



LESSON 4

REFERENCES: ESTHER 4; 5:1-7; 7:1-4; 8:11; PROPHETS AND KINGS, PP. 602-606.

Esther Saves Her People

Do you pray with your family at home? Queen Esther prayed with her maids in the palace. Lots of other people were praying for her too.

Esther, the little orphaned Jewish girl who lived in a foreign country, had grown up to be queen. Her cousin Mordecai had raised her to love and honor God, but he had also told her not to tell anyone she was Jewish. Mordecai didn't want the king to change his mind about Esther.



Because Mordecai worked in the palace, he could

send Esther messages and advice. Esther was always glad to hear from him.

One day after Esther had been queen for about five years, she got a very important message from Mordecai. The king's important helper, Haman, had tricked the king into making a terrible new law. This new law said that on a certain date the people of Persia could hurt all the Jewish people and take everything they owned. "You must ask the king to save the lives of all your people," Mordecai said.

Memory Verse

"Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

MATTHEW 18:20, NIV.

The Message

God hears us when we pray together.

Esther sent a message back to Mordecai. "I am afraid. The king hasn't asked to see me for more than a month, and I'm not allowed to go see him." No one, not even the queen, was allowed to go into the king's inner court without being invited. Anyone who did would be killed, unless the king held out his royal scepter. *(Point to the scepter on page 20.)*

Mordecai sent another message. "Don't think that you will escape because you live in the king's house. Who knows, you may have been chosen queen for just such a time as this."

Esther made up her mind. She sent a message back to Mordecai. "Gather all the Jews in the city. For three days don't eat anything. Spend all your time praying. My maids and I will do the same thing. On the third day, I will go and see the king, and if I die, I die."

On the third day, Esther said a last prayer and put on her royal robes. Bravely she walked into the king's inner court.

The king looked up. Who would dare to come before him without an invitation? Why, it was Esther! The king smiled and held out his golden scepter. "What is it, Queen Esther?" he asked. "Even up to half the kingdom, it will be given you."

Esther reached out and touched the tip of the scepter. Then she invited the king to two special dinners. At the second dinner she told the king she was Jewish. And she asked him to change the terrible law that would hurt her and her people.

The king knew then that he had been tricked into making such a horrible law. But the law could not be changed. So he wrote a new law that said that the Jews could protect themselves. When the day came, no one tried to hurt them.

The Jewish people had been saved by Esther's bravery and God's power. God had heard the prayers of all the people. God still hears our prayers, whether we pray alone or with others. He is a wonderful God who cares for us all the time.



Do and Say

SABBATH

Each day this week, read the lesson story together and review the memory verse.

Where two Hold up two fingers.

or three Hold up three fingers.

gather Arms outstretched as if

in my name, gathering together.

there am I Point upward.

with them. Point to self and others.

Matthew 18:20. . . Palms together; then open as if opening a book.

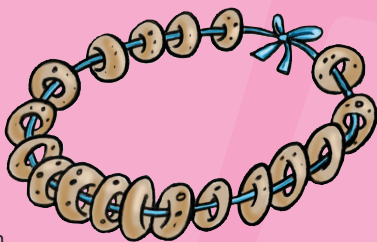
SUNDAY

Encourage your child to share the Crown of Praying Hands or the star they made in Sabbath School with someone and tell them about Queen Esther. (Or draw a picture of a crown or a star.) Esther shone like a star when she led her people to pray.

MONDAY

Read together Esther 4. Talk about why people fast and pray.

Help your child string together round cereal pieces on yarn to represent the people they pray with. Tie the ends together. Tying the yarn together will make a circle, like a prayer circle.



TUESDAY

Tie one of your legs to one of your child's legs with a wide strip of material or an old necktie and try walking together without falling. Say: That reminds me: Praying together gives us strength and binds us together with others. Sing a prayer song.



WEDNESDAY

Hold a towel outstretched between you and your child. Put an inflated balloon on it and walk around the house without letting it fall off. Ask: Was that fun? We made a good team. We can do other things together, such as praying.

Sing "Whisper a Prayer" (*Little Voices Praise Him*, no. 233), then pray for someone you know.

THURSDAY

Ask: What do we do to get ready to pray? Why do we do those things? (so we can think only about God; to be reverent and respectful) Thank God that your family can pray together.

FRIDAY

Act out the Bible story with your family. Talk about ways your child can be brave like Esther, and act out some situations. Ask: Who can help you be brave? (Jesus)