

Esther

Daily Bible Readings for

Students and Teacher:

(Student copy can be torn-out from the back of the Student Book.)

	<u>Scripture Reading</u> <i>(After reading the Scripture, place a ✓ in the box.)</i>	<u>Subject</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday	Psalms 75:1-10	God's Faithfulness
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday	Psalms 89:1-8	God's Faithfulness Established
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday	Lamentations 3:22-26	God's Faithfulness Is Great
<input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday	Isaiah 25:1-9	God's Faithfulness Saves
<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday	Psalms 119:89-93	God's Faithfulness Is Everlasting
<input type="checkbox"/> Friday	I John 1:1-9	Faithful to Forgive
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	Revelation 21:1-7	Faithful to Bring Us to Heaven

Memory Work

(After practicing your verse, place a ✓ in the box.)

M T W Th F S Recite

"I will sing of the lovingkindness of the LORD forever; to all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth."

Psalms 89:1

Materials needed for this lesson:

Along with the general materials needed by students as listed in the Introduction to the Teacher's Manual, the following materials will be needed for class:

1. Make a batch of Hamantashen, the classic Purim cookies. Recipe is at the end of the lesson.
2. Props for play. See details in the *Teach the Lesson* section.
3. An end-of-the-year gift like an age-appropriate devotional or an activity book that focuses on Old Testament events. Contact Ambassador Publications for suggestions.
4. Write the following on craft sticks, use during opening prayer time, and then add to "Stick"-ing to Prayer basket
 - a. Thank God for using ordinary people to accomplish His will.
 - b. Ask God to show you how He wants to use you to influence your world.

Lesson Preparation

As you prepare for this lesson on "Esther", read:

Esther 1-10

Bible Background

What do you say about a Bible book that mentions a Persian king well over a hundred times but does not mention God at all? Though the name of God is not mentioned this book, His presence and power are clearly seen. The story of Esther is another example of the providence of God and His rule in the affairs of mankind. Kings can issue their decrees, but God overrules and accomplishes His purpose, either through them or in spite of them. God's grace is evident in His effort to save His people from extinction. These events take place while the Jews are still in captivity as punishment for their sins, but God had promised to bring them home again (Jeremiah 29:10). He would not forsake them, and no man could interfere with His plans for them.

When orphaned at a young age, Esther was raised by her older cousin, Mordecai, who worked in the household of the Persian king (Esther 2:5-7). Their families were among the first people deported from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Now Mordecai and Esther were among the many Jews who had remained after Cyrus gave permission for the exiles to return to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. The events here took place during the years that some of the Jews were rebuilding Jerusalem. Esther became queen in 478 B.C. during the time of the rebuilding of the temple. The attempted massacre of the Jews occurred in 473 B.C. Ezra went to Jerusalem in 457 B.C., and Nehemiah returned there in 444 B.C.

When Mordecai learned of Haman's plot to destroy the Jews, he enlisted Esther's help to plead with the king for her people (Esther 4:7-8). Esther sent word to Mordecai that she is not really in a position to do anything at risk of her life (Esther 4:11). Mordecai's reply to Esther should enlighten all of us about our place in God's world. In Esther 4:13-14, Mordecai reminded Esther of three important facts. First, living in the palace did not guarantee that she would "escape any more than all the Jews." Second, her silence wouldn't prevent deliverance "from another place and you and your father's house will perish." Third, her place in the palace was not an accident, for she had "attained royalty for such a time as this."

God can use us in times and places we could not imagine and in which we are afraid to speak or act. God has a divine purpose to accomplish in this world, and He will do that through people, whether "kings or commoners." God will accomplish His purpose even if we refuse to listen and obey His will. And if we do start to think we are so important in His work, remember that God's work is never at the mercy of God's servants.

The deliverance of the Jews is celebrated during the feast of

Esther

Purim on the 13-15th days of Adar (Feb-Mar). It was to be a yearly reminder to the people to rejoice in God's mercy and faithfulness.

6. What did the third group accomplish? (*Rebuild Jerusalem's wall*)

Vocabulary

- Defying**—boldly resisting; disobeying
Lots—the process of choosing something using marked objects like stones, sticks, dice, etc.
Signet—a ring with an official impression engraved into it, used to stamp official documents
Sackcloth—a coarse cloth worn as a sign of mourning
Scepter—an official staff used to symbolize royal authority
Perish—die
Gloating—to pridefully flaunt one's own accomplishments
Wretched—worthless; something that causes irritation
Gallows—a wooden frame, usually made of two upright posts and a crossbeam with a noose attached, used to execute people by hanging
Escort—an official person who brings an honored person to an event
Edict—a command issued by a king or someone with authority

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from
Student
Book

Lesson Objectives

Keeping the following objectives in mind, work through student Lesson 28-"Esther"

(Reduced student pages are located on the next 3 pages).

1. Students will learn that God uses ordinary people to accomplish His will.
2. Students will learn that, if they are willing, they can be used by God to influence their world.

Hymn that can reinforce the lesson

Class Time

Welcome the students and begin with prayer.

Use the new "Stick"-ing to Prayer sticks during opening prayer. Then add them to the prayer basket.

Recite memory work.

Review

1. Who led the first group of Jews out of Babylon and back to Jerusalem? (*Zerubbabel*)
2. What did the first group accomplish? (*Rebuilding the Temple*)
3. Who led the second group of Jews out of Babylon and back to Jerusalem? (*Ezra*)
4. What did the second group accomplish? (*Return to the true worship of God*)
5. Who led the third group of Jews out of Babylon and back to Jerusalem? (*Nehemiah*)

Introduce the Lesson

Some Jews never returned to Jerusalem. They lived out the remainder of their lives in Babylon. The book of Esther gives details of how God worked in the lives of a king and some commoners to preserve the Jewish people.

Have students share their finding about why Purim is celebrated?

(*Purim celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people by God through Queen Esther.*)

Compare their findings with the information in the **Fast Fact**.

Teach the Lesson

Read the introductory paragraphs on page 106 of the student book. Continue the lesson by assigning parts to the students and reading the script as a play. (*If there are not enough students in class for the number of parts, ask another class or some adults to help fill the parts.*)

After the play section, complete the remainder of the lesson.

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Characters, Costumes, and Props

Narrator

Costume--None

Props—None

King Ahasuerus (Uh has' uh roos)

Costume—A royal-looking shawl or scarf around shoulders

A crown

Props—A golden scepter—*spray paint a paper towel roll*

A signet ring—*any ring will do*

Mordecai (More' duh ki)

Costume—A plain-looking shawl or scarf around shoulders

Esther

Costume—A pretty, feminine-looking shawl or scarf around shoulders or covering head

Props—A crown

Haman (Hay' mun)

Costume—A gaudy, attention-getting shawl or scarf around shoulders

Props—None

Additional Props

Ashes—*Burn a piece of paper and bring the ashes to class. When the script refers to Mordecai "wearing sackcloth and ashes," allow the students to touch the ash and then try to rub it off. They will realize how difficult it is to remove ash.*

Scroll—*brown paper rolled around a paper towel tube*

Fast Facts section

Have students share their finding about why Purim is celebrated?

(Purim celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people by God through Queen Esther.)

Compare their findings with the information in the **Fast Fact**.

Catechism Corner

Read through the Catechism Corner. Challenge students to memorize the Catechism question and answer found in #1.

Closing the Lesson

Use the **Word Works** as a closing to remind the students of God's sovereignty.

Then have students locate on page 109:

the first column,

the second paragraph

the first sentence

Underline the sentence: *God uses ordinary people who love Him and are willing to serve Him to accomplish his will.*

Read the sentence out loud as a group.

Assignment

Give students an end-of-the-year gift, either an age-appropriate devotional or Old Testament activity book. Encourage students to use these to learn more about our awesome God and His Word.

Hamantashen

The Classic Purim cookie

The cookies are supposed to symbolize the defeated enemy of the Jewish people, and thus resemble the ears or hat of Haman.

Hamantashen are versatile and can be made from the dough recipe below or from purchased frozen cookie dough. The fillings can be mixed and matched. Prune butter and poppy seed are traditional but the filling can be any kind of jam or preserves or even chocolate chips.

Ingredients

4 eggs

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup oil

juice of one lemon

rind of 1 lemon, grated

1 tsp. vanilla extract

5 cups flour

2 tsps. baking powder

Fillings:

1 pound prepared poppy seed filling

or, 1 pound lekvar (apple or prune butter)

or 1 pound strawberry or apricot preserves

Preheat oven to 350°.

Grease cookie sheets.

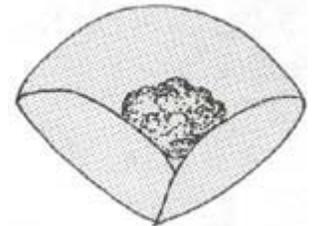
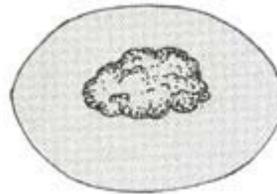
Beat eggs and sugar. Add remaining ingredients, and mix well.

Divide into four parts.

Proceed to assemble and bake according to Hamantashen illustration.

1. Prepare dough of your choice. Divide into four portions
2. On a floured board roll out each portion to about 1/8-inch thick. Using a round biscuit or cookie cutter cut 3-inch circles.

3. Place 1/2 to 2/3 teaspoon of desired filling in the center of each circle.
4. To shape into triangle, lift up right and left sides, leaving the bottom down and bring both sides to meet at the center above the filling.



5. Bring top flap down to the center to meet the two sides. Pinch edges together.
6. Place on grease cookie sheet 1 inch apart and bake at 350 degree preheated oven for 20 minutes.



Close with Prayer

Distribute the "Sticking" to Prayer sticks among the students. Encourage them to use the sticks during their own prayer time.

Teacher's Notes

LESSON 36 – ESTHER

Questions

1. Esther was an orphan and an exile in a foreign country.
2. If the king did not extend his scepter to her when she came unannounced and uninvited, she would be put to death.
3. No
4. She loved her God and was willing to do what He wanted. Her love for God was greater than her fear of man.
5. Give examples from your own life and allow students to respond.

Catechism Corner

1. How, then, can the forgiveness of sins be specifically connected with this sacrament? (Q. 369)
Answer: Because in the Lord's Supper we receive the body and blood of Christ, which were offered up for us, as a sure promise of the forgiveness of sins.
2. Why is the Lord's Supper a feast of thanksgiving?
Answer: In it we receive the assurance of forgiveness, life and salvation.

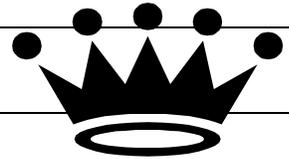
Word Works

The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all.

Psalm 103:19

Suggested additional activity: Make masks such as are used at a celebration of Purim. Faces could be drawn and colored or decorated with yarn, glitter, etc., then glued to a paper plate. A tongue depressor could be glued at the bottom too make a hand-held mask. Faces could be drawn of Esther, Mordecai, Haman, or King Ahaserus.

GOD IS IN CONTROL



*The book of Esther is a great example of the sovereignty of God.
God is in control of all the events in the world and He will take care of his people.*

Look back through the story of Esther.

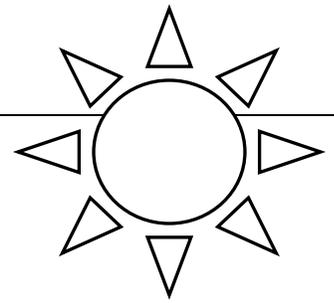
How many places can you name where you see evidence of God at work?

1. _____ Reference _____
2. _____ Reference _____
3. _____ Reference _____
4. _____ Reference _____
5. _____ Reference _____
6. _____ Reference _____
7. _____ Reference _____
8. _____ Reference _____

Can you think of a time when you saw God at work in your own life? Write it down and then draw a picture of it.

God is Faithful to His People

Recall the faithfulness of God by reviewing His work throughout the Old Testament. Match the description of God's act of faithfulness with the correct character He acted toward.



Ruth	God provided safety for this man and his family when He flooded the whole earth.
Daniel	Though sold into slavery, this man was used by God to rescue his family from famine.
Elijah	God rescued this man as a baby in order to deliver His people from the Egyptians.
Esther	God provided a kinsman-redeemer for this woman of faith.
Noah	God provided food for this prophet by sending black birds.
Joseph	God sent a big fish to accomplish His purpose through this prophet.
Moses	God rescued this man from the jaws of lions.
Jonah	God raised up this queen to save His people.

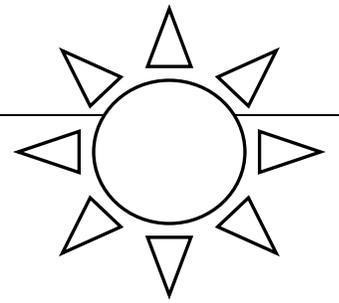
Today's memory verse exclaims the faithfulness of God.
See how well you remember the verse by filling in the missing words.

I will _____ of the _____ of the LORD
forever; to all _____ I will make known Your
_____ with my mouth.

Psalm 89:1

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Today's memory verse exclaims the faithfulness of God.
See how well you remember the verse by filling in the missing words.

I will SING _____ of the LOVINGKINDNESS _____ of the LORD
forever; to all GENERATIONS _____ I will make known Your
FAITHFULNESS _____ with my mouth.

Psalm 89:1