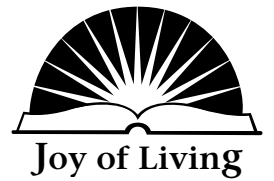


ESTHEL



Esther

Youth Bible Study

by Pat Kampenga

Sample
Lesson

Joy of Living Esther Youth Bible Study

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ESTHER — WEEK TWO

DISCUSSION LESSON 1

15 – 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: BALLOON RACE

Divide into teams. Blow up as many balloons as you have teams. Teams stand behind the goal line. At the signal, the first person on each team puts the balloon between his knees and races towards the opposite goal line. Once crossed over, he removes the balloon and races back to the next player in line who puts the balloon between his knees and repeats the process. Game is won when the first team has all its players sitting down, and the first player holds the balloon in his hands. If a balloon is dropped on the way to the goal line, player picks it up and resumes going for the goal.

15 – 20 minutes discuss LESSON 1

to end of class CRAFT: NOTE PAD & MINI CANDLE HOLDER

NOTE PAD:

3" x 8 1/2" construction paper	scissors
white paper	stapler
markers/crayons/colored pencils	ruler

On the construction paper, measure 1/2" from one 3" edge, and fold. Fold the paper in half so that it measures 3" x 4". Cut the white paper into 3" x 4" strips. Place these strips under the 1/2" fold and staple together. Construction paper cover can now be decorated with markers, crayons or colored pencils. Use the note pad to write memory verse so that it is always handy.

CANDLE HOLDER:

large empty thread spool	yarn
glue gun/liquid glue	small candle to fit inside spool hole
small object to sit alongside candle (figure, shell, etc.)	

Glue one end of yarn onto the empty spool. Wrap yarn around spool until the entire spool is covered. Cut and glue yarn end to wound yarn. Attach small figure or other decorative object to top. Insert small candle into hole. More than one candle holder can be made if you have time.

ESTHER LESSON 1

Before you begin your lesson:

- a. Pray for God's Holy Spirit to help you answer the questions.
- b. Some questions may be too hard; it's ok to write, "I don't know."
- c. Think about what God's Word is telling you for today.
- d. With some questions, it might be helpful to write all the scripture verses on your paper.

Read Esther chapter 1, verses 1 – 8.

The story of Daniel began when the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, took the Jews into captivity. The story of Esther began more than 100 years after that time, about 486-465 B.C. Babylon is no longer a ruling power. The Persians are now the major ruling power. Some of the Jewish descendants whose parents had been taken captive under Nebuchadnezzar have returned to Jerusalem. Some have chosen to stay in Babylon.

Susa no longer exists today, but it was also called Shushan and was located along the modern day Karun River in an area known as Khuzistan. The Persian Empire covered today's countries of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, parts of Egypt, and parts of Russia. Some maps have also included areas of India and Ethiopia. In other words, the Persian Empire covered a very large area.

There is a saying, "Coincidence: When God performs a miracle, but remains anonymous." Sometimes when we read the Bible stories about God's miracles and His angels speaking to people, we might wonder why He doesn't do exactly the same thing today for each of us. The book of Esther is a good example of God's working in lives without being seen. And although the book of Esther is the only Bible book that does not mention God's name, we know by the events in this book that He is in control of everything. This is a book to help us remember He is always with us, even when we can't see Him. We need to trust Him, and rely upon Him, even when what is happening to us may disappoint or hurt us. He is there, always!

1. After Xerxes or Ahasuerus (same person) was king for three years, he gave a party. Who came to his party?

2. The party lasted 180 days. How many months do you think that might be?

3. After this party, the king gave another dinner. How long did this last?

4. Who came to the dinner held in the King's palace garden?

5. **RISKY:** Verse 6 describes the king's garden. Besides belonging to the king, what do you notice that makes it special?

6. Describe the goblets.

Read Esther chapter 1, verses 9 – 22.

1. Why did King Xerxes send for Queen Vashti?

2. Did the Queen obey the king's demand?

3. The king was used to everyone obeying him. Who did he ask for help?

4. **HARD:** Memucan said the queen had done wrong. What was his reason for saying what she did was wrong?
5. King Xerxes did not honor Queen Vashti when he commanded her to come to him and show off her beauty. He had shown off all his other wealth and power for 180 days and the seven-day banquet. Now he wanted to show off what he thought was another piece of property. But Queen Vashti refused. She had honor when her husband did not.

The Bible is full of verses to help us live a life that pleases God. He wants us to show honor and respect to everyone. After the first letter, cross out two letters, and then leave the next one. Continue the pattern. Write down the letters that are left to find out what Jesus says is the right way to treat people. You'll have to figure out where to add spaces between the words.

T A C R D E E F G A H I T J K O L M T N O H P Q E R S R T
U S U V A W X S Y Z Y Z Y O X W U V U W T S A R Q N P O
T N M T L K H J I E H G M G F T E D O C B T A A R B C E D
E A F G T H I Y J K O L M U A B L C D U E F K G H E 6:31

ESTHER LESSON 1 — ANSWERS

Read Esther chapter 1, verses 1 – 8.

The story of Daniel began when the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, took the Jews into captivity. The story of Esther began more than 100 years after that time, about 486-465 B.C. Babylon is no longer a ruling power. The Persians are now the major ruling power. Some of the Jewish descendants whose parents had been taken captive under Nebuchadnezzar have returned to Jerusalem. Some have chosen to stay in Babylon.

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1. After Xerxes or Ahasuerus (same person) was king for three years, he gave a party. Who came to his party? Verse 3: "The king asked all his governors, advisors, and army officers to come. They came from every part of Media-Persia." [Ahasuerus is the Hebrew name for the Greek Xerxes for the Persian King Khshayarsha. A Greek historian by the name of Herodotus is the chief source of information regarding Persian history.]
2. The party lasted 180 days. How many months do you think that might be? Six months: 180 days divided by 30 days equals 6 months. [This was not just a party to have fun, but a planning strategy session to invade Greece. War was used as a means of survival and acquiring wealth.]
3. After this party, the king gave another dinner. How long did this last? Verse 5a: "When these days were over, the king gave a banquet, lasting seven days" (NIV).

4. Who came to the dinner held in the King's palace garden? Verse 5b: "Everyone came, janitors and cabinet officials alike. They came for seven days of feasting. This feast was held in the courtyard of the palace garden."
5. **RISKY:** Verse 6 describes the king's garden. Besides belonging to the king, what do you notice that makes it special? "The garden was hung with white and blue curtains. The curtains were tied to silver rings with ribbons of white and purple. The silver rings were set into marble pillars. There were gold and silver benches. These stood on floors of black, red, white, and yellow marble." [No plants were mentioned, but the wealth of Persia is described in detail.]
6. Describe the goblets. Verse 7: "Drinks were served in gold goblets of many designs. And there was plenty of royal wine to drink. The king was feeling very generous."

Read Esther chapter 1, verses 9 – 22.

1. Why did King Xerxes send for Queen Vashti? Verse 11: "He told them to bring Queen Vashti to him. She was to wear the royal crown on her head. He wanted all the men to see how pretty she was. For she was a very pretty woman." [Some scholars believe Vashti was ordered to come wearing only a crown. Others believe the crown, or turban indicates to unveil only her face so others could admire her beauty. He was drunk and his order was disrespectful to his queen.]
2. Did the Queen obey the king's demand? Verse 12: "So they went and gave the king's order to Queen Vashti. But she would not come. The king was very angry." [Vashti's action left the king with egg on his face. He was ruler. He was displaying his power and wealth to important officials. If he couldn't control Vashti, maybe he didn't have the power to rule the kingdom. He needed to do something to correct the situation.]
3. The king was used to everyone obeying him. Who did he ask for help? Verse 13: "He spoke to his lawyers, for he did nothing without their advice. They were men of wisdom. They also knew about Persian law and justice. And the king trusted what they had to say." [The king had seven wise men advise him. Seven is symbolic for completeness and perfection.]
4. **HARD:** Memucan said the queen had done wrong. What was his reason for saying what she did was wrong? Verse 17: "For women all around will begin to disobey their husbands. They will do this when they learn what Queen Vashti has done to you."
5. King Xerxes did not honor Queen Vashti when he commanded her to come to him and show off her beauty. He had shown off all his other wealth and power for 180 days and the seven-day banquet. Now he wanted to show off what he thought was another piece of property. But Queen Vashti refused. She had honor when her husband did not.

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E A F G T H I Y J K O L M U A B L C D U E F K G H E 6:31

TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WANT THEM TO TREAT YOU. LUKE 6:31