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# Esther

## Youth Bible Study

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by Pat Kampenga

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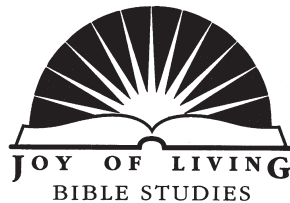
*Joy of Living Esther Youth Bible Study*

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# **Esther**

## **Youth Bible Study**

**by Pat Kampenga**



## Before you begin

An ideal curriculum for home-school, Bible class, Sunday School or personal Bible Study, **Joy of Living Youth Curriculum** is flexible and easy to use. Each lesson covers the same scripture passage as the adult **Joy of Living** Study.

### Age:

This course encourages students of various ages to develop a habit of personal Bible study. Since the study requires reading the Bible and writing answers to the questions, the minimum age should be about 6 years old. Although the questions are geared to about age 10, older students will profit by gaining a basic knowledge of the Bible. Students over the age of 14 may be mature enough to study the adult **Joy of Living** course.

### The lessons:

The study is divided into weekly units. Each week is divided into three sections:

- a suggested class schedule including craft and game ideas
- leader's lesson sheets (these contain the answers for the lesson completed by the students during the previous week)
- student questions for the next lesson (these are passed out at the end of the class)

Students complete the written lessons at home and are encouraged to do a few questions each day rather than trying to complete all the questions in one day. This will aid the students in developing a pattern of daily Bible Study. The "HARD" and "RISKY" questions are to inspire the student to think and reason and help them dig deeper into God's Word.

### For homeschool or personal Bible study:

The curriculum may be used in a variety of ways:

- Lessons may be completed by the individual student and graded for accuracy. Discussion time is optional, although it is encouraged.
- Students within the same family or group may work on the lessons together. A discussion time with a parent or other adult is suggested.
- Adults may work one-on-one with the student(s) while they complete the lesson.
- Lessons may be used as part of family devotions. Read the portions of scripture aloud and use the questions to prompt discussion of the Bible passage.

### For use with groups:

There is great flexibility in implementing this curriculum. Since each class has its own needs, space, finances, and time frame the class schedule is supplied as a general outline and can be changed to suit specific situations and needs.

Each class session has free time, recreation/snack time, question discussion time, and craft time.

*Remember* - Keep the pace moving to avoid boredom and trouble, while providing continuity.

Suggested time SCHEDULE to be adapted to individual group:

- 15 - 20 minutes. - unstructured free time
- 15 - 20 minutes. - game/snack time
- 15 - 20 minutes. - discussion time
- remaining time for craft

## **Helpful Hints for Groups**

### **Facility/Equipment**

- Whatever the class size, access to a gym or large game room is worthwhile for team play and group activities.
- If the church has the room, a separate cupboard for supplies is a plus.
- A volleyball or similar ball is good to have on hand for a variety of games.

### **Discussion Time**

- Use the counting off system to divide the class into groups for discussion time. (Avoid, if possible, separating into groups according to age or family.)
- Each discussion group should have an adult leader. Older children should not be used (unless absolutely necessary) as leaders or sitters; they are there for fellowship and learning, too.
- With many of the questions there is no right or wrong answer. The questions are to encourage the student to think and reason and to dig deeper into God's Word. However, since discussion time is also a form of teaching, the leaders are given answers on their question sheets to aid them in the discussion, with occasional commentary insights added in brackets.
- As you discuss the lesson be careful not to belittle a student's opinion or idea. Even if the answer is wrong you can encourage the student by saying something similar to, "I like to see that you're thinking, do you think perhaps... (then give the correct answer)" or "I can see that you are thinking about the question, does anyone else have thoughts on this question?"

### **Teachers/Leaders/Helpers**

- The number of leaders and helpers is determined by the size of the class. The ideal situation is one discussion leader per every 5 children.
- In addition to the main leader, it is helpful to have a game leader, and craft leader.
- Responsibilities are determined within each class structure.

- Parent volunteers may be requested when extra help is needed. If there is a large number of children, the parents have to volunteer only once or twice the entire year.
- Scheduling parents to bring treats is a financial bonus. Keeping cost to a minimum is being a good steward of God's resources.

### **Game Time**

Although board games, puzzles, hidden pictures, crosswords, coloring, and quiet activities do not keep the attention of active children, they should not be ruled out as alternative game time activities. Ball games, races, or tag games are suggested and favored to holding everyone's interest.

### **Suggestions for obtaining craft ideas & supplies:**

Garage/yard/rummage sales

library craft books

children's magazines

YMCA, Park & Recreation Dept., churches (almost every city has a summer program for children, which includes a craft time; they may have leftover craft supplies they would like to donate)

### **Supplies to have on hand for crafts not in kits:**

glue, glue sticks, glue gun

scissors (at least 1 pair for every 2 students)

paint (tempera-washable)

paint brushes

paper towels

newspapers

construction paper

crayons

colored markers

colored pencils

paper cups, napkins (snack time)

various items to pass in relay races

balls, basketball, nerf, etc.

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*The Holy Bible, New International Version*, Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, TN. 1986

## Esther — Game & Craft List

	<b>Game</b>	<b>Craft</b>	<b>Page</b>
Week 1	Stepping Stones	Daisy Flower	8
Week 2	Balloon Race	Note Pad & Mini Candle Holder	12
Week 3	Egg Roll Relay	Loom-Woven Coasters	20
Week 4	Chain Tag	Christmas Tree Centerpiece	29
Week 5	Pencil Relay	Treasure Chest	36
Week 6	Base Tag	Heavy Hippo Doorstop	43



## ESTHER – WEEK ONE

### NO LESSON DISCUSSION

15 – 20 minutes free time – games, fellowship

15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: STEPPING STONES

You will need four sheets of paper (construction, newspaper, etc.) of any size, any color. Divide class into two teams. Give the first person of each team two sheets of paper. Draw the start line and the finish line on the playing area with masking tape. At the signal the first person of each team must throw one sheet of paper onto the floor and jump onto it. He then throws the second sheet forward, steps on it, turns around and picks up the first sheet of paper. Rotating papers in this manner until he reaches the finish line. Then he runs back to his team, tags the second in line, and game continues until all have raced.

15 – 20 minutes discuss class rules

to end of class CRAFT: DAISY FLOWER\*

#### MATERIALS:

small paper cups  
small shell macaroni  
glue  
scissors

large elbow macaroni  
spaghetti or green pipe cleaners  
spray paint (optional)  
pencils

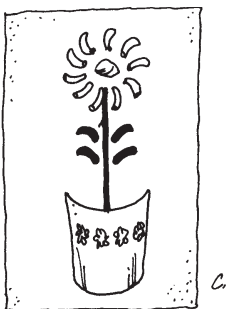
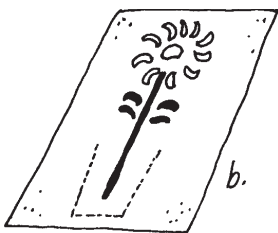
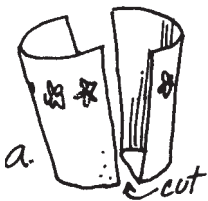
felt-tip pens

6" x 9" colored construction paper or poster board

styrofoam meat trays (to hold glue for dipping)

If colored flowers are desired, spray paint macaroni & spaghetti before class.

Cut one paper cup at a time in half from top to bottom (sketch a). Draw outline of cup on each piece of construction paper (sketch b). Glue pipe cleaner or spaghetti piece onto paper with end extending into "vase." Use shell and elbow macaroni pieces to make flower and leaves on stem. Use felt pens to decorate cup. Glue cup onto construction paper for vase (sketch c).



\*from *A Treasure Chest of Crafts*, Gospel Light Publications, 1985, page 21. Used by permission.

## 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

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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 — 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.

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

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



## ESTHER LESSON 2

### 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 2, verses 1 – 10.

History says that after the 6 months' military planning session, and the banquet, King Xerxes waged war against Greece. He didn't win the war, and returned to Susa in defeat.

1. Finally, the king remembered what happened to Vashti. What did his attendants tell him to do?
  
2. Mordecai was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin. How did the Jews get into Babylon according to 2 Kings 24:14,15?
  
3. How is Hadassah, also known as Esther, related to Mordecai?
  
4. **CHALLENGE:** Why did Hegai give Esther special treatment?
  
5. **HARD:** What was Esther's secret and why did she keep it?
  
6. **PERSONAL:** Do you think Esther was scared? She was taken from her family, living in a strange place without anything familiar around her. No family, friends, pets, clothing, or even her bed. She might have had a hard time knowing what was expected of her and what to do. Have you ever been some place when nothing was familiar? Did you know what to do and how to act? Maybe Esther knew Psalm 32:8. Why not write it here and put your name in it? Then hide it in your heart by memorizing it for the time you will need it.

**Read Esther chapter 2, verses 11 – 18.**

1. Who walked in the courtyard every day?
2. How long did Esther's beauty treatments last?
3. Before Esther was called to see the king, she could use any or all kinds of jewelry, clothing, or any other item to make her look better. But she took only what Hegai the eunuch told her to use. She could have taken ornaments to make herself more beautiful, but she didn't. She didn't want anything more than she needed. What do these verses say about being happy with the things you have?

Philippians 4:11,12

1 Timothy 6:6,8

Hebrews 13:5

4. **CHALLENGE:** About how many years have gone by since Xerxes' first banquet and Esther's visit to the king? You'll find the clues in Esther 1:3 and 2:16.

5. What did the king think about Esther?

**Read Esther chapter 2, verses 19 – 23.**

1. What was the plan of two of the king's officer's, and who heard it?
2. Mordecai heard these plans, he told Esther, and she told the king. What does Solomon say in the following verses about the plans of man?

Proverbs 16:1

Proverbs 16:9

Proverbs 16:33

**Read Esther chapter 3, verses 1 – 6.**

1. **RISKY:** After the two officials were hanged, King Xerxes promoted someone. But a lower rank official would not honor this higher-rank official. Who are these men?

Higher Rank Official

Lower Rank Official

2. When the higher-rank official learned about this lower official's lack of honor, he became angry. What was the high-rank official's plan?

3. What does Proverbs 16:25 say about man's ways?

**Read Esther chapter 3, verses 7 – 15.**

1. About how long has Esther been queen? See Esther 2:16 and 3:7 to help you figure this out.
  
2. Haman decided to throw dice (or cast lots) to see what would be the best time to destroy the Jews. Which month were the dice thrown and which month won? How long did Haman have to wait to carry out his plan?
  
3. What did Haman convince or persuade King Xerxes to do?
  
4. What order did the king send out?
  
5. After the edict went out into Susa, what did these people do?  
King & Haman  
  
People of Susa
  
6. Which verse did you memorize?

## ESTHER — WEEK THREE

### DISCUSSION LESSON 2

- 15 – 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship
- 15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: EGG ROLL RELAY

You'll need one hard cooked egg per team. Divide into teams. Set up a similar obstacle course for each team. Use items from around the room: chair legs, tables, etc. Place an egg in front of the first player of each team. At the signal, the first player assumes a crawling position. Player rolls the egg around the obstacles using only the tips of the fingers on one hand. When player reaches goal line, he picks up the egg and races back to this team, gives the egg to the next player in line, runs to the end of the line and sits down. Play continues until a team is in their original positions, sitting down.

- 15 – 20 minutes discuss LESSON 2
- to end of class CRAFT: LOOM-WOVEN COASTERS

#### MATERIALS:

8" cardboard square  
various colored skeins of yarn  
large-eyed plastic needle (sold at craft stores)  
scissors

8" x 1 1/2" cardboard strip  
tape

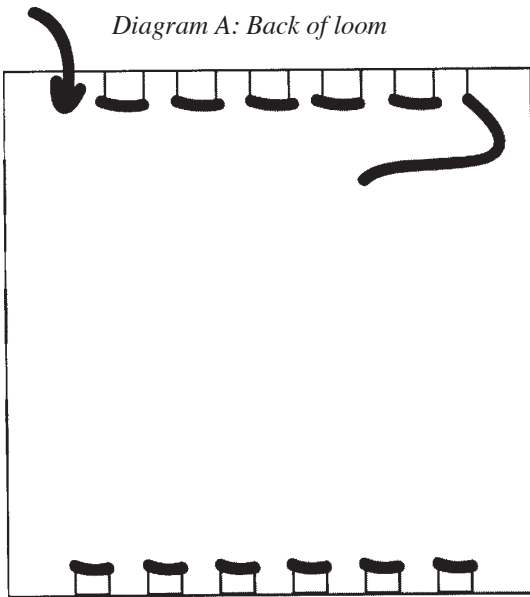
**First, make the loom:** Starting an inch from the upper left corner of the 8" square, make twelve 1/2" snips across the top of the square, spaced 1/2" apart. You should end up with a 1" margin on the right side. Cut matching snips on the bottom of the loom.

**Now thread the loom:** *See diagrams on next page.* Tie a knot 3" from the end of a 9-foot length of yarn, and slip through the first notch at the top of the loom, with the "tail" hanging from the back of the loom. Bring the yarn down the face of the loom into the matching first notch at the bottom, then around the back side through the second lower notch. Bring yarn back up the face of the loom to the second upper notch, then around the back side to the third upper notch. Continue wrapping (not too tightly) until all notches are threaded. You will have 12 vertical warp strings. When last notch has been threaded, knot the yarn leaving a 3" tail. Tape loose ends to back of loom.

**To weave:** Slip the 8" x 1 1/2" cardboard strip under the tops of the warp strings. (This spacer will reserve enough yarn to tie off the finished weave.) Thread the needle with the yarn. Or, wrap a piece of tape around the end of a length of yarn and make that your needle. Starting from the middle of loom, weave it over and under alternate warp strings. When you get to one side, start a second full row from that point, this time going under the warp strings you went over the last time and vice versa. Slide the second row snugly up against the first one. Continue adding full rows until you have woven a coaster-size square, or about 1" from the bottom of the loom. Then weave the end of the strand back into the preceding row. To change colors, simply work the end of the strand you're using back into the weave, then start the next row in the center as you did at the beginning.

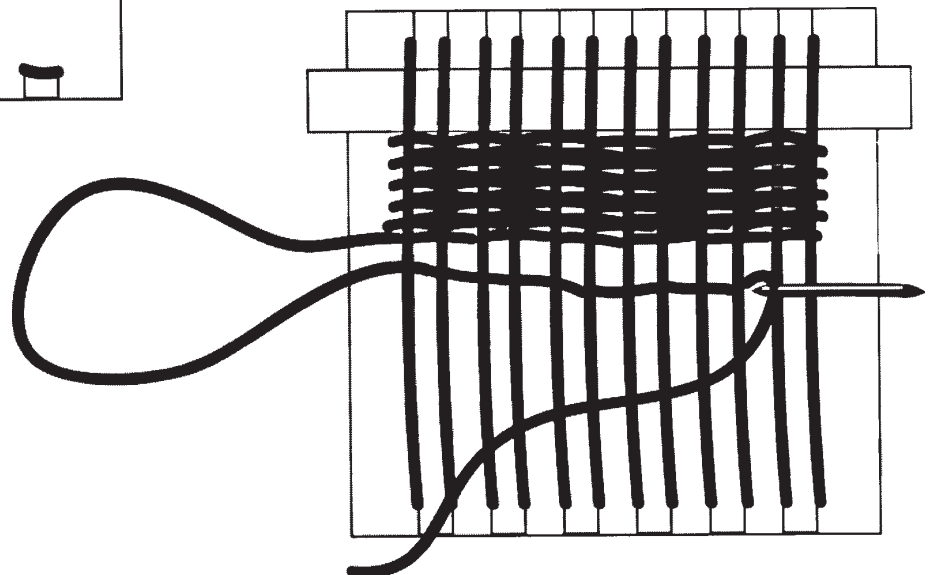
**To finish:** Flip the loom over and snip the sections of yarn running across the notches. Pair the loose ends and tie them together against the outer rows to create tassels.

*Diagram A: Back of loom*



You may wish to continue working on this coaster or additional coasters next week.

*Diagram B: Front of loom*



## ESTHER LESSON 2 – ANSWERS

### Read Esther chapter 2, verses 1 – 10.

History says that after the 6 months' military planning session, and the banquet, King Xerxes waged war against Greece. He didn't win the war, and returned to Susa in defeat.

1. Finally, the king remembered what happened to Vashti. What did his attendants tell him to do? Verse 2: "So his advisors said, 'Let us go and find all the pretty girls in the empire. Let us bring them to the king for his pleasure.'"
2. Mordecai was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin. How did the Jews get into Babylon according to 2 Kings 24:14,15? "King Nebuchadnezzar took 10,000 captives from Jerusalem. This included the best of the soldiers, craftsmen, and smiths. So only the poorest and least skilled people were left in the land. Nebuchadnezzar took King Jehoiachin to Babylon. He also took his wives and officials, and the queen mother."
3. How is Hadassah, also known as Esther, related to Mordecai? Verse 7: "This man had a pretty young cousin named Hadassah. She was also called Esther. Her father had adopted her into his family and raised her as his own daughter."
4. **CHALLENGE:** Why did Hegai give Esther special treatment? Verse 9: "Hegai was in charge of the harem. He liked Esther very much and did his best to make her happy. He ordered special food for her. And he gave her special beauty treatments He also gave her seven girls from the palace as her maids. And he gave her the best room in the harem." [The scholars agree Esther had an inner beauty that was worthy of the special attention from Hegai.]
5. **HARD:** What was Esther's secret and why did she keep it? Verse 10: "Esther hadn't told anyone that she was a Jewess. This was because Mordecai had said not to." [As we will later learn, there was animosity and prejudice against the Jews. It was better for Esther to remain silent for a time. This secret could be a problem in your class. Scholars agree she did not keep Jewish laws and yet God used her to spare His people. God included it in His story for a reason, therefore, we cannot judge what God has chosen to use for His glory.]
6. **PERSONAL:** Do you think Esther was scared? She was taken from her family, living in a strange place without anything familiar around her. No family, friends, pets, clothing, or even her bed. She might have had a hard time knowing what was expected of her and what to do. Have you ever been some place where nothing was familiar? Did you know what to do and how to act? Maybe Esther knew Psalm 32:8. Why not write it here and put your name in it? Then hide it in your heart by memorizing it for the time you will need it. Psalm 32:8: "I will teach you," says the Lord. 'I will guide you along the best path for your life. I will advise you and watch your progress.'"

## Read Esther chapter 2, verses 11 – 18.

1. Who walked in the courtyard every day? Mordecai.
2. How long did Esther's beauty treatments last? Verse 12: "Before being taken to the king's bed, the girls were given beauty treatments for one year. For the first six months they were treated with oil of myrrh. For the last six months they were treated with special perfumes and ointments."
3. Before Esther was called to see the king, she could use any or all kinds of jewelry, clothing, or any other item to make her look better. But she took only what Hegai the eunuch told her to use. She could have taken ornaments to make herself more beautiful, but she didn't. She didn't want anything more than she needed. What do these verses say about being happy with the things you have?

Philippians 4:11,12 "Not that I was ever in need. I have learned how to get along happily if I have much or little. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned a secret. I can be content and happy in every situation. It doesn't matter if I have a full stomach or am hungry. I am content if I have plenty or am in need."

1 Timothy 6:6,8 "Do you want to be truly rich? You already are if you are happy and good. So we should be satisfied without money if we have enough food and clothing."

Hebrews 13:5 "Don't love money. Be happy with what you have. For God has said, 'I will never fail you nor forsake you.'"

4. **CHALLENGE:** About how many years have gone by since Xerxes' first banquet and Esther's visit to the king? You'll find the clues in Esther 1:3 and 2:16. Approximately four years have passed. Verse 1:3a: "And in the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials" (NIV). Verse 2:16: "So Esther was taken to the palace of the king. This was in January of the seventh year of his reign."
5. What did the king think about Esther? Verses 17,18: "Well, the king loved Esther more than any of the other girls. He liked her so much that he set the royal crown on her head. He made her queen instead of Vashti. To celebrate this, he threw another big party. He asked all his officials and servants to come. And he gave rich gifts to everyone."

## Read Esther chapter 2, verses 19 – 23.

1. What was the plan of two of the king's officer's, and who heard it? Verse 21: "One day Mordecai was on duty at the palace. At that time, two of the king's eunuchs were angry at the king. So they made a plan to kill him. Their names were Bigthan and Teresh. They were guards at the palace gate."



2. Mordecai heard these plans, he told Esther, and she told the king. What does Solomon say in the following verses about the plans of man?

Proverbs 16:1 “We can make our plans, but the final outcome is in God’s hands.”

Proverbs 16:9 “We should make plans, but count on God to lead us.”

Proverbs 16:33 “We toss the coin, but it is the Lord who controls its decision.”

### **Read Esther chapter 3, verses 1 – 6.**

1. **RISKY:** After the two officials were hanged, King Xerxes promoted someone. But a lower rank official would not honor this higher-rank official. Who are these men?

Higher Rank Official - HAMAN

Lower Rank Official - MORDECAI

2. When the high-rank official learned about this lower official’s lack of honor, he became angry. What was the high-rank official’s plan? Verses 5,6: “Haman was very angry but decided not to punish just Mordecai. He made a plan to destroy all of Mordecai’s people, the Jews. He wanted to destroy all the Jews in the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.” [Haman was a descendant of the Amalekites, bitter enemies of the Jews. An ancient feud carried on from the time of Moses and the wilderness wanderings.]
3. What does Proverbs 16:25 say about man’s ways? “Before every person there lies a wide and pleasant road he thinks is right. But this road ends in death.”

### **Read Esther chapter 3, verses 7 – 15.**

1. About how long has Esther been queen? See Esther 2:16 and 3:7 to help you figure this out. About five years. In Esther 2:16, Esther is well received by the king in his seventh year of reign. And in Esther 3:7, it’s the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the king’s reign. About 5 years have passed.
2. Haman decided to throw dice (or cast lots) to see what would be the best time to destroy the Jews. Which month were the dice thrown and which month won? How long did Haman have to wait to carry out his plan? Verse 7: “The best time for destroying the Jews was found by throwing dice. This was done in April of the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Ahasuerus. February of the next year was the date chosen for this action.” [Pur is the Babylonian name for the lot. Casting lots was a common practice for making decisions. This action was to decide when the annihilation of the Jews would take place, like putting an appointment on a calendar.]

3. What did Haman convince or persuade King Xerxes to do? Verse 9: “If it please the king, make a law that they be destroyed. I will pay \$20 million into the royal treasury. It will pay for the expense of destroying these people.” [Some translations say 10 thousand talents of silver and that weighs about 375 tons. There are two thousand pounds in a ton, so that would be 750,000 pounds.]
  
4. What order did the king send out? Verse 13: “They were then sent by messengers to all the provinces of the empire. They said the Jews must all be killed. This included young and old, women and children. This was to happen on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February of the following year. And the property of the Jews was to be given to those who killed them.”
  
5. After the edict went out into Susa, what did these people do? [Verse 15.]

King & Haman - sat and drank.

People of Susa - walked around confused and panicked.

6. Which verse did you memorize?

## ESTHER LESSON 3

### 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 4, verses 1 – 8.

1. What did Mordecai do when he heard about the new law and Haman's promotion?
2. What did the Jews in the surrounding areas around Susa do?
3. **RISKY:** Why did Esther send Mordecai clothes?
4. Who did Esther send to find out why Mordecai was upset?
5. What was the message Mordecai sent to Esther?
6. Mordecai told Esther the truth. He did not gossip. What do these verses say about gossip?

Leviticus 19:16

Psalm 34:12,13

Proverbs 16:28

**Read Esther chapter 4, verses 9 – 17.**

1. Why was Esther afraid to do as Mordecai asked?
2. Have you ever been afraid? What does 2 Timothy 1:7 say about fear?
3. When Mordecai received Esther's fearful answer, he sent back a challenge. Put that challenge into your own words from verses 13,14.
4. **PERSONAL:** Esther decided to fast, or to go without food and drink for three days. When someone fasts, they spend time in prayer. You may decide you want to go without food and pray. Maybe you could discuss this fast with your mom and stay in your room for one meal reading your Bible and praying. Or, instead of giving up food, why not give up an hour of television, or an hour on the computer? It might be hard, because this is a big challenge.

**Read Esther chapter 5, verses 1 – 9.**

1. After fasting did Esther rush in to see the king?
2. When we have prayed about something, and asked God to help us, we must wait for His answer. Many times we are very peaceful inside. Esther might have been shaking in her boots when she set out to see the king. Yet she looked calm and peaceful. She had prayed and fasted and went to see the king. What does Jesus say in John 14:27 about God's peace?
3. Esther had courage to face the king. Philippians 4:13 says you can have that same kind of courage: "I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ. He gives me strength and power." Was the king happy to see Esther? Give verse(s) with your answer.

4. Esther wanted to give the king and Haman a banquet. In fact, two banquets were to be given. What angered Haman after the first banquet?

**Read Esther chapter 5, verses 10 – 14.**

1. Even though Haman was unhappy about Mordecai, what did he do when he reached home?
2. What do you learn about people with too much pride from Proverbs 16:18?
3. Haman was very angry with Mordecai. In fact, he was very bitter at Mordecai. The person who has bitterness in his heart is a very unhappy person. What is the warning about bitterness in Hebrews 12:15?
4. Did Haman's wife Zeresh suggest Haman do something nice for Mordecai? Or did she suggest he do something mean? Give the verse with your answer.
5. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you memorize this week? Do you know Philippians 4:13, or Proverbs 16:18?

## ESTHER – WEEK FOUR

### DISCUSSION LESSON 3

15 – 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: CHAIN TAG

Two players are chosen to be IT. They join hands and with their free hands try to tag the other players. The first player tagged joins hands between the two IT. The remaining players, when tagged, join the tag line between the original two IT. Only end players (IT) may tag. It is permissible for a player to break through or go under the joined hands of the line. When the chain has been broken, it must unite again before tagging resumes. The game ends when the last player is caught or when a time limit has been reached. The last two players tagged become IT. Set boundary lines to restrict play to a small area.

15 – 20 minutes discuss LESSON 3

to end of class CRAFT: CHRISTMAS TREE CENTERPIECE\*

#### MATERIALS:

3 graduated sizes Styrofoam or paper cups  
green paint/brushes glue  
buttons, ric rac, stars, sequins construction paper  
red & white chenille wires scissors

Paint the outside of each cup green. If the paint refuses to adhere to the Styrofoam cup, cut green construction paper the size of the cup and wrap around the outside. Leave the lips of the cups white. When dry, stack one on top of the other: the open end of the largest cup is the base with the next cup's open end stacked on top of the first one, etc. This will form a triangle tree. Twist 4" lengths of red & white chenille wires together and bend tops over to make "candy canes." Glue buttons, sequins, candy canes, stars, paper ornaments on tree for decoration.

Finish last week's weaving, or make several more to give as gifts.

*\*Note: If you are not doing this lesson near Christmas, switch this craft with the one from the lesson that you will do near Christmas.*

## ESTHER LESSON 3 – ANSWERS

### Read Esther chapter 4, verses 1 – 8.

1. What did Mordecai do when he heard about the new law and Haman's promotion? Verse 1: "Mordecai soon learned what had been done. So he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went out into the city, crying with a loud and bitter wail." [Wearing sackcloth, sitting in ashes, and weeping were all outward signs expressing grief. Prayers of confession and worship were the inward part of this custom of expressing grief that were not seen by others.]
2. What did the Jews in the surrounding areas around Susa do? Verse 3: "And throughout all the provinces there was great mourning among the Jews. There was much fasting, crying, and despair at the king's law. Many wore sackcloth and put ashes on their heads." [The Jews had lived in this land over 100 years. They had a life and were prospering. Now, all they had would be taken from them, including their very lives.]
3. **RISKY:** Why did Esther send Mordecai clothes? [No right or wrong answer for this question. Purely for discussion. It is possible Esther had not yet heard of the edict. She really didn't know what had upset Mordecai. Maybe he had lost all his possessions and needed help from her. Verse 5 indicates she was unaware of what was going on in the kingdom.]
4. Who did Esther send to find out why Mordecai was upset? Verse 5: "Then Esther sent for Hathach. He was one of the king's eunuchs. He had been chosen as her special servant. She told him to go out to Mordecai. He was to find out what the trouble was and why he was acting like that."
5. What was the message Mordecai sent to Esther? Verses 7,8: "He heard the whole story from him. He also heard about the \$20 million Haman had promised the king to destroy the Jews. Mordecai also gave Hathach a copy of the king's law. It was the law that said all the Jews must die. Mordecai told him to show it to Esther and to tell her what was happening. He told him to tell Esther that she should go to the king to plead for her people." [Mordecai gave proof of what was happening in the land to show he wasn't reacting to gossip.]
6. Mordecai told Esther the truth. He did not gossip. What do these verses say about gossip?

Leviticus 19:16 "Do not gossip. Do not falsely accuse your neighbor of some crime. For I am the Lord."

Psalm 34:12,13 "Do you want a long, good life? Then don't let your tongue say anything evil. Don't let your lips tell a lie."

Proverbs 16:28 "An evil person plants trouble. Gossip pulls the best of friends apart."

### Read Esther chapter 4, verses 9 – 17.

1. Why was Esther afraid to do as Mordecai asked? Verse 11: “All the world knows the law of this land,” she said. “Anyone who goes into the king’s inner court without being called must die. That person shall live only if the king holds out his golden scepter. This is true with man or woman. And the king has not called for me to come to him in more than a month.”
2. Have you ever been afraid? What does 2 Timothy 1:7 say about fear? “The Holy Spirit doesn’t want you to be afraid of people. He wants you to be wise and strong, and to love them.”
3. When Mordecai received Esther’s fearful answer, he sent back a challenge. Put that challenge into your own words from verses 13,14. “Mordecai then sent a reply to Esther. ‘Do you think you will be free from this law there in the palace?’ he asked. ‘Do you think you will get away when all other Jews are killed? You might keep quiet at a time like this. If you do, God will save the Jews some other way. But you and your family will die. And who knows? God may have made you queen so you could help at this time!’”
4. **PERSONAL:** Esther decided to fast, or to go without food and drink for three days. When someone fasts, they spend time in prayer. You may decide you want to go without food and pray. Maybe you could discuss this fast with your mom and stay in your room for one meal reading your Bible and praying. Or, instead of giving up food, why not give up an hour of television, or an hour on the computer? It might be hard, because this is a big challenge.

### Read Esther chapter 5, verses 1 – 9.

1. After fasting did Esther rush in to see the king? No. Verse 1: “Three days later Esther put on her royal robes. She went into the inner court. This was just beyond the royal hall of the palace. There the king was sitting on his royal throne.”
2. When we have prayed about something, and asked God to help us, we must wait for His answer. Many times we are very peaceful inside. Esther might have been shaking in her boots when she set out to see the king. Yet she looked calm and peaceful. She had prayed and fasted and went to see the king. What does Jesus say in John 14:27 about God’s peace? “I am leaving you my peace! And the peace I give isn’t like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid.”
3. Esther had courage to face the king. Philippians 4:13 says you can have that same kind of courage. “I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ. He gives me strength and power.” Was the king happy to see Esther? Give verse(s) with your answer. Yes. Verses 2,3: “And when he saw Queen Esther standing there in the inner court, he called to her. He held out the golden scepter to her. So Esther went near and touched its tip. Then the king asked her, ‘What do you wish, Queen Esther? What have you come to ask me? I will give it to you, even if it is half the kingdom!’”



4. Esther wanted to give the king and Haman a banquet. In fact, two banquets were to be given. What angered Haman after the first banquet? Verse 9: “What a happy man Haman was as he left the banquet! He saw Mordecai there at the gate. He was not standing up or bowing before him. And this made Haman very angry.”

**Read Esther chapter 5, verses 10 – 14.**

1. Even though Haman was unhappy about Mordecai, what did he do when he reached home? Verse 11: “He bragged to them about his riches and his many children. He boasted of the jobs the king had given him. He was proud that he had become the greatest man in the kingdom next to the king himself.”
2. What do you learn about people with too much pride from Proverbs 16:18? “Pride will destroy you. It will make you fall.”
3. Haman was very angry with Mordecai. In fact, he was very bitter at Mordecai. The person who has bitterness in his heart is a very unhappy person. What is the warning about bitterness in Hebrews 12:15? “Look after each other. That way not one of you will fail to find God’s best blessings. Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you. When it springs up it causes deep trouble, hurting many in their spiritual lives.”
4. Did Haman’s wife Zeresh suggest Haman do something nice for Mordecai? Or did she suggest he do something mean? Give the verse with your answer. Something mean. Verse 14: “Then Zeresh, his wife, and all his friends spoke up. ‘Get a 75-foot-high gallows ready,’ they said. ‘In the morning ask the king to let you hang Mordecai on it. When this is done, you can go on your merry way with the king to the banquet.’ This made Haman very happy. So he ordered the gallows built.”
5. **PERSONAL:** Which verse did you memorize this week? Do you know Philippians 4:13, or Proverbs 16:18? Philippians 4:13 “I can do everything God asks me to with the help of Christ. He gives me strength and power.” Proverbs 16:18 “Pride will destroy you. It will make you fall.”

## ESTHER LESSON 4

### **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 6, verses 1 – 4.**

1. After Esther's first banquet, the king couldn't sleep. He had the history records of his reign read to him. In it, he found Mordecai had found out the plot to kill the king. Had the king ever honored Mordecai for his courageous act?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who had received a promotion instead? See Esther 2:21,22; 3:1 for your answer.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why was Haman in the outer court of the palace?

### **Read Esther chapter 6, verses 5 – 12.**

1. What question did the king ask Haman?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Put Haman's grand plans he thought were to honor himself into your own words.

3. **PERSONAL:** Have you done anything someone else got praised for? Were you upset? What does Proverbs 27:2 say about praising yourself?

4. What do these verses say about conceit, or thinking you are better than everyone else?

Proverbs 12:15

Isaiah 5:21

Romans 12:3

5. How are we supposed to do kind deeds according to Jesus in Matthew 6:3-4?

6. **RISKY:** Do you think Haman was happy and excited with the job the king gave him to do? How do you think Haman looked? Draw a picture of what you think he looked like.

7. After honoring Mordecai, Haman went home to get sympathy from his family and friends. While he was crying to them about all that went wrong, the king's eunuchs came to his house. Why?

**Read Esther chapter 7, verses 1 – 10.**

1. The king asked Esther again what she wanted. What was it she wanted?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How did Haman look when Esther pointed her finger at him?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How did the king react to Esther's finger pointing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. **CHALLENGE:** Where was Haman when the king came back into the room?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What happened to Haman?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Haman planned to kill Mordecai in two ways. First, he asked for a law to be made to destroy a certain race of people because Mordecai wouldn't bow to him. Then, he decided to hang Mordecai before the edict date. But, instead, Haman was hung. What does Proverbs 26:27 say about making plans to hurt someone?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. **PERSONAL:** Which verse or verses did you memorize this week?

## ESTHER – WEEK FIVE

### DISCUSSION LESSON 4

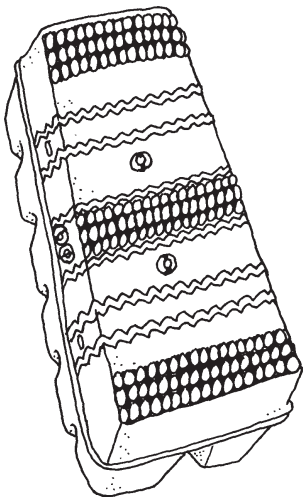
- 15 – 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship
- 15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: PENCIL RELAY

Divide into teams. Give the leader of each team a pencil. Draw a finish line. At the signal, the first player places the pencil on the top of his shoe and kicks his foot so that the pencil flies forward. He races to where the pencil landed and repeats the kicking process until the pencil flies over the finish line. He runs back to his team, hands the pencil to the second player who repeats the process. The first player goes to the end of the line and sits down. The first team sitting in their original position wins.

- 15 – 20 minutes discuss LESSON 4
- to end of class CRAFT: TREASURE CHEST\*

#### MATERIALS:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| styrofoam egg cartons      | lentils, pasta shapes, rice, seeds                                |
| rickrack, ribbon           | scissors  |
| glue                       | glitter   |
| gold or silver spray paint | newspapers  |
| large, deep cardboard box  | optional: “treasures” to go in box<br>(stickers, gum, nuts, etc.) |
| 3x5 cards                  |   |



Before class: Cut ribbon and rickrack into 5-inch lengths. Spread newspapers around working area. Optional— Write Bible verse on 3x5 cards: “I pray that his glorious riches will strengthen you inwardly. He will do this through his Holy Spirit” Ephesians 3:16. (Or let each student write on his own card.)

Lay egg carton opened flat on working area. Glue lentils, pasta, rice, seeds, rickrack and ribbon to top of carton in any pattern student desires. Place egg carton in cardboard box, and teacher lightly sprays with paint. Child can sprinkle it with glitter before paint dries. If possible, spray paint outside, or open window for ventilation. When paint is dry, close boxes. Insert Bible verse card and “treasures.”

\*from *Treasure Chest of Crafts*, page 36

## ESTHER LESSON 4 – ANSWERS

### Read Esther chapter 6, verses 1 – 4.

1. After Esther’s first banquet, the king couldn’t sleep. He had the history records of his reign read to him. In it, he found Mordecai had found out the plot to kill the king. Had the king ever honored Mordecai for his courageous act? No. Verse 3: “What reward did we ever give Mordecai for this?” the king asked. His servants said, ‘Nothing!’” [We don’t know why the king couldn’t sleep. Although the king didn’t know that the next day, Haman was going to ask the king for permission to kill Mordecai, and Esther was going to indict Haman for the annihilation of the Jews, God knew this, and it was in His plan for the king to check his history records. How like God, to have the servants read that portion which included Mordecai.]
2. Who had received a promotion instead? See Esther 2:21,22; 3:1 for your answer. “One day Mordecai was on duty at the palace. At that time, two of the king’s eunuchs were angry at the king. So they made a plan to kill him. Their names were Bigthan and Teresh. They were guards at the palace gate. Mordecai heard about the plan and told Queen Esther. Esther told the king about it. She also told the king that Mordecai had reported it... Soon after this King Ahasuerus chose Haman as Prime Minister. Haman was the son of Hammedatha the Agagite. He was the most powerful official in the empire next to the king himself.”
3. Why was Haman in the outer court of the palace? Verse 4: “Who is on duty in the outer court?” the king asked. Now, as it happened, Haman had just come into the outer court of the palace. He was there to ask the king to hang Mordecai from the gallows he was building.”

### Read Esther chapter 6, verses 5 – 12.

1. What question did the king ask Haman? Verse 6a: “So Haman came in. The king asked him, ‘What should I do to honor a man who truly pleases me?’”
2. Put Haman’s grand plans he thought were to honor himself into your own words. Verse 6b, 7-9: “Haman thought to himself, ‘Whom would he want to honor more than me?’ so he replied, ‘Bring out some of the royal robes the king himself has worn. Bring out the king’s own horse and royal crown. Tell one of the king’s most noble princes to put the royal robes on the man. Have this prince lead him through the streets on the king’s own horse. Have him shout, “This is the way the king honors those who truly please him!””
3. **PERSONAL:** Have you done anything someone else got praised for? Were you upset? What does Proverbs 27:2 say about praising yourself? “Don’t praise yourself. Let others do it.”

4. What do these verses say about conceit, or thinking you are better than everyone else?

Proverbs 12:15 “A fool thinks he needs no advice. But a wise person listens to others.”

Isaiah 5:21 “Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight” (NIV).

Romans 12:3 “I am God’s messenger. So I want to give each of you God’s warning. Be honest when you think about yourself. Measure your value by how much faith God has given you.”

5. How are we supposed to do kind deeds according to Jesus in Matthew 6:3-4? “But when you do a kind thing for someone, keep it a secret. Don’t tell your left hand what your right hand is doing. And your Father, who knows all secrets, will reward you.”
6. **RISKY:** Do you think Haman was happy and excited with the job the king gave him to do? How do you think Haman looked? Draw a picture of what you think he looked like.
7. After honoring Mordecai, Haman went home to get sympathy from his family and friends. While he was crying to them about all that went wrong, the king’s eunuchs came to his house. Why? Verse 14: “They were still talking about this when the king’s messengers came. They brought Haman quickly to the banquet Esther had made.”

### **Read Esther chapter 7, verses 1 – 10.**

1. The king asked Esther again what she wanted. What was it she wanted? Verses 3,4: “At last Queen Esther said, ‘Perhaps I have won your favor, O king. And perhaps this will make Your Majesty happy. Please, save my life and the lives of my people. For I and my people have been sold to those who will destroy us. We are doomed to be destroyed and killed! If we were only to be sold as slaves, maybe I could stay quiet. But even then there would be great damage to the king. The damage would be so great that no amount of money could begin to cover it.’” [Esther finally reveals she is a Jew by identifying with the Jews who are about to be destroyed. This took great courage on her part, since she didn’t know how the king would receive this information. Once Esther’s request sinks in, the king wants to know who the person is that wants to destroy the Jews.]
2. How did Haman look when Esther pointed her finger at him? Verse 6: “Esther replied, ‘This wicked Haman is our enemy.’ Then Haman grew pale with fear before the king and queen.”
3. How did the king react to Esther’s finger pointing? Verse 7a: “The king jumped to his feet and went out into the palace garden.”

4. **CHALLENGE:** Where was Haman when the king came back into the room? Verse 8: “In despair he fell upon the couch where Queen Esther was resting. Just then, the king came back from the palace garden. ‘Will he even sleep with the queen?’ the king roared. ‘Will he do it right here in the palace? Will he do it before my very eyes?’ Right then the death veil was put over Haman’s face.” [The “word” that came from the king’s mouth (NIV) supposedly was an execution order. The “death veil” in the translation used in this text (TSLB) is a covering over the face of a person sentenced to death.]
5. What happened to Haman? Verse 10: “So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king’s fury subsided.”
6. Haman planned to kill Mordecai in two ways. First he asked for a law to be made to destroy a certain race of people because Mordecai wouldn’t bow to him. Then he decided to hang Mordecai before the edict date. But instead, Haman was hung. What does Proverbs 26:27 say about making plans to hurt someone? “The person who sets a trap for others will get caught in it himself. Roll a boulder down on someone, and it will roll back and crush you.”
7. **PERSONAL:** Which verse or verses did you memorize this week?





2. To seal an order with a signet ring meant the order could not be broken. Sealing a document with the signet ring of a rich or important person proved the document was real and not a phony. What orders must be carried out in these scriptures?

Esther 1:19

Esther 3:13

**Read Esther chapter 8, verses 11 – 17.**

1. What was Mordecai's order in Esther 8:11,12 and what day was this to happen?
2. How did the Jews react to Haman's order? See Esther 4:3 for your answer.
3. How did the Jews react to Mordecai's order in Esther 8:17?

**Read Esther chapter 9, verses 1 – 26.**

1. **HARD:** Why weren't the enemies of the Jews able to beat them in battle?

2. How many men were killed in the citadel of Susa?
  
3. What had been Haman's order in Esther 3:13?
  
4. What was Mordecai's order in Esther 8:11?
  
5. **PERSONAL:** Although the Jews were given permission to take the belongings of their enemies, they didn't. We are told three times they had their chance to take the property of their enemies, but they didn't. They only defended themselves against their enemies. Have you had someone do something mean to you and all you wanted to do was to get even, to do something mean to them? What does Romans 12:19 say God will do for you?
  
6. Why is the celebration called Purim?
  
7. Since Cain killed Abel there has been fighting and killing and wars on the earth. What is God's promise to us in Isaiah 2:4 that will happen some day?
  
8. **PERSONAL:** How many verses have you memorized in your study of the book of Esther? If none, how about hiding just one verse in your heart? How about the last sentence in Esther 4:14: "And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

## ESTHER — WEEK SIX

### DISCUSSION LESSON 5

15 – 20 minutes free time — games, fellowship

15 – 20 minutes snack and group recreation: BASE TAG

Use old file folders cut in half or cereal box sides for “bases,” one for each player. Scatter bases around the playing area. Choose IT, who stands on one of the bases near the center of the playing area. Other players each stand on one base. When IT leaves his base, so must the others. IT tries to tag a player before the player reaches a new base. Only one player may stand on a single base. If a player is tagged, he becomes the new IT.

15 – 20 minutes discuss LESSON 5

to end of class CRAFT: HEAVY HIPPO DOORSTOP

#### MATERIALS:

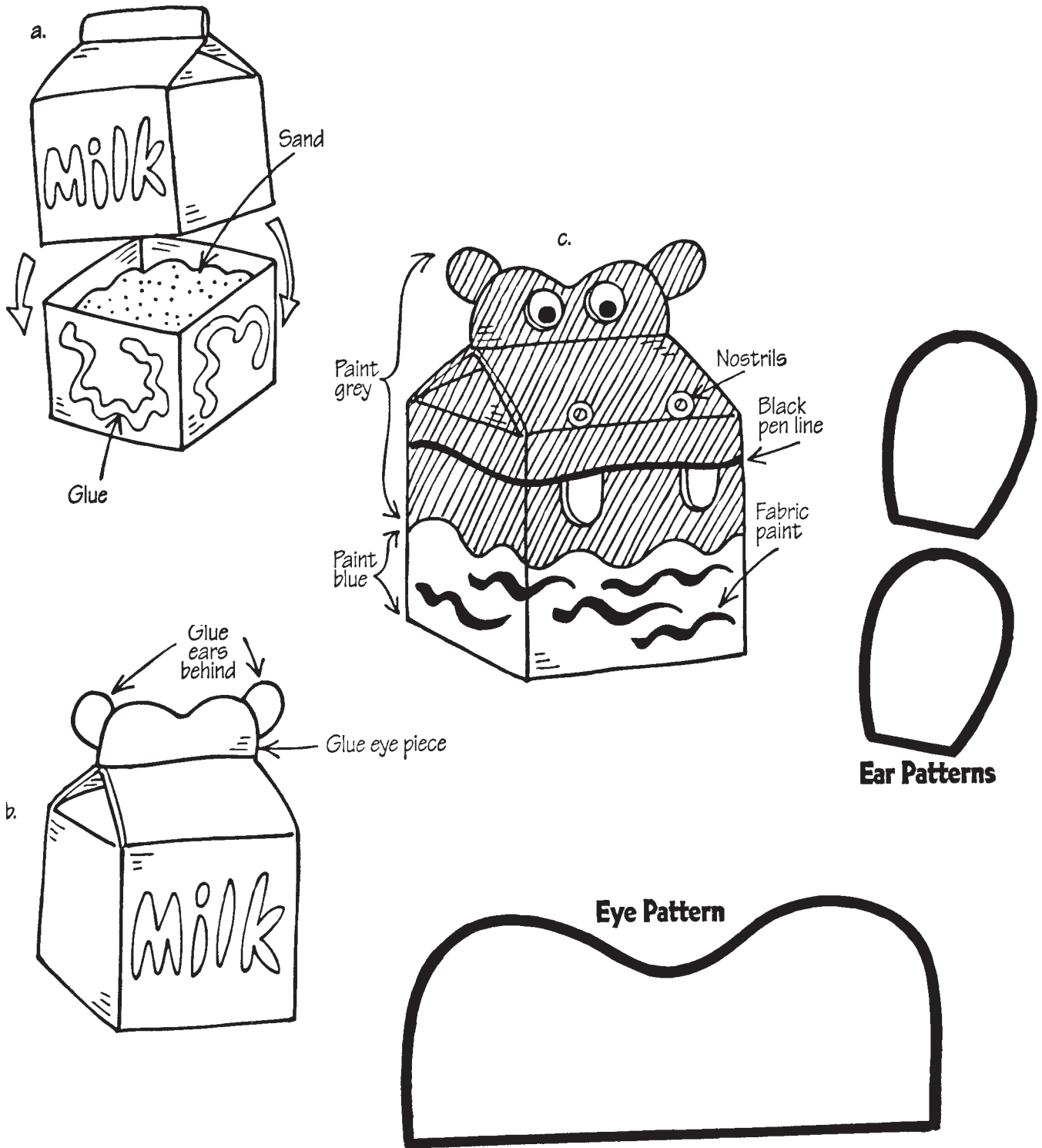
acrylic paints in grey, blue & white	newspaper
blue glitter fabric paint with fine tip	scissors
card stock	sand
paper cups	paintbrushes
shallow containers	glue
black permanent felt pens	pencil
self-adhesive paper hole reinforcements	ruler
half-gallon milk cartons	tongue depressor
20-mm wiggle eyes	

**Preparation:** Cut one milk carton in half for each child. Photocopy Eye and Ear patterns (see next page) onto card stock. Cut tongue depressors 1” from each end (discard middle pieces). Cover work area with newspaper. Pour acrylic paint into shallow containers.

**In class:** Have each child use paper cup to pour sand into bottom portion of milk carton. Spread glue around bottom portion of milk carton (sketch a, next page). Place top portion of milk carton over bottom portion. Glue top opening of milk carton together.

Cut out card stock eye pattern and ears and glue onto top of milk carton (sketch b, next page). Paint top half of milk carton and card stock eyes and ears grey. Paint bottom half of carton blue (sketch c). Let dry.

Paint tongue depressor pieces white to make tusks. With black felt pen, draw a line around the middle of the grey portion of carton to make mouth (sketch c). Glue on wiggle eyes and tusks. Use fabric paint to make waves in the water.



## ESTHER LESSON 5 – ANSWERS

### Read Esther chapter 8, verses 1 – 5.

1. **CHALLENGE:** What happened the same day that King Xerxes gave Queen Esther Haman's property? HINT: You'll have to look back at chapter 7 for your answer. Esther received Haman's property the same day he was hung.
2. What secret did Esther tell the king? See also Esther 2:10 for your answer. Esther 2:10: "Esther hadn't told anyone that she was a Jewess. This was because Mordecai had said not to." Esther 8:1: "That same day King Ahasuerus gave all that Haman owned to Queen Esther. Then Mordecai was brought before the king. For Esther had told the king that he was her cousin and foster father."
3. Who had the king given his ring to before he gave it to Mordecai? Verse 2: "The king took off his ring, which he had taken back from Haman. He gave it to Mordecai and chose him as Prime Minister. And Esther told Mordecai to manage all of Haman's property for her."
4. What did Esther ask the king to do? Verse 5: "Esther said, 'If it pleases Your Majesty, and if you love me, please send out a new law. Do this to stop Haman's law to destroy the Jews throughout your kingdom.'"

### Read Esther chapter 8, verses 6 – 10.

1. How did King Xerxes answer Esther? Verse 8: "Now go ahead. Send a message to the Jews. Tell them whatever you want to in the king's name. And seal it with the king's ring so that it cannot be stopped."
2. To seal an order with a signet ring meant the order could not be broken. Sealing a document with the signet ring of a rich or important person proved the document was real and not a phony. What orders must be carried out in these scriptures?

Esther 1:19 "We suggest that you make a royal law. It should be a law of the Medes and Persians that can never be changed. It should state that Queen Vashti be sent away from you for all time. And you shall choose another queen who is better than she."

Esther 3:13 "They were then sent by messengers to all the provinces of the empire. They said the Jews must all be killed. This included young and old, women and children. This was to happen on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February of the following year. And the property of the Jews was to be given to those who killed them."

**Read Esther chapter 8, verses 11 – 17.**

1. What was Mordecai's order in Esther 8:11,12 and what day was this to happen? "This law allowed the Jews to defend their lives and their families. It allowed them to destroy all the forces against them. And they were allowed to take the property of their enemies. The day set for this was the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February! This law was to be in effect throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus." [Notice, no provision is made for the Jews to defend themselves under Haman's edict. But under Mordecai's edict, the Jews could take up arms to defend themselves against those who attacked them.]
2. How did the Jews react to Haman's order? See Esther 4:3 for your answer. "And throughout all the provinces there was great mourning among the Jews. There was much fasting, crying, and despair at the king's law. Many wore sackcloth and put ashes on their heads."
3. How did the Jews react to Mordecai's order in Esther 8:17? "And to every city and province the king's law was brought. And the Jews were filled with joy and declared a feast. Many people of the land acted like they were Jews. This was because they were afraid of what the Jews might do to them."

**Read Esther chapter 9, verses 1 – 26.**

1. **HARD:** Why weren't the enemies of the Jews able to beat them in battle? Verse 2: "The Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the king's provinces. They came together to defend themselves against any who might try to hurt them. But no one tried. For they were very afraid of the Jews." ["The fear of the Jews mentioned here was not fear of Jewish aggression, since the edict only permitted the Jews to protect themselves. It was more likely an awed recognition that the Jews had been granted divine favor and protection" (QUEST notes).]
2. How many men were killed in the citadel of Susa? Verse 6: "They even killed 500 men in Susa." [Esther's request to hang Haman's ten dead sons was not an uncommon request of the time. It was a tactic used to demoralize the enemy. In 9:13, Esther requested another day of killing. No clear cut answer was found. It could have been that in the outlying villages around Susa, the enemy was quickly defeated. Yet in the fortified city, the enemy felt stronger and was not easily destroyed. Therefore, in order to destroy the enemy, the city hosted another day of battle.]
3. What had been Haman's order in Esther 3:13? "They were then sent by messengers to all the provinces of the empire. They said the Jews must all be killed. This included young and old, women and children. This was to happen on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of February of the following year. And the property of the Jews was to be given to those who killed them."

4. What was Mordecai's order in Esther 8:11? "This law allowed the Jews to defend their lives and their families. It allowed them to destroy all the forces against them. And they were allowed to take the property of their enemies."
5. **PERSONAL:** Although the Jews were given permission to take the belongings of their enemies, they didn't. We are told three times they had their chance to take the property of their enemies, but they didn't. They only defended themselves against their enemies. Have you had someone do something mean to you and all you wanted to do was to get even, to do something mean to them? What does Romans 12:19 say God will do for you? "Dear friends, if people are mean to you, don't try to get even. Leave that to God. He has said that he will pay them back."
6. Why is the celebration called Purim? Verse 26: "That is why this feast is called 'Purim.' The word for 'throwing dice' [casting lots] in Persian is pur." [This feast is still celebrated today. It is a joyous celebration. Children come to the feast dressed in their favorite character from the book. And when the book of Esther is read, the audience participates by booing and hissing at Haman's name, and cheering at the names of Esther and Mordecai.]
7. Since Cain killed Abel there has been fighting and killing and wars on the earth. What is God's promise to us in Isaiah 2:4 that will happen some day? "The Lord will settle all fights between nations. All the nations will make their weapons of war into tools to be used for peace. Then at last all wars will stop. And all training for war will end."
8. **PERSONAL:** How many verses have you memorized in your study of the book of Esther? If none, how about hiding just one verse in your heart? How about the last sentence in Esther 4:14: "And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" (NIV).