



Story: Esther Prays

Supplies Needed

You will need the following:

14 Sheets of [Cardstock](#) (8.5" x 11")

14 3 mil Laminating [Film](#)

Directions

- Print pages 2-29 two-sided on cardstock. Laminate the pages.
- Hold up the pictures while you read the story.



Before holding up the picture:

What did we talk about last time in class? (*Esther became queen*)

What was the name of Esther's cousin? (*Mordecai*)

Where did Mordecai work? (*At the king's palace*)

Hold up picture:

One day, Mordecai was guarding the king's gate when he overheard two servants, Bigthan and Teresh, plotting to kill the king. Mordecai immediately warned Esther of the plot and Esther told the king.



Hold up picture:

The two plotters were arrested, found guilty, and hanged on the gallows. Their plot was recorded in the chronicles of the King and it was noted in the chronicles that Mordecai was the one who had uncovered the plot.

Explain:

The King's chronicles were a record of everything that happens in the kingdom. Later on, you will see how important it was that this event was recorded in the King's chronicles, and that Mordecai was the one that saved King Xerxes's life.



Hold up picture:

Later on, King Xerxes promoted a man named Haman above all the other princes to be the second most powerful man in the kingdom. The King ordered all his servants to bow to Haman. So, all the King's servants would bow to Haman when he entered the palace, except Mordecai. Mordecai would not bow or show Haman reverence.

Ask / Explain:

Reverence means honor or respect. Why do you think Mordecai wouldn't bow to Haman? *(The Jews shouldn't bow to anyone except God)*



Hold up picture:

The other servants asked Mordecai, “Why do you not obey the King and bow to Haman?” They knew Mordecai was a Jew and they kept asking him every day, but Mordecai would not listen to them.



Hold up picture:

So the other servants told all this to Haman. Haman was furious to find out that Mordecai the Jew would not bow to him. So Haman plotted to find a way to punish not just Mordecai, but all the Jews.



Hold up picture:

Haman went to King Xerxes and said, “There are people living in the land who have their own laws and obey them rather than the King’s commands.”

Explain:

Was Haman lying? *(Answers might vary)* Technically, Haman was telling the truth: Mordecai was following God’s Law instead of the King’s laws. But Haman was twisting the truth to get Mordecai and all the Jews in trouble.



Hold up picture:

Haman continued, “If it pleases the King, let a decree be written that they (the Jews) be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the King’s treasury to get this done.”

King Xerxes took off his signet ring and gave it to Haman and said, “The money and the people are yours. Do with them as you wish.”



Hold up picture:

The King's scribes were instructed to write a law that on the 13th day of the 12th month, the Jews were to be attacked and killed and all their possessions taken as plunder. The law was sealed with the King's signet ring. A copy of the law was sent by messengers to each province of the kingdom. And remember that a law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed or altered.



Hold up picture:

When Mordecai heard about the law to kill all the Jews, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. Then he went around the city wailing, eventually making it to the front of the King's gate. There was a great mourning among all the Jews in every province, with fasting and wearing of sackcloth and ashes.

Explain / Ask:

Wearing sackcloth and ashes was a common custom during this time to show mourning, like we might wear black to show mourning.



Hold up picture:

When Esther heard about Mordecai's distress, she sent one of the King's servants, named Hathach, with clothes for Mordecai to put on instead of his sackcloth. But Mordecai refused to put the clothes on.

Explain / Ask:



Hold up picture:

Esther sent Hathach, the servant, back out to ask Mordecai what was troubling him. Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the new law and explained how much Haman had promised to pay to kill all the Jews. He asked Hathach to tell Esther to go into the King's presence and to beg for mercy for him to save her people, the Jews.

Explain / Ask:



Hold up picture:

Hathach reported back to Esther the message from Mordecai. Then Esther gave a message for Hathach to take back to Mordecai. She said, “Everyone knows that anyone who approaches the King’s inner chamber without being summoned by the King is put to death, unless the King extends his golden scepter to spare their life. I have not been summoned by the King for 30 days.”

Explain / Ask:

Hathach, the servant, is taking messages back and forth between Esther in the palace and Mordecai who is sitting outside the palace gates. This is probably a very large palace and it would be easy for King Xerxes to not see Esther for awhile...it’s not like our houses where we share rooms and see everyone everyday.



Hold up picture:

Esther's words were reported back to Mordecai. And Mordecai had this message to send back to Esther. He said, "Don't think just because you live in the palace that you will escape judgment from this new law. For if you remain silent at this time...you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this."

Explain / Ask:

Mordecai is warning Esther, don't think you're going to escape this just because you're the queen. And maybe God put you in your position as queen to help the Jews at this time.



Hold up picture:

Esther sent a reply back to Mordecai saying, “Gather all the Jews in Susa (or Shushan) to pray and fast for me. Don’t eat for three days. My maids and I will pray and fast with you. Then I will go to the King even though he has not summoned me. If I die, I die.”

Explain / Ask:

Esther was willing to risk her life for all the Jews, but first she wanted all the Jews to pray and fast with her for three days.

This is a good example for us for when we are facing difficult decisions. What should we always do in tough situations? *(Pray to God)* Do you think the King will welcome Esther when she goes to see him? *(Answers might vary)* We will find out in our next lesson.