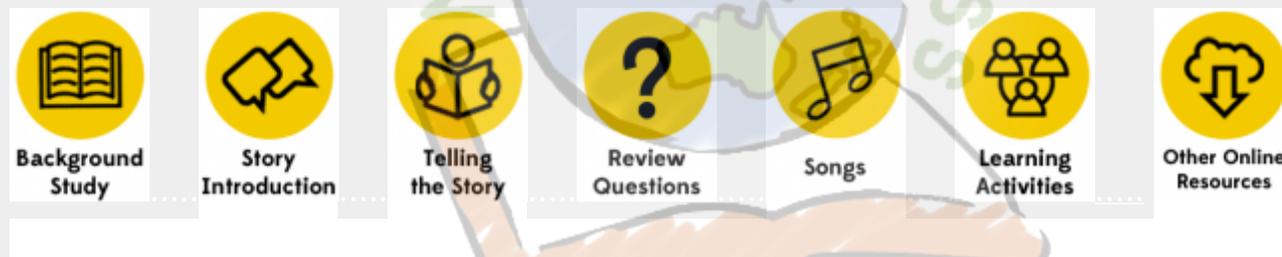


Queen Esther

Scripture Reference: [Esther 1-10](#)



Suggested Emphasis: Blessings God gives us should be used to help others.



Story Overview:

Xerxes (son of Darius) now ruled. Because he had deposed his queen in a drunken feast, a search was made throughout the kingdom for a new queen. Under the direction of her cousin, Mordecai, Esther was put forward and chosen. Not knowing that his beautiful queen was Jewish, Xerxes fell in with a plan to destroy the Jewish captives living in his land. Queen Esther saved her people by revealing her Jewish origins to the king and convincing him to let the Jews defend and protect themselves.

Background Study:

The book of Esther is an unusual book because God's name is not mentioned once in the entire book. Even so, the book clearly outlines the power of God over the plans of men.

Years have passed since Daniel was thrown into a lion's den. Xerxes (sometimes called Ahasuerus) has succeeded Cyrus and is now the ruler of Persia. Xerxes and his queen, Vashti, were living at the winter capital city of Susa. The king gave a six-month-long feast. He invited many important men of the kingdom to the feast. The men drank much wine. At the climax of the feast, King Xerxes asked Vashti to come in so all the other men could see what a beautiful wife he had. Vashti refused to obey the king. We are not told what her reason was (despite all of the speculation we might have heard) but we do know that her refusal angered the King so much that he deposed her as his queen. After the feast was over, and King Xerxes was not drinking wine, he began to think about Queen Vashti. He remembered the law he had written, stating she could no longer be queen. Maybe Xerxes was sorry he had written that law. He may have wished he could destroy the law, but he could not. The law of the Medes and Persians, once written, could not be changed or destroyed by anyone, not even the king.

The king's servants suggested that a new queen be found. He could choose from all of the beautiful young women of the kingdom. Girls were gathered together and taken care of in the palace for one year. One of the girls who went to the palace was a young Jewish girl named Hadassah, or Esther. Her cousin, Mordecai took care of her since her parents had died. If 2:5-6 were read to mean that Mordecai was personally taken from Jerusalem then he would be over a hundred years old. It might mean that he was descended from one who was taken. Even though many of the Jews had returned to Jerusalem, there was still a large population living in Babylon (and in this case, Susa).

The king chose Esther as the new queen. At Mordecai's suggestion, Esther did not reveal the fact that she was Jewish.

As time passed, Mordecai happened to overhear an assassination plot being hatched. He told Esther who, in turn, told the king. The would-be assassins were hanged and Mordecai was honoured. All was recorded in the annals (record books) of the king (2:23).

Five years passed. A man named Haman also gained favour with the king and royal officials were ordered by the king to bow to Haman when he passed. We are not told why, but Mordecai refused to bow to him. Haman's anger was such that he began to plot to kill not only Mordecai, but also all of the Jews.

Haman convinced the king that the Jews were a menace to Persia and should be destroyed. Not knowing that his own queen was a Jew, the king passed a law that the Jews could be attacked. Mordecai heard of the plan and went straight to Esther. He asked her to use her position to save the Jews. Esther knew that she needed to approach the king but she had to do so very carefully. She could not have forgotten what happened to the last queen who had displeased King Xerxes. Esther took a big chance by approaching the King. It was not the place of the queen to approach the king but, instead, the king summoned the queen when he wanted her. She also knew she had a duty (4:14).

The king did not reject Esther when she approached him. In fact he told her he would give her anything she requested. Esther could not ask him to change his own law (to kill the Jews) but she set forth a plan to let the king make the needed discoveries himself. The king granted her request to throw Haman a banquet the next day.

Haman was thrilled to be invited to a banquet with the king but he was galled to notice that Mordecai still refused to bow to him. Before coming to the banquet, Haman ordered a gallows built on which to hang Mordecai.

The hand of God is seen in the fact that the night before the banquet, the king could not sleep. He asked that his annals (record books) be brought to him and read. Listening to these history books should put him to sleep! The king listened to the old account of Mordecai uncovering the plot to kill the king. It occurred to him that he should honour

Mordecai.

It must have again been galling for Haman to be summoned to the king and ordered to honour Mordecai. And Haman was also now in a lot of trouble. He had built gallows to hang a man who was now being honoured by the king!

At the feast, Esther revealed that she was a Jew and that Haman had tricked the king into decreeing the Jews killed and Mordecai hung. The king was enraged and ordered Haman hung on the gallows.

Despite the fact that the king might have regretted making the new law to kill all the Jews, he could not change it. His solution was to issue a decree that allowed the Jews to protect themselves. In this way, the Jews protected themselves and were saved.



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Way to Introduce the Story:

Begin the class by playing hangman. Use words like “beautiful, kingdom, queen, Jews, and honour”. Let this lead you into the story. Tell the children that all of these words and the gallows will be in the story.

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The Story:

King Xerxes was King over the Persian Empire. That meant that he was king over the

biggest kingdom in the world at that time. Even though King Xerxes was rich and powerful, he was sad because he did not have a queen. The first queen's name was Vashti. King Xerxes had thrown a big feast and gotten drunk. He wanted Vashti to dance in front of all the men at the feast but Queen Vashti said "no." The King became so angry that he told her that she would never be the queen again. He never saw her again.

The king's helpers searched the whole kingdom to find the most beautiful girls so the king could choose a new queen. The girls were brought to the palace. The girls were given the best makeup and perfumes. They spent a whole year learning how to be a queen. One of the girls was a beautiful young Jewish girl called Esther. Esther did not have a father or a mother. Her cousin, Mordecai had raised her and treated her like a daughter. Mordecai taught Esther how to love God and how to be a Jew.

When it came time to choose the new queen, the king chose Esther. Esther was a good queen. The king did not believe in God but Esther did. She never forgot her cousin Mordecai and she never forgot that she was one of God's children. Sometimes it was hard for Esther because the other Jews were treated badly. They did not have the riches that Esther had. Esther tried to use the good things that God had given her to help other people.

One time Mordecai helped the king. Mordecai heard that someone was trying to kill the king. He told Esther about it and she told the king. The plan was stopped. Mordecai saved the king's life! This was very special so it was written about in the king's record book.

Another man became famous in the kingdom. His name was Haman. The king thought Haman was a good man so he ordered everyone in the kingdom to bow down to Haman. But Haman was a bad man and he hated the Jews. Mordecai would not bow down to Haman. Haman was so angry that he planned a way to kill Mordecai and all of the Jews.

Haman told the king that the Jews were bad. Finally, the king believed him and made a law. The law said that people could kill the Jews and not get in trouble. Haman was glad.

He had a huge gallows built and he planned to have Mordecai hanged.

When Mordecai heard about the plan he told Esther. "Please, Esther, you have to save our people! Maybe God knew this would happen and that is why he let you be Queen."

Esther was very frightened. She had never told the king that she was a Jew. Would he be mad at her like he was mad at the first queen? No one was allowed to go to the king unless he asked them first. Even the queen could not go to the king without an invitation. If anyone went to the king without an invitation they could be put to death. The only thing that could change this was if the king pointed his sceptre at the person who came to him.

Finally, Esther decided to go to the king without being asked. When she came to him she was very frightened. Would she be put to death? Then the king pointed his sceptre at her and told her to come to him. The king liked Esther. He told her she could have anything she wanted.

Esther had a plan. She told the king that she wanted to have a special feast just for the two of them and for Haman. Esther and the king planned the feast for the very next day.

The king went to bed that night but he could not sleep. Sometimes reading a book helps you sleep. So the king asked one of his helpers to bring one of the old record books. The helper brought the book and began to read to the king about things that had happened long ago. He read about the time Mordecai had saved the king's life! The king got very excited. He wanted to do something special for Mordecai. The king called for Haman to come into his chamber. Haman was happy because he thought the king was going to do something nice for him. The king asked Haman what should be done for someone who deserved honour. Haman thought the king was about to honour him so he said: "That person should be given a royal robe and one of the king's horses. They should be led through the streets so everyone knows that the king likes them."

"That is a great idea," said the king. "Go and do those things for Mordecai!"

Haman was shocked! He could not believe that the king liked Mordecai. Now, Haman knew he was in big trouble. The king liked Mordecai but Haman was trying to kill Mordecai. What would the king do when he found out?

The next day Haman went to the special feast with Esther and the King. The worst thing that Haman imagined happened. Esther told the king that someone was trying to kill the good man, Mordecai, who had saved the king's life. The king was very angry. He said that the man should be put to death. Haman was hung on the very gallows that he had built for Mordecai.

Then Esther told the king that she was a Jew. He was very sorry that he had made the law that Jews could kill the Jews. Even the king could not change the law. Then Esther asked the king to make another law - a law that said the Jews could fight back if someone tried to kill them. The king knew that this was a good idea so he made the law. From then on, if someone tried to hurt the Jews then the Jews fought back. Soon, no one wanted to hurt the Jews anymore.

Mordecai and all of the Jews were saved because of Esther.

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

The life of Esther is told as one story in today's lesson but the Free Bible images above break it down into 3 different slideshows. Click on the links below to download these illustrations and/or slideshows directly from <https://www.freebibleimages.org/> :

[Esther Story Part 1](#)

[Esther Story Part 2](#)

[Esther Story Part 3](#)

Consider carefully which illustrations you will use when you teach. Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Review Questions:

1. Who was the young Jewish girl who was chosen to be queen? Esther
2. Who was Esther's cousin? Mordecai
3. What did Haman try to do to Mordecai? Hang him on the gallows
4. When Esther approached the king, what did he point at her? His sceptre
5. Who did Haman have to lead through the streets in honour? Mordecai
6. What finally happened to Haman? He was hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai

Song Suggestions:

- [Ha-la-la-la Song](#)
- [Love is Something If You Give It Away Song](#)
- [Books of the Old Testament Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

- Write talents or blessings on cards (money, good cook, singing, etc) and let the

children take turns drawing a card and telling the class how they could use that talent to help other people.

- Play hangman with words from the story.
- Read Esther 2:7, 17 and 1 Peter 3:3-4. Divide the board into two columns. Head them with “Inward Beauty” and “Outward Beauty”. Write examples of each in the columns.
- Puppet Skit for Pre-schoolers: Try using [simple finger puppets](#) or dolls for this cute [Queen Esther Puppet Skit](#) which was submitted by Jenny Ancell, Australia. You’ll just need to change some Australian references to adapt to your situation.



- [\(Costumed Bible Characters\)](#) A little play-acting is often a fun way to tell the story or review what has been learned. Here are some ways you might use the idea:
 - After telling the story guide the children in dressing up in costumes and acting it out.
 - Or, you can dress up in a simple costume to act the part of one of the Bible characters. As you begin to speak “get into character” as if you were actually the person in the story visiting the class today to tell them what has happened to you.
 - Or, later in the class session, as a review, the teacher can also use the same method to ask the children review questions as if you are one of the characters

in the story talking to the children.

Crafts:

- Write each child's name at the top of a blank paper and then ask them to draw a picture or write about what they might like to be when they grow up. Then let each child share their answers. As each child shares their answer then ask the class how a person doing that job might help others. Then, guide the discussion toward specific ways people in these jobs might share the good news of Jesus. You may have to lead younger children in answering but older children will be able to answer for themselves.

Example: "I want to be a fireman when I grow up. If someone is in a fire I can save them." You might add..."And, if a fireman gets hurt you might ask to pray for them."

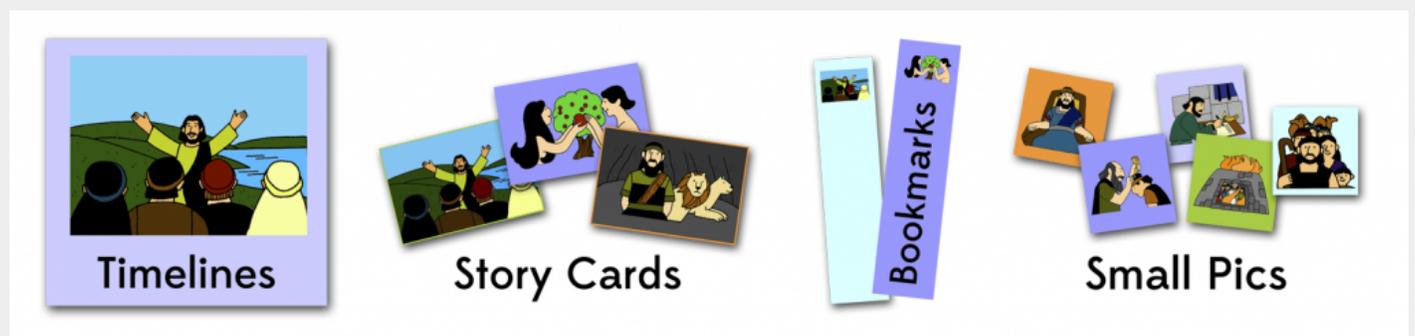
Once you have done this a few times the children will probably begin to think of other ways they might share their faith in various occupations.

You could do this same activity but use flash cards instead of drawing. I found printable flash cards

at <http://www.kids-pages.com/folders/flashcards/Occupations.htm>

- Make and decorate crowns. Use glue and glitter to write the name "Queen Esther" on the crown.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Queen Esther" printables to print on A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for "Queen Esther" printables \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Esther becomes Queen \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Mordecai and Haman \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Esther pleads for her people\(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Haman's anger at Mordecai \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Mordecai is honoured \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Haman's evil is repaid \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Esther saves her people \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Jews rejoice and declare a feast \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [These flash cards depicting various occupations can be used as discussion starters for how to help people when you are in various occupations. Find these at <http://www.kids-pages.com/>](#)
- <http://www.freekidscrafts.com/>
- [Craft: Instructions for a simple paper crown at <http://www.dltk-kids.com/>](#)
- [Online activities and games at <http://gardenofpraise.com/>](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/esther/>

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