

PARENTS' PAGE LESSON 20: The Queen of Beauty and Courage

Timeless Truth: By showing faith, God can change the hearts of rulers.

Bible Basis: Esther 2:10-12, 16-18, 3:1-12, 5:1-7, 7:1-6

Key Verse: "Show me your favor. . . . Please spare my people. That's my appeal to you" (Esther 7:3).

Resource: *The Story for Kids*: Chapter 20

Parent Tips:

Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity encourages your family to make some foods popular in Persia. The Extra Mile highlights a song called "Such a Time As This."

Get the Point:

Preschool: Esther gets her heart ready for a hard job. God helps me when it's hard.

Elementary: Esther gets her heart ready for a hard job. God helps me when it's hard.

Middle School: God elevated Esther "for such a time as this." In the same way, I need to be sensitive to God's plan for me.

High School: God elevated Esther "for such a time as this." In the same way, I need to be sensitive to God's plan for me.

Table Talk

Preschool/Elementary

- What do you think Esther made for the big dinner with King Xerxes and Haman?
- What's your favorite food?
- Queen Esther was King Xerxes favorite, but she took a risk by speaking to the king without being invited. Did she just barge in and demand to be heard? Why not?
- By being respectful and humble, the king granted Esther's wish. Tell of a time where respect and humility helped you.
- Have you heard the saying, "Attitude is everything"? How would you describe Esther's attitude?
- If you were in Esther's place, what would you have asked the king to do?

Middle/High School

- Esther kept it a secret from King Xerxes that she was Jewish. Do you think it was good for her to keep that secret?
- When is it okay to keep secrets? When is keeping secrets a bad idea?

- At first Mordecai encouraged Esther not tell anybody she was Jewish, then he told her to go before the king and beg for mercy for her people. Have you ever had a family member tell you to do something for God?
- Esther prepared for her meeting with the king by fasting and encouraging others to fast with her. What does it say about Esther that she went to God with her request first?
- Have you ever fasted?
- Talk about a time when you went to God in earnest prayer before making a decision. What happened?

Living Faith

Persian kings were famous for the lavish banquets. So when Esther invited King Xerxes to a “big dinner” (Esther 5:8), the pressure was on. Make a big Persian dinner in honor of Queen Esther, although you may not want to break out the solid-gold dinnerware. During the Achaemenid empire, Persian kings could get nearly any food they wanted. Fruit was very common, especially cantaloupe. A spinach salad may be an authentic touch for your meal. Fish was also popular.

Have fun as a family planning out the menu early in the week. Set aside one night where everybody can be together to prepare the big dinner. Try something new. Use an exotic spice. As everybody’s working together or when everyone sits down, you can go through some of the “Table Talk” questions. Queen Esther’s story is truly remarkable, and Esther is only one of two books in the Bible named for a woman.

For dessert, your family may want to bake *Hamantaschen* (ha-man-tosh-en), a traditional Jewish cookie made for Purim (see Esther 9:18-32), a celebration that honors Esther and Mordecai for saving the Jewish people from extermination. These triangular cookies look a little funny, and the name *Hamantaschen* means "Haman's ears." But they’re fun to make and taste delicious. Look in a cookbook or go online and search for *Hamantaschen*.

Extra Mile

One of the most well-known verses from this chapter of *The Story* comes when Mordecai tells Esther that God may have raised her to be queen “for such a time as this” (Esther 4:14).

Go online and search for Wayne Watson’s song “For Such a Time As This” and click on <http://video.yahoo.com/watch/966307/3739462>.

Have a piece of paper and pencil ready as you listen to the song and watch the lyrics scroll across the screen. Ask family members write down phrases that have special meaning to them. When the song is over, give family members the chance to explain why they chose their specific line from the song. Also ask:

- How does this song relate to Queen Esther’s story?

- How is this song meaningful in your life and in your relationship with God?
- How can you “live a mirror of His mercy”?
- What will you do to “change what will be”?