

Lesson 9

A Queen Saves Her People

Bible Lesson: Esther 3:7 – 9:32

Memory Verse: I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. *Psalm 18:3*

Books of the Bible Review: BOOKS OF GOSPEL
Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

BOOK OF HISTORY
Acts

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach

- ◆ that God is merciful
- ◆ that God hears and answers prayer
- ◆ that God uses His people in His plan
- ◆ that God gives courage to face difficult situations

Prepare Materials

- ◆ index cards, 1 per child
- ◆ stickers with Bible verses, animals, or flowers on them

- ◆ fish-shaped puzzle from last week's memory verse
- ◆ music for "I Will Call Upon the Lord" (optional)
- ◆ Bibles to help learn the memory verse
- ◆ books of the Bible word find (pattern in Teacher manual), 1 per child
- ◆ paper chain for Books of Gospel and History

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Introduction

Not only was Queen Esther outwardly beautiful, she was also obedient to her uncle and guardian Mordecai and did what was right even when it was dangerous. God helped Esther to be strong and brave to help save her people. Children sometimes face difficult situations that frighten them. Jesus will help the children who trust in Him to do what is right.

B. Prayer Preparation

1. Praise God because He is worthy to be praised.
2. Pray that the children will learn to be obedient to their parents.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you teach the children how to pray when they are afraid.

4. Pray that the children will have courage to do what is right, even when it is hard or when others make fun of them.

C. Bible Study

King Ahasuerus (also known as Xerxes) was a king who was vain and boastful. He had an elaborate lifestyle. His palace had marble columns and couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of precious gems and stones. Hangings of fine linen were held by cords of fine purple on silver rings. Yet in spite of his vast wealth, he had little compassion for his subjects.

During one period of his reign, the king flaunted his riches and the splendor of his majesty for some 180 days. At the end of these days, he held a lavish banquet lasting an entire week. On the seventh day when he was half drunk from wine, he commanded Queen Vashti to appear so that all the men of the court could gaze upon her beauty. King Ahasuerus was sensual, proud, crude, and uncouth.

When the queen refused his command, King Ahasuerus was enraged with anger. The king decided to banish Queen Vashti and choose a new queen to take her place. In the providence of God, the Jewish orphan Esther was chosen by King Ahasuerus to be the new queen.

Time passed and a court official named Haman rose to new heights of power. The king commanded that all subjects of the kingdom must kneel down and pay honor to Haman. But the new queen's uncle Mordecai refused. When Haman received word that this man was a Jew, he convinced the king that all Jewish people in the land should be killed on a specific day. Mordecai sent word to his niece Queen Esther and challenged her to intercede on behalf of the Jewish people. Mordecai sent to Esther these unforgettable words: *"And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?"* (Esther 4:14).

Esther risked death if the king rejected her when she came to him unbidden, but she went to present her request to the king. He extended his golden scepter to her (the sign that she would not be executed for coming to him unbidden), and she presented her plea. Granting her request the king arranged for the Jews to defend themselves. He also decreed that the man who had conceived such a horrible plot must be hanged. That man was Haman.

A character study of King Ahasuerus and Queen Esther reveals significant contrasts. King Ahasuerus was an ineffectual leader given to moods of extravagance and wrath. He was a worldly ruler who was ultimately weak, for his strength came only from himself. In stark contrast, Queen Esther was courageous and strong. She exhibited character traits of leadership, loyalty, and a quiet yet unflinching trust in the living God. This Jewish orphan who trusted God became not only Queen of Persia, but also a woman God used to bring about deliverance and exaltation of his people.

D. What Is God Like?

1. God never forgets His own and will not forsake them. God meets emergencies and crises with leaders He has redeemed, raised up, and prepared. *"Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you"* (Joshua 1:5).
2. God has always been faithful and delivered His people. He will not allow those who put their trust in Him to be put to shame. *"Indeed, none of those who wait for Thee will be ashamed; those who deal treacherously without cause will be ashamed"* (Psalm 25:3).

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome with Love

GREET the children with a smile and **THANK** them for being here today. **TAKE** attendance, letting the children count the number of Sundays they have come during this quarter. With only a month or so to go in the Sunday school year, **ENCOURAGE** them to continue in their faithful attendance.

SAY: We come to Sunday school to learn about God the Father who created us and provides for us, God the Son (Jesus) who died on the cross for our sins, and God the Holy Spirit who teaches us through the Bible.

Prayerfully **SING** together the first three verses of *"Heavenly Father, Here We Gather"* (printed in student books and Teacher Manual).

Use a Learning Center

ART CENTER – PRAYER CARD

Today the children will make a prayer card to use as a reminder to pray for those whom God lays on their heart to pray for.

SAY: In our story today, Queen Esther asks her people to pray for her. She has an important request for the king and needs God's help. Today we will be making a prayer card to help us remember to pray for people God brings to our mind.

Give each child an index card. Have colorful stickers of Bible verses, animals, or flowers for the children to decorate one side of their card. On the other side have them **WRITE** names of people they would like to pray for. Suggest parents, brothers, sisters, or friends.

After the children have written names on their cards, take time for each child to say a prayer for at least one person on the card.

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S MESSAGE

Memory Verse

LAY the pieces of the puzzle from last week's lesson out on the table. Let the children put the puzzle together as quickly as possible. **READ** the verse in unison:

*"I called out of my distress to the Lord,
and He answered me."
Jonah 2:2*

ASK:

- ◆ Who is speaking in this verse? (Jonah)
- ◆ What was his distress? (he tried to run from God, disobeyed God, and needed forgiveness)
- ◆ Did God help him? (yes)
- ◆ How? (God delivered him from the fish, forgave his sin, and gave him another chance to obey His command to go to the people of Nineveh)

SAY the verse again together. Encourage each student to say the verse without any help. **ASSURE** the children that we can call upon the Lord at any time. He will always hear our prayers and care for our needs.

Bible Story

ASK the children to tell all that they can remember about the story of Jonah. As the children share, highlight these points:

- ◆ God is in control of all things.
- ◆ God was gracious and compassionate to Jonah and to the city of Nineveh!
- ◆ Disobeying God is sin.
- ◆ God forgives our sin when we ask Him to.
- ◆ God gives us the strength to obey Him.

TEACHING TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Sing the Message

TEACH the fourth verse of "Heavenly Father, Here We Gather" (printed in student books and Teacher Manual).

*Come and hear us, and be near us,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;
Walk beside us, lead and guide us,
Till we join the heav'nly host.*

EXPLAIN that when we sing these words, we are asking God to hear our prayers. We ask Him to be with us and guide us as long as we live on this earth, until someday He takes us to heaven to live with Him forever.

Pray the Message

Focus on God's mercy as you pray together. **EXPLAIN** that showing mercy means being kind and compassionate. **PRAISE** God for being merciful to all of us even though we are sinners.

Learn the New Words

Esther A young Jewish woman who became the Queen of Persia.

Mordecai Esther's uncle who took care of her when her parents died.

rule or law Direction from authority on how to behave.

defend Protect from danger, attack, or harm.

mercy Kind and compassionate treatment.

worthy To deserve respect and honor.

Introduce the Message

WRITE the word *Esther* on the chalkboard.

ASK:

- ◆ Does anyone know the story of Esther from the Bible? **LIST** their responses underneath

her name. Include the words *very beautiful, queen, and Jew.*

- ◆ Do you know how Esther became queen?

Then **EXPLAIN:** Many young women were brought before the king. It was like a contest! The king wanted to see them all to decide who he would like to be the new queen. He chose Esther. The Bible says the king loved Esther more than all the other women and that Esther found favor and kindness with him more than all the others. After Esther became queen, the king gave a special banquet and called it "Esther's Banquet."

SAY: In our story today Esther faced great danger! A rule in the kingdom said that people could not come before the king to speak with him unless the king had called them, not even the queen. If people did not follow the rule, the king could have them killed! But Esther knew she must see the king! It was very important! What do you think Esther did?

The flannelgraph pictures of Esther from "Women of the Bible" would be a helpful visual as you tell the story today.

Read/Tell the Message

SAY: Open your books to Lesson 9. Help children **OPEN** their Bibles to Esther 3. **READ** the title of the story together.

READ the story, having the children follow along in their own books. Use expression and enthusiasm when you read.

A QUEEN SAVES HER PEOPLE

In our story today, we learn about a young Jewish woman whom God used to save His people. This Jewish woman's name was Esther. Esther was kind and very beautiful, and she became the queen of the country of Persia.

In the country where Esther lived, there were also many other Jews. Some people did not like the Jews. One day they asked the king

to make a rule that it was all right for people to kill Jews. The king listened to them and signed the law.

Esther's uncle Mordecai had taken care of Esther when her parents died. Now he lived near the king's palace and could send messages to her. Mordecai heard about the law and was very sad. He sent a message to Esther. He asked her to talk to the king to see if he would change his mind about the law to kill Jews. Mordecai said to Esther, "Who knows whether you have not become queen for such a time as this?"

Esther feared the king. She knew he was very powerful. But Esther knew it was right to try to help her people even if it was dangerous. She asked the Jews in her city to pray for her. God watched over Esther. He was with her when she went to talk with the king. She asked the king to help save her people. The king had not known that his Queen Esther was a Jew. The king listened to Esther. Now he did not want the Jews to be killed. He made a new law that said the Jews could defend their lives against anyone who tried to kill them.

God had mercy on His people in Persia. He helped Esther to be strong and brave. God answered Esther's prayer to save the Jews from the plans of evil men.

Reinforce the Message

ASK:

- ◆ What rule did the king make about the Jews? (that it was all right for people to kill Jews)
- ◆ Why was this a bad rule? (it is not right to kill; Esther and her uncle were Jews and were in danger)
- ◆ What did Esther need to do? (talk with the king about this new rule)
- ◆ Why was it dangerous for her to talk to the king? (she could be killed if the king did not want to listen to her)
- ◆ What did she do before she went to see the king? (prayed and had other Jews pray for her too)
- ◆ What happened? (the king listened to Esther and made another new law that said the Jews could defend themselves against anyone who tried to kill them)

SAY: God had mercy on the Jewish people. What does that mean? (that God was kind and compassionate to them, He saved them from their trouble)

SING "God Is Watching over You" p.27 *Songs of God and Me*. **SAY:** God takes care of His children. He protects and keeps them.

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memorize the Bible Verse

SING "Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart."

DIVIDE the class into pairs. Try to mix those who read fairly well with those who are still learning.

GIVE each pair a Bible. **TELL** them to find Psalm 18:3. Once they have found the verse, have them do the following three things:

READ the verse together two or three times.

CHOOSE one person to hold the Bible while the other says the verse. The child holding the Bible can check the words and help as needed

while the other child says the memory verse. Then let the children **CHANGE** roles.

COVER the verse and say it together again. **PRACTICE** together until both are confident of the words. Have each student say the verse without looking at the Bible.

*I call upon the Lord,
who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.
Psalm 18:3*

The well-known chorus "I Will Call upon the Lord" may be a helpful way to remember the memory verse. (Music for this song is not included in the books listed as resources for this grade.)

Study the Books of the Bible

Today you will review the first five books in the New Testament. They are four **Books of Gospel**, which are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the one **Book of History** called Acts.

Make one copy for each child of the word find page in the Teacher Manual. This puzzle will help the children review the Gospels and Acts.

Continue with the paper chain for the New Testament books. Make five new links, one for each of the Gospels and one for the Book of History. Hang the links beneath the correct posters. Review together the names of the four Gospels and Acts.

Sing "The Books of the Bible" song.

Do the Activities Together

ACTIVITY 1 – God Hears Esther’s Prayer

READ the numbers and words at the bottom of the page. Tell the children to **COLOR** the different numbered sections in the picture with the color that matches the number indicated at the bottom of the page.

While they color, encourage the students to talk about different times they have prayed and tell how God has answered their prayers.

ACTIVITY 2 – Call upon the Lord

Help the children match the shapes underneath the blank lines with the shapes at the top of the page. There is a different shape for each vowel letter. Let the children fill in the missing vowels in today’s Bible memory verse. Say the verse together a couple of times.




*I call upon the Lord,
who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.
Psalm 18:3*

Lesson 9 – Activity 1 A Queen Saves Her People



59

Lesson 9 – Activity 2 A Queen Saves Her People

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I c _ ll _ pon th _ L _ rd,
 wh _ is w _ rthy t _ b _
 pr _ is _ d, _ nd _ am
 s _ v _ d fr _ m my
 e n _ m i _ s. Ps _ lm 18:3

60

CLOSING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Teach and Sing

Begin teaching the last verse of the theme hymn, "O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways" (printed in student books and Teacher Manual).

*Make me to walk in Thy commands;
'Tis a delightful road:
Nor let my head or heart or hands,
Offend against my God.*

Help the class learn the new verse using the illustrated poster you have made. Point out the picture symbols and guide the children in reading the words. **SPEAK** the phrases one at a time, allowing the children to repeat after you. Then **SING** the hymn together.

REMIND the children that Esther walked with God and trusted God. God protected Esther and cared for her. When we know God and trust in Him, we will want to honor Him and obey His commands. We will show respect

for His Word. We will be careful not to do or say anything that would not honor God. **TALK** about some of the things that would dishonor God such as saying mean things to or about other people, disobeying parents, swearing, lying, or cheating.

Pray Together

THANK God for the mercy He shows to us every day. **THANK** Him that He hears and answers our prayers. Pray that God would help us to honor and obey Him even when it is hard. **ASK** for God's help in any areas the students need courage to face something difficult.

Invite the children to participate in prayer. Close by singing a favorite song.

PREPARE FOR NEXT WEEK

Gather and Prepare Materials

- ◆ large letters spelling *JOB TRUSTED GOD* cut from various colors of construction paper
- ◆ doorknob hanger (pattern on Teacher Manual), 1 per child
- ◆ sheet of paper folded in fourths, 1 per child
- ◆ music for "I Will Call upon the Lord" (optional)
- ◆ 13 clothespins
- ◆ clothesline
- ◆ business-sized envelopes, 1 per child
- ◆ paper chain for Books of Paul's Epistles

Prepare Lesson 10

Begin your study and preparation with prayer.

Pray for each student daily by name.

Read the Bible text (Job 1:1 – 2:10; 42:1-17) and student lesson.

Memorize the Bible verse:

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21

Read the Teacher Manual.

Highlight, underline, and write in your own notes to help you teach Lesson 10.

Find the names of the Books of Gospel and History.

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Acts

Color each name a different color.

M	a	t	t	h	e	w
a	s	v	o	w	d	J
r	L	u	k	e	x	o
k	f	c	b	g	y	h
z	A	c	t	s	p	n