

ESTHER SAVED HER PEOPLE

ESTHER



CHRIST CONNECTION: Like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help us and rescue us from sin.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: This is our God. We waited, and He saved us. Isaiah 25:9

STORY POINT: Esther was brave and saved her people.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The book of Esther tells a fascinating story of courage and demonstrates how God works to protect His people to carry on His mission. Esther takes place during a time when some of the Jewish people were living under the rule of the Persians. During that time, God elevated a young Jewish woman named Esther to a place in the king’s palace that would allow her the opportunity to save her people.

One of the interesting aspects of the book of Esther is that the name of God is not mentioned. Still, God is present in every aspect of the story. Perhaps this is most clearly seen in Mordecai’s words to Esther. In Esther 4:14, Mordecai, Esther’s cousin, tells her that perhaps she has been elevated as queen in the king’s palace exactly for this moment. The phrase “for such a time as this” describes how God works seemingly behind the scenes to accomplish His will, proving He rules over every aspect of our lives.

The main theme of the book of Esther is that God is sovereign over all of history. God will deliver His faithful remnant when they face threats from enemies. Even when circumstances seem hopeless, God is at work. God delivered His people in this story by thwarting the plans of Haman, an advisor to the king. Haman’s plan was not just a political move but a spiritual attack on the very people of God. But God, in the sovereignty of His will, had placed Esther in the perfect place at the perfect time to defeat the enemies of His people.

The book of Esther points us to the day when Jesus would come at just the right time in just the right place to deliver us from our sins. Help kids see how Romans 5:6 tells us that at just the right time, Jesus came to die for us while we were helpless. Encourage kids to understand that in God’s sovereignty, He determined the exact right place and time for Jesus to be born and to die for their sins before rising again



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet preschoolers and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



LOVE

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel

30–40 MINUTES



LIVE

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



BONUS

60–65 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers for an additional hour



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a supply of the following items available during all teaching sessions: Allergy Alert, Bibles, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, construction paper, copy paper, glue sticks, glue, tape, baby dolls, blocks, play dough, and a beanbag.

WELCOME

Find dinner items

- paper bags
- toy dinner items
- Big Picture Question Poster



LEARN

Tell the Bible story

- "Esther Saved Her People" video (optional)

Review the Bible story

- Bible Story Picture Poster

Learn and practice the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker



LOVE

Prepare a royal feast

- toy food
- plates
- tablecloth
- dress-up clothes
- doll clothes
- non-breakable mirror
- paper crowns (optional)
- instrumental music (optional)

Pass the crown

- toy crown



LIVE

Decorate with gems

- heavyweight paper
- gemstone stickers
- blue, red, green, and purple markers

Missions activity

- "Jim and Jean Leeper Photos" printable

Snack and transition

- hand sanitizer (optional)
- "Match Items" activity page, 1 per child
- Big Picture Cards for Families



BONUS

Say the key passage phrase

- Key Passage Phrase Marker
- toy scepter

Make a food collage

- disposable plates, 1 per child
- grocery advertisements

Find the scepter

- toy scepter



WELCOME Preschoolers

Provide as many learning activities as possible from the Love and Live sections to give preschoolers choices to learn. Incorporate the Bible story, the Christ Connection, story point, and key passage phrase in your conversations as the preschoolers engage in learning activities throughout the session.

Use the following activity to greet children as they enter the room. Talk about the big picture question and answer. After each child completes the welcome activity, encourage him to participate in the activities provided from the Love and Live sections of the leader guide.

FIND DINNER ITEMS

Display the Big Picture Question Poster. Place paper shopping bags around the room with toy food and dishes inside them, one item per bag. Invite children to reach inside the bag without looking and guess what is in the bag. Gather the items and set up a dinner. Review the big picture question and answer as children play.

SAY “ I’m so glad to see you! Today, we will learn about a woman named Esther who attended a special dinner with the king. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** Just like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help rescue us from sin. Sin broke our relationship with God. **How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.** ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN the Bible Story

1 SHOW EMOTIONS



Gather preschoolers in the group time area. Say an emotion, such as happy, silly, mad, and surprised. Encourage preschoolers to make a face matching each emotion.

SAY “ You are so good at making faces to show emotions. In our Bible story today, we will learn about a time when a woman named Esther may have felt a lot of different emotions. Through all of her different emotions, **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE**. Listen carefully to learn what happened. ”

2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Open your Bible to Esther. Tell the Bible story using the following summary. You may choose to review the Bible story by showing the video.

ESTHER SAVED HER PEOPLE

SAY “ Some of God’s people had gone home to Jerusalem, and some lived in the land of Persia. The king of Persia wanted a queen. He chose a beautiful woman named Esther. Esther didn’t tell the king she was one of God’s people.

One day, Esther’s cousin Mordecai found out that a man named Haman wanted to hurt all of God’s people. Mordecai was very worried and sad because he didn’t want God’s people to be hurt.

Esther found out about Haman’s evil plan. She was afraid to go see the king because she wasn’t allowed to unless he called her. But she knew she had to try to help. Mordecai reminded Esther that maybe God made her queen to save her people.

Esther prayed and then went to see the king. He was happy to see her and asked what she wanted. Esther invited the king and Haman to dinner. After dinner, she asked them to come back for dinner the next day, too.

The next day, Esther told the king about Haman’s evil plan. The king was very angry, and he had Haman taken away. He then made a new rule to keep all of God’s people safe. ”

Christ Connection: Like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help us and rescue us from sin.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

Display the Bible Story Picture Poster within view of children. Use a pencil or marker as a scepter. Encourage the preschoolers to pass the scepter and take turns sharing one thing they remember about the story. Review story details that children may have missed.

SAY “ When the king held out his scepter to Queen Esther, this showed she had permission to talk with him. What did Queen Esther ask the king? (She invited him to a feast.) After the second feast, what did Esther tell the king? (Haman was trying to kill her and her people.) The king ordered Haman to be taken away. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** ”

4 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”:

This is our God.
This is our God.
We waited and He saved us.
This is our God.

5 LEARN AND PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Isaiah 25:9. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Learn the key passage phrase. Say the key passage phrase together while waving like a king or queen.

SAY “ Esther prayed to God and waited for the right time to tell the king about Haman’s evil plot. Our key passage phrase says, ‘This is our God. We waited and He saved us.’ Esther trusted in God, obeyed Him, and told the king at just the right time about Haman’s evil plot. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** ”

6 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for Esther and her obedience to do what God wanted her to do even when it was hard.

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God because of what we learned

1 GUESS THE CHARACTER

Write Haman and draw a stick boy figure on a piece of paper and Esther with a stick girl figure on another paper. Tape the papers to opposite sides of the room. List adjectives to describe each figure and encourage children to move to the paper with that name. Adjectives may include brave, wise, queen, unkind, and sneaky.

SAY 🗨️ Haman had an evil plan to hurt all of God’s people. God used Esther to stop the evil plan. Esther invited Haman and the king to dinner twice before revealing Haman’s plan to the king. The king was angry and had Haman taken away. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** 🗨️

2 PREPARE A ROYAL FEAST

Place dress-up clothes, dolls, doll clothes, plates, play food, and paper crowns in an area near a table. Cover a table with a tablecloth. Invite preschoolers to use the items to set up a royal feast. Encourage preschoolers to put on paper crowns and dress-up clothes over their clothes. Provide a nonbreakable mirror for them to see themselves. Suggest they dress the dolls to go to a royal feast too. Consider playing instrumental music in the background as children enjoy their royal feast together.

SAY 🗨️ Esther asked the king and Haman to come to a feast. After the feast, Esther told the king about Haman’s evil plan to hurt the Jews. Haman’s evil plan could not stop God. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** God had a plan for Esther to rescue His people. By saving the His people, God made the way for His Son, Jesus, to come into the world to rescue sinners. 🗨️

3 PASS THE CROWN

Lead children to sit in a circle. Play some music as children pass a toy crown around the circle. Stop the music at random intervals. Instruct the child holding the crown to stand up, put it on their head, and say, “**ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE**” and sit back down. Continue play as time allows.

SAY 🗨️ That was a fun game! God used Mordecai to inform Esther about Haman’s evil plan. God used Esther to save His people from Haman’s evil plan. Like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help us and rescue us from sin. 🗨️

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE for God out of love

1 DECORATE WITH GEMS

Write the key passage phrase on a piece of heavyweight paper for each child. Distribute papers, gem stickers, and markers to children. Encourage children to color the papers with gemstone colors (blue, green, purple, and red) and decorate with stickers.

SAY “ God has plans for His people. He has saved His people many times. Our key passage phrase says, ‘This is our God. We waited and He saved us.’ We can trust God to save us. Like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help us and rescue us from what sin broke. **How did God fix what sin broke? God sent Jesus.** ”

2 MISSIONS ACTIVITY

Print and display a copy of the “Jim and Jean Leeper Photos” printable. After the activity, pray for missionaries who serve in dangerous areas. Ask God to keep them safe as they share the good news about Jesus.

SAY “ Many years after Jim and Jean Leeper served in Germany and Turkey, they were asked if they would be willing to go to Bosnia, where there had just been a war. It was not considered a safe place. But Jim and Jean continued to say yes to where God was leading them. ”

3 SNACK AND TRANSITION



Post an Allergy Alert. Serve the snack. As children eat, review and talk about the Bible story. When children finish their snack, lead them to complete the activity page. As they work, continue talking about the Bible story and emphasize the Christ Connection.

SAY “ Like Esther helped her people, God sent Jesus to help us and rescue us from sin. ”

Remember to communicate helpful information to the bonus teaching hour leaders. If parents are picking up children at this time, tell them something their child did well during the session. Distribute Big Picture Cards for Families. Encourage parents to engage with the family discussion starters and family activities during the week.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Group Time

1 MAKE INVITATIONS

Cut paper in half and fold to create a small card, one per preschooler. Explain to children that in the Bible story today there are special invitations given to a king. Distribute crayons and folded paper to children. Assist children in creating invitations for one another. Encourage children to listen closely to find out more.

2 TALK ABOUT THE BIBLE STORY

Open the Bible to Esther. Use the summarized points below to talk about the Bible story:

ESTHER SAVED HER PEOPLE

- Some of God's people lived in Persia. The king chose Esther to be his queen.
- Esther's cousin Mordecai learned that Haman wanted to hurt all of God's people. He was very worried.
- Esther was afraid to tell the king about Haman's plan, but she decided to go to the king to save her people.
- Esther invited the king and Haman to dinner. She asked them to come back for another dinner the next day.
- At the second dinner, Esther told Haman's plan to the king. The king was angry. He sent Haman away and made a new rule to protect God's people.

3 SING A SONG

Sing the song to the familiar tune of "The Farmer in the Dell":

This is our God.
This is our God.
We waited and He saved us.
This is our God.

4 SAY THE KEY PASSAGE PHRASE

Place the Key Passage Phrase Marker at Isaiah 25:9. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Pass a toy scepter as you say the key passage phrase together several times.

5 PRAY

Pray, thanking God for saving His people and for sending Jesus to save us if we trust in Him.



TEACHING HOUR

BONUS Teaching Hour Activities

6 PLAY OUT WAYS TO BE A HELPER



Encourage preschoolers to help you think of ways they can be helpers at home or at church. Ideas might include putting away toys, folding laundry, cleaning up a spill, bringing family members something they need, or passing out supplies or snacks during the session. Once you think of an idea, play it out. Ideas can be played out by individual preschoolers or the whole group together. Encourage preschoolers to be helpers.

SAY “ Esther was a helper. Even though she was afraid, she went to the king. She could have been punished, but the king held out his scepter. Esther told the king about Haman’s evil plan. After hearing Esther’s story, the king ordered Haman to be taken away. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** God sent His Son, Jesus, to save people from sin. ”

7 MAKE A FOOD COLLAGE

Cut food images from grocery advertisements. Distribute disposable plates, food picture cutouts, and glue sticks and encourage children to create a plate of food for a special meal. Retell the story as children work.

SAY “ Esther invited Haman and the king to a special meal. The first night they ate, but Esther did not tell the king about the evil plan to hurt all of God’s people. The second day, Esther told the king about Haman’s evil plan. The king was angry. He sent Haman away and made a new rule to protect God’s people. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** ”

8 PLAY A “FIND THE SCEPTER” GAME

Hide a toy scepter in the room. Play worship music as preschoolers search for the scepter. When a child finds it, prompt him to say something he remembers about today’s Bible story, the story point, or the key passage. Tell the preschoolers to close or cover their eyes while a leader hides a scepter again. Continue play as time allows or each child has a turn to find the scepter.

SAY “ Esther was one of God’s people who were called Jews. Esther wanted to help her people, but the king had a rule: No one can go to the king unless the king asks that person to come first. The only way to not be punished was if the king held out his scepter. Esther knew that God was with her. She told the king about Haman’s evil plan to hurt the Jews. **ESTHER WAS BRAVE AND SAVED HER PEOPLE.** ”

Release preschoolers to parents according to your church’s security procedure. Tell them something their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session.