

Sunday School Lesson

November 19, 2023

A Time for Courage

Esther 3:2-3, 5-6; 4:7-16

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Sunday School Lesson

Questions for Us Today

November 19, 2023

2

Have you had the opportunity to save someone from a horrible fate? If so, what did you do?

Has someone – other than the Lord – saved you?

Sunday School Lesson

Objective

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3

To understand why and how Queen Esther became such a courageous figure in our Bible.

Sunday School Lesson Segments – 1

November 19, 2023

1. Bibliography

2. Points of Information: Esther

Sunday School Lesson Segments - 2

November 19, 2023

3. Lesson Context

4. Lesson Text

5. Remember This

Points of Information – Esther

The Hebrew name for Esther is Hadassah. Esther 2:7.

The Book of Esther is one of the two where God's name is not mentioned. The other is Song of Solomon.

It is also one of only two Bible Books named for a woman. The other is Ruth.

Points of Information – Esther

Esther became queen to the Persian ruler –Ahasuerus (a/k/a Xerxes) – following the disobedience and then ouster of the prior queen, Vashti.

Esther's elder cousin, Mordecai, served as a father for her, since her parents were deceased. Esther 2:7, 15a.

Points of Information – Esther

Following the advice of Mordecai, Esther hid her Jewish identity until it was necessary to reveal it to the King.

8

Jews celebrate Esther's courageous actions and the resultant salvation (from genocide) of their people by having an annual feast called Purim.

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Lesson Context - 1

9

In the first Chapter of the Book of Esther, we see the power and revelry of King Xerxes. Then, we see his anger and the downfall of Queen Vashti when she disobeyed him.

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Lesson Context - 2

In the second Chapter of the Book of Esther, we see how this young woman appealed to King Xerxes.

10

Also, we see how Mordecai's keen watch identified a plot against the king and saved the ruler's life.

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Lesson Context - 3

Now, in Chapter 3, we see how Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman led to this enemy of the Jews plotting their destruction.

11

Later in this Chapter, Haman was honored further by King Xerxes.

In Chapter 4, Mordecai dialogued with Queen Esther and strategized on how to counter the evil plans of Haman.

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Text – UMI Outline #1

12

Esther 3:2-3

Mordecai Refuses to Bow to Haman

Esther 3:2-3 [NIV]

All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.

Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"

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Text – UMI Outline #2

14

Esther 3:5-6

Haman Plots to Destroy All Jews

Esther 3:5-6

When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was enraged.

Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all of Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.

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Text – UMI Outline #3

16

Esther 4:7-8

Mordecai Informs Esther of Haman's Plot

Esther 3:7

Mordecai told him [Hathak, one of the king's eunuchs] everything that happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews.

Esther 3:8

He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to instruct her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

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Text – UMI Outline #4

19

Esther 4:9-11

**Esther Fears Approaching the King About
Haman's Plot**

Esther 3:9-10

Hathak went back and reported to Esther what Haman had said.

Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai,

Esther 3:11

“All the king’s officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the golden scepter to them and spares their lives. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king.”

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Text – UMI Outline #5

22

Esther 4:12-14

Mordecai Counsels Esther About Her Fears

Esther 3:12-13

When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai,

he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape.

Esther 3:14

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

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Text – UMI Outline #6

25

Esther 4:15-16

Esther Calls a Three-Day Jewish Fast

Esther 3:15-16

Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai:

“Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish.”

Remember this:

If you are faithful to the Lord, “no weapon formed against you shall prosper.” Isaiah 54:17a.
NKJV

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