esther feel calm and peaceful even when she was afraid.
- These puppets will remind us of our Bible story and how God is always with us to help us be peaceful and brave!
- **God gives us peace behind the scenes.**

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:** Have kids repeat each chunk of the memory verse after you in the different voices indicated, or make up your own!
- **For it is God** [Normal voice.]
- **who works in you** [Really low voice.]
- **to will and to act** [Opera voice.]
- **in order to fulfill** [Chipmunk voice.]
- **his good purpose.** [Robot voice.]
- **Philippians 2:13** [Normal voice.]

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 | Stick Figure Spotlight

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out [Wiki Sticks](#) to the kids and have them create their own Queen Esther and King Xerxes. Make an example for the kids to see ahead of time before they begin. (See a worked example [here](#).)

ACTIVITY | Peaceful Scene

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill a large tub with kinetic sand for kids to free play in. Add some small beach toys, buckets, and shovels for the kids to play with.