

Bible Point

# God made us special, and we can do great things.

## Bible Verse

“Serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13b).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- help prepare and serve a banquet,
  - talk about great things they can do with God's help,
  - learn how God worked through Esther to save her people, and
  - ask God to help them do great things.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

#### ■ Esther reveals Haman's plot.

**Esther 5:1-8;  
7:1-7, 10**



The conflict between Mordecai and Haman in the book of Esther is actually a conflict between the Jews and an age-old foe of God's people—the Amalekites. Haman's attempt to exterminate the Jews in Esther's day was, in a sense, a final Amalekite overture against God and his people. Haman, however, was no match for God.

That's not to say things did not get tense. According to Persian law, no man or woman, queen or otherwise, could approach the king without first being summoned by him. The penalty for such disrespect was death. The king, however, could grant mercy by the raising of his scepter to the person (Esther 4:11). Mordecai begged Esther to go to the king, without an invitation. When she did just that, she put her life in danger. When Esther approached the king, she was relieved to see him accept her by stretching out his scepter.

At various times in life, we face the opportunity to shrink back in fear or to be brave in the face of adversity. How comforting it is for God's people to know that when they stand bravely for him God remains in control.

### Prayer

- Read 1 Samuel 17:45-47.
- Are there circumstances in your life right now for which you need strength and courage beyond what you are able to muster on your own? Ask God for courage and confidence in his strength.
- Pray: Dear God, help me to be brave in you. Help me to teach the children that they can do great things for God. In Jesus' name, amen.

### Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Today I Learned...” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

# This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
<b>Welcome Time</b>	<b>Welcome!</b> —Receive name tags, and be greeted by the teacher.	Basket name tags made in Lesson 1	
<b>Let's Get Started</b>  Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	<b>Option 1: The King's Throne</b> —Decorate a chair to be a throne, and learn that Esther went to the king's throne room.	Pillow, blanket, crepe paper streamers, tape	
	<b>Option 2: Golden Scepters</b> —Make scepters, and hear that King Xerxes had a golden scepter.	Yellow construction paper, tape, crayons, washable markers	
	<b>Option 3: Fix a Feast</b> —Work together to make sandwiches for a banquet.	Bread, bologna, cheese slices, star- or heart-shaped cookie cutters, tray, wet wipes	
	<b>Pick-Up Time</b> —Sing a song as they pick up toys and gather for Bible Story Time.	CD player	
<b>Bible Story Time</b>	<b>Setting the Stage</b> —March and sing; then say special things about a friend.	Throne from Option 1 or a colorful blanket	
	<b>Bible Song and Prayer Time</b> —Sing a song, bring out the Bible, and pray together.	Bible, CD player	
	<b>Hear and Tell the Bible Story</b> —Hold up their scepters as they listen to a story based on Esther 5:1-8; 7:1-7, 10.	Bible, scepters from Option 2	
	<b>Do the Bible Story</b> —Learn about Queen Esther's life in the palace.	Glue, craft sticks, scissors, tape	
	<b>A Royal Banquet</b> —Sing about brave Queen Esther, and have a royal banquet together.	CD player, snack from Option 3, table décor, plastic cups, juice, wet wipes	
<b>Closing</b>  	<b>Great Things</b> —Help Whiskers see that he can do great things.		
	<b>Esther, the Star</b> —Learn a finger play about Queen Esther, and learn a cheer about doing great things.		

\*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

## Welcome Time

**SUPPLIES:** basket name tags made in Lesson 1

- Bend down and make eye contact with children as they arrive.
- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week's "Today I Learned..." discussion. Use questions such as "How did you help someone this week?" or "What special ways to help did you sing about in your special song?"
- Say: **Today we're going to learn that ► God made us special, and we can do great things.**
- Hand out the basket name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help the children attach the name tags to their clothing. If some of the name tags were damaged or if children weren't in class the first week, have them make new name tags using the photocopiable handout on page 22. You can find the directions for making the name tags on page 13.
- Direct children to the Let's Get Started activities you've set up.



**BIBLE POINT**



It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over throughout the lesson will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

## Let's Get Started

Set up one or more of the following activities for children to do as they arrive. After you greet each child, invite him or her to choose an activity.

Circulate between the activities to offer help as needed and direct children's conversation toward the point of today's lesson. Ask questions such as "Have you ever done something very brave?" or "What's the greatest thing you've ever done?"

### ■ Option 1: The King's Throne

**SUPPLIES:** pillow, blanket, crepe paper streamers, tape

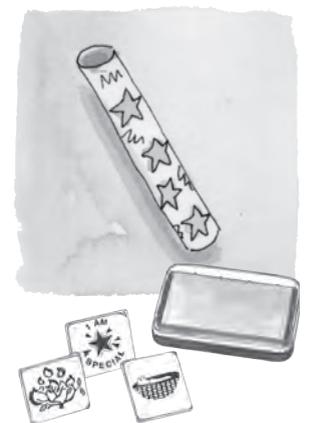


Bring in an adult-sized chair. Set out a pillow, a blanket, crepe paper streamers, and tape. Help children decorate the chair to make it a comfortable royal throne. Tell children that thrones are so special that only kings or queens can sit on them. When the throne is decorated, let children take turns sitting on it while wearing the *paper crown*. Tell them that in today's story, Esther went to see the king in his throne room. Keep the chair decorated so children can use it later in the lesson.

### ■ Option 2: Golden Scepters

**SUPPLIES:** yellow construction paper, crayons, washable markers, tape

Set out yellow construction paper, crayons, washable markers, the *star stamp*, *ink pad*, and tape. Let each child decorate a sheet of construction paper with the *star stamp*, crayons, and washable markers. Help children roll their papers into long tubes and then tape the tubes securely. As children work, explain that scepters are long sticks decorated with lots of jewels. Tell children that King Xerxes had a golden scepter to show that he was in charge.



Have children make extra scepters for those who don't choose this option. Children will use the scepters during "Hear and Tell the Bible Story."

### ■ **Option 3: Fix a Feast**

**SUPPLIES:** bread, bologna, cheese slices, star- or heart-shaped cookie cutters, silver tray or serving platter, wet wipes

Set out bread, bologna, cheese slices, and star- or heart-shaped cookie cutters. Ask children to clean their hands with wet wipes. Form trios and have them work together to make special sandwiches. Have one trio member use a cookie cutter to cut the bread and then pass the cookie cutter to the next trio member who will use it to cut the bologna. The last trio member will use the cookie cutter to cut the cheese slices. Have children arrange their pretty sandwiches on a silver tray or serving platter. As children work, explain that in today's story, Esther prepared a special meal for the king. Set the snacks aside for the "Royal Banquet" activity.

When everyone has arrived and you're ready to move on to Bible Story Time, encourage the children to finish what they're doing and get ready to clean up.

### ■ **Pick-Up Time**

**SUPPLIES:** CD player



Lead children in singing "Come Along With Me" with the CD (track 2) to the tune of "Come and Go With Me." Encourage children to sing along as they help clean up the room.



**Come along with me and pick up all our things,  
Pick up all our things,  
Pick up all our things.  
Come along with me and pick up all our things  
So our room will be clean.**

*(Repeat 2x.)*

## **Bible Story Time**

### ■ **Setting the Stage**

**SUPPLIES:** throne from Option 1 or a colorful blanket

If you chose Option 1, use the chair decorated by the children. Otherwise, before class, drape a colorful blanket over an adult-sized chair. Then set out chairs in a circle with a chair for each child.

Tell children you'll clap three times to get their attention. Explain that when you clap three times, the children are to stop what they're doing and raise their hands. Encourage children to respond quickly so you'll have time for all the fun activities you've planned.



Gather the children around you, and ask:

- **What did you make or do when you came to our class today?** (Decorated a throne; made a golden scepter; made sandwiches.)

Say: **Some of you created a beautiful throne, some of you made golden scepters, and some of you prepared a banquet for us. You were all learning important things about our Bible story. Today we're learning that ►God made us special, and we can do great things.**

**Let's sing a song to remember how special God made each of us. As we sing, we'll march around these chairs. When the song ends, find a seat as quickly as you can. Then we'll say something great about the person sitting in the throne.**

Lead children in singing "I Am Special" to the tune of "Frère Jacques" without the CD.



**SING**

**I am special, I am special.  
If you look, you will see  
Someone very special,  
Someone very special.  
God made me. God made me.**

Following the song, call on a volunteer to affirm the child sitting on the throne. Children may say things such as "You have a nice smile," "You're a good friend," or "I like you." Then have the child step away from the throne and stand with you. Remove one chair, and repeat the song. When each child has been affirmed, gather children in a circle, and ask:

- **What did you like about our game?** (Sitting on the throne; hearing nice things; saying nice things about people; singing.)

Say: **We have a class full of special people! ►God made us special, and we can do great things. Each person in this class can do lots of great things! Today we'll learn about the great thing that Queen Esther did when she learned about Haman's wicked plan. Before we get ready to hear our story, let's say a cheer for our great class.**

Lead children in cheering, "Two, four, six, eight, our class is really great!"



## ■ Bible Song and Prayer Time

*SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player*



Say: **Now it's time to choose a Bible person to bring me the Bible marked with today's Bible story. As we sing our Bible song, we'll pass around our special Bible. The person who's holding the Bible when the music stops will be our Bible person today.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad for the Bible" with the CD (track 3) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in my Lamp." As you sing, pass around the special Bible.



**SING**

**I'm so glad for the Bible.  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
I'm so glad for God's book today.  
I'm so glad for the Bible.**

**Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'—  
Keep me learnin' all about his way.**

**Let me hear 'bout God's love—  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
Let me hear 'bout God's love for me.  
Let me hear 'bout God's love—  
Keep me learnin', learnin', learnin'.  
Let's shine the light for all to see.**

*(Repeat first verse.)*

When the music stops, invite the child who's holding the Bible to bring it to you. Stamp the child's hand with the *star stamp*, and thank him or her for bringing you the Bible. Then stamp the other children's hands. As they come up to you to get their hands stamped, take time to show the children the Bible and explain to them that the Bible is God's Word for them.

Say: **I'm thankful for [name of child who brought the Bible], and I'm thankful for everyone in our class today. Let's thank God together for all our friends in this class.**

Lead children in singing "I'm So Glad We're Together" with the *CD* (track 4) to the tune of "Give Me Oil in My Lamp."



**I'm so glad we're together.  
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'.  
I'm so glad we're all here today.  
I'm so glad we're together.  
Keep us prayin', prayin', prayin'—  
Prayin' for each other every day.**

Lead children in folding their hands and bowing their heads as you continue to sing.

**Thank you, Lord, for each one.  
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful.  
Thank you for everyone who's here.  
Thank you, Lord, for each one.  
Keep me thankful, thankful, thankful—  
Thankful for our friends both far and near.**

### teacher tips

Make sure to return Learning Lab items back to the box when you are finished using them so the items can be used in future lessons.

This Bible story is featured in the new *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at [group.com](http://group.com).



## ■ Hear and Tell the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, scepters made in Option 2 or make a simple paper tube for each child to use as a scepter



Bring out the *Brave Queen Esther* book. Distribute the scepters children made during Option 2, and have children gather around you. Open the Bible to **Esther 5:1-8**, and show it to the children. Say: **Our Bible story comes from the book of Esther in the Bible. Our book shows us pictures of our Bible story.**

Open the book to the first picture. As you turn each page, have volunteers tell you what happened in that part of the story.

Then say: **Esther was frightened. She knew that if she went to see the king**

without being invited, she could be killed. But Esther knew that someone needed to save her people, so she decided to be brave and go see the king. As I read our story, listen for the word *king*. Raise your scepter every time I say it. Let's practice. Say "king," and pause while children raise their scepters. Very good! You look just like kings and queens when you do that!

Turn to page 12 in the book and show children the picture of King Xerxes and Queen Esther. Read the following story and pause for children to hold up their scepters on the word *king*.

Read: **For three days after Esther talked to Mordecai, she didn't eat or drink anything. Esther prayed that the king would be kind and listen to what she had to say.**

**Then Esther put on her finest robes and stood in the doorway of the king's throne room. When the king saw Esther standing in the hall, he smiled and held out his golden scepter. Esther wasn't going to die after all! When Esther came near the king, he asked, "What is it, Queen Esther? What can I do for you?"**

**"Please come to a special dinner I've prepared for you. And bring your servant Haman, too."**

**The king agreed and sent for Haman immediately. As they ate, the king asked Esther again, "What do you want? I'll give you whatever you ask for." So Esther asked Haman and the king to come to another banquet the next day. The men agreed at once.**

Turn to page 14. Then continue: **The next day, Esther, Haman, and the king gathered around a banquet table again. The king asked, "Queen Esther, what is it? I'll give you whatever you ask for."**

**Esther took a deep breath and said, "Oh king, give me my life and save the lives of my people, the Jews. Someone has made a terrible plan to kill us."**

**The king was furious! "Who did this terrible thing?" he cried. Esther pointed to Haman and told the king that Haman was planning to have all the Jewish people killed.**

**The angry king called for his guards to take Haman away and punish him. Brave Queen Esther had saved her people!**

Close the book, and ask:

- **What brave thing did Esther do?** (Went to talk to the king; told on Haman.)
- **What did Esther ask the king?** (To come to a banquet; to save her people.)
- **What happened when Esther told the king about Haman's plan?** (The king got mad at Haman; the king punished Haman.)

Say: **Esther was brave. She went to see the king even though it was dangerous. God used Esther to stop Haman's evil plan. Just as God made Esther special, ►God made us special, and we can do great things. Let's celebrate those great things.**

Collect the scepters before moving on to the next activity.



◀ **BIBLE POINT**

## ■ Do the Bible Story

**SUPPLIES:** glue, craft sticks, scissors, tape



Before class, remove the “Palace Puppets” poster, the Persian King puppet, the Esther puppet, and the two Bible-Times Man puppets from the Learning Lab. Glue or tape a wide craft stick to the bottom of the puppets if you haven’t already. Tape the “Palace Puppets” poster on the wall at children’s eye level.

Show children the poster and the puppets. Explain that one puppet is the Persian King, one is Esther, one is Haman, and one is Mordecai. Give each puppet to a child, and encourage the children with the puppets to crouch just below the poster. Ask the children to hold the puppets up in front of the poster so the puppets look as if they’re in the palace. Encourage the children to use the puppets to retell today’s Bible story. Tell the rest of the class to pretend to be the audience and clap after the puppet play is over. Then let the children switch roles. Be sure each child gets a chance to be in the puppet play.

When children are finished, collect the puppets and gather the children in a circle.

Ask: • **How did Esther help save her people?** (She talked to the king; she was brave; she told the king about the evil plan.)

• **Have you ever done something really brave? What happened?** (I rode on a merry-go-round with my sister; I slept in my new room all by myself; I stayed at Grandpa’s house all weekend and had fun.)

• **How did it make you to feel to be brave?** (I felt good; I know God helped me.)

Pray for the children, and ask God to help each child be brave.

Say: **God made Esther special, and he helped her do a great thing when she rescued her people. ► God made us special, and we can do great things, too—just like Esther! Let’s take a look at what Esther’s banquet might have looked like.**

## ■ A Royal Banquet

**SUPPLIES:** CD player; snack made in Option 3, table décor (such as a tablecloth, fancy napkins, candles, and flowers), plastic cups, juice, wet wipes



For this activity, bring in your choice of items to create a festive banquet table, such as a tablecloth, fancy napkins, flowers, and candles.

Say: **Esther was very brave and did great things. Let’s remember Queen Esther by singing about her.**

Lead children in singing “Queen Esther” to the tune of “Did You Ever See a Lassie?” with the CD (track 18).

### teacher tips

Three- and four-year-olds listen to and enjoy Bible stories. They also are beginning to understand that prayer is talking to God. Their prayers often consist of short, spontaneous, and simple statements.

### BIBLE POINT



See page 5.



**Did you hear about Queen Esther** (*cup hand to right ear*),  
**Queen Esther, Queen Esther?**

**Did you hear about Queen Esther?** (*Cup hand to left ear.*)  
 (*Clap, clap*) **She's a star!** (*Flick fingers on each word.*)

**Queen Esther was so brave.** (*Flex muscles.*)  
**She knew that she must save** (*put index finger to temple*)  
**All her people from old Haman** (*point to others in class*),  
**So they would not die!** (*Put hand on head.*)

**Did you hear about Queen Esther** (*cup hand to right ear*),  
**Queen Esther, Queen Esther?**

**Did you hear about Queen Esther?** (*Cup hand to left ear.*)  
 (*Clap, clap*) **She's a star!** (*Flick fingers on each word.*)

**The great celebration** (*raise hands and wiggle fingers*)  
**All over the nation** (*turn in a circle*)  
**Was to help the Jews remember** (*put index finger to temple*)  
**Queen Esther, the star!** (*Flick fingers on each word.*)

Turn off the CD, and say: **To celebrate the great thing that Queen Esther did, we're going to have a banquet just like the one Esther gave for Haman and the king. I'll need lots of special helpers to prepare our table.** Choose trios to place different items on the table.

When the table is set, gather children around you, and say: **What good helpers you are! Look at our lovely banquet table! Let's all sit down and enjoy our special meal like kings and queens.** Before children eat, pray: **Dear God, thank you for making us so special. Show us all the great things we can do when we serve you. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Ask children to clean their hands with the wet wipes. Then distribute the sandwiches made in Option 3, and pour juice or water into the plastic cups. Say: **Remember, ►God made us special, and we can do great things, just like Esther.**

When children are finished eating, have everyone help clean up. Say: **Now let's visit Whiskers and see what great things he's been doing.**



## Closing

### ■ Great Things

**SUPPLIES:** none

Bring out Whiskers the Mouse, and go through the following puppet script. When you finish the script, put Whiskers away and out of sight.





**Whiskers:** Wow, you guys had a special snack today!

**Teacher:** We sure did, Whiskers. It was a banquet, just like in our Bible story.

**Whiskers:** Someone in the Bible had a banquet?

**Teacher:** Yes, Esther gave a special meal for the king. Children, can you tell Whiskers the brave thing Esther did at the banquet? *(Let children explain that Esther told the king about Haman's plan.)*

**Whiskers:** Boy, Esther was brave!

**Teacher:** Yes, she was. And you know, ► God made us special, and we can do great things, too.

**Whiskers:** But what can I do?

**Teacher:** Well, remember last week you wanted to help your dad mow the lawn, but he wouldn't let you? You said you were going to find another way to help him.

**Whiskers:** That's right. I went home and used the big broom to sweep the grass off the sidewalk. And you know what? He even let me dig in the dirt and pull up some weeds. That was fun!

**Teacher:** See, Whiskers? You helped your dad and made him happy. That was a great thing!

**Whiskers:** Wow! I guess you're right. *(To the children)* I know you've done some great things, too. Will you tell me about them? *(Let children tell Whiskers great things they've done or can do.)*

Boy, that's great! ► God made us special, and we can do great things! 'Bye, everyone. I gotta go do some more great things!



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## BIBLE VERSE ►



Say: **Our Bible verse for today says this:** ► **“Serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13b). It’s fun to eat a meal with our friends and family. That’s a special time when we can serve others. Jesus made special meals for his friends, too. Jesus also served others by praying for them and helping them feel better. Let’s each think of one way we can serve somebody this week.** Let each child name one way he or she can serve someone during the coming week.

**Let’s ask God to help us do something special this week.**

## BIBLE VERSE ►

Pray: **Dear God, please help us ► “serve one another in love,” the way Jesus does. Thank you for making us special so we can do great things. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

## ■ Esther, the Star

**SUPPLIES:** none



Say: **Queen Esther did a great thing when she saved her people. ► God made us special, and we can do great things, too. When you give hugs, cheer up a friend, help your mom or dad, or tell people about God, you're doing great things for God! This finger play will remind us that we can shine like Esther did.**

Distribute the *linking stars* so each child has one. Lead children in the following finger play. (If you don't have enough stars for everyone, make some before class using shiny wrapping paper and scissors.)

**Like a star you see at night** (*hold up linking star*),  
**Esther's beauty shone so bright.** (*Frame face with hands.*)  
**The king chose her to be his queen** (*place pretend crown on head*),  
**For she was the prettiest he'd ever seen!** (*Place hand over eyes as if searching.*)

**Like a star you see at night** (*hold up linking star*),  
**Esther's bravery shone so bright.** (*Flex biceps.*)  
**She saved the Jews from Haman's plan** (*thumbs-up sign on "Jews"; thumbs-down sign on "Haman"*),  
**And they rejoiced throughout the land!** (*Turn in a circle and wave arms.*)

Repeat the rhyme two or three times. Then have children hold their stars over their heads, and lead them in cheering, "Like a star I see at night, the great things I do will shine so bright!" If you did Option 2, remind children to take home their scepters.



### Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.

Photocopy the "Today I Learned..." handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with the children. Encourage parents to use the handout to plan meaningful family activities to reinforce this week's topic.



## For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

### ■ Lively Learning: Star Song



Form a circle and lead children in singing “Queen Esther” to the tune of “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”



SING

**Did you hear about Queen Esther,  
Queen Esther, Queen Esther?  
Did you hear about Queen Esther?  
(Clap, clap) She’s a star!**

**Queen Esther was so brave.  
She knew that she must save  
All her people from old Haman,  
So they would not die!**

**Did you hear about Queen Esther,  
Queen Esther, Queen Esther?  
Did you hear about Queen Esther?  
(Clap, clap) She’s a star!**

**The great celebration  
All over the nation  
Was to help the Jews remember  
Queen Esther, the star!**

As children sing, pass the *paper crown* and a *linking star* around the circle. When each verse ends, have the children who are holding the Learning Lab items give high fives to everyone. Remind children that ► God made us special, and we can do great things.

### ■ Make to Take: Courtly Place Mats



Set out construction paper, stickers, crayons, glue sticks, and the *star stamp* and *ink pad*. Have each child decorate a sheet of paper to make a special place mat. As children work, remind them of the banquet Esther held for the king and Haman. Talk about the great thing that Esther did and the many great things we can do. Remind children that ► God made us special, and we can do great things.

### ■ Treat to Eat: Crunchy Scepters

Set out pretzel rods, small bowls of cream cheese, M&M’s candies, plastic knives, paper plates, and napkins. Ask children to clean their hands with wet wipes. Then show children how to frost the top half of their pretzels and add M&M’s candy “jewels” to make “scepters.” As children enjoy their scepter snacks, explain that the king showed kindness to Esther by holding out his scepter.



### ■ Story Picture: Esther Visits the King

Give each child a copy of the “Today I Learned...” handout. Set out crayons, tape, and small pieces of aluminum foil. Show children how to sculpt the aluminum foil into long scepter shapes. Help each child tape the scepter onto the king’s hand. As children color their pictures, tell them that ► God made us special, and we can do great things.

# Today I learned...

## God made us special, and we can do great things.

**Lesson 12**  
Today your child learned that **GOD MADE US SPECIAL, AND WE CAN DO GREAT THINGS.** Children heard a story about the brave thing Esther did. They enjoyed a banquet together and asked God to help them do great things.

Help me learn this:

"Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13b).

Ask me:

- What brave thing did Esther do?
- Tell me about something great you can do.
- What great things could our family do together to serve God?

### Family Fun

- Help your child learn "Use Every Chance" to the tune of "London Bridge."  
**Use every chance you have,  
Chance you have,  
Chance you have.  
Use every chance you have  
For doing good.**

### Esther Visits the King

(Esther 5:1-8; 7:1-7, 10)



