

God Uses Esther



Key Passages

- Esther 2:17, 2:22, 4:16, 5:2, 8:17

Lesson Focus

- God saved His people.

Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will color the Temple Coloring Sheet as a review of Lesson 5 and/or play with play dough.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Flip Chart Prayer Page, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God's Word—Students will hear that God is in control and leads people to accomplish His plan, like He led Esther to help save the Jews.

Song—Students will sing songs to help them remember the lesson of the day. Lyrics to the songs are found on the Flip Chart Song Page and the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.



Activity 1: God Leads

Students will follow you as you lead them around the room and answer questions from the lesson.



Activity 2: Esther Maze

Students will complete a maze then color the picture.



Memory Verse Review and Activity

Students will review the memory verse as they play a game and recite/sing the verse. Give them an opportunity to repeat the verse with you, together, or individually.



Applying God's Word/Snack

Students will review the lesson while enjoying the snack for the day.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.



COME ON IN

- ☐ Print one Temple Coloring Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- ☐ Provide play dough if appropriate.

- ☐ Temple Coloring Sheet for each student
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Play dough
- ☐ Cookie cutters



CIRCLE TIME

- ☐ Print one copy of the five Lesson Illustrations to use during the class.
- ☐ Practice the songs on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

- ☐ Five Lesson Illustrations
- ☐ Lesson Flip Chart
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Stuffed animal for prayer time



GOD LEADS

- ☐ Print one copy of the God Leads Questions Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- ☐ Set out 5 tables and/or chairs around the room as obstacles.

- ☐ God Leads Questions Sheet
- ☐ Lesson Illustrations #1–5
- ☐ 5 Tables and/or chairs set out as obstacles
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Long piece of rope or a jump rope
- ☐ Scarf or necktie to use as a blindfold



ESTHER MAZE

- ☐ Print one Esther Maze from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- ☐ Esther Maze for each student
- ☐ Crayons



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW AND ACTIVITY

- ☐ No preparation necessary.

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Soft, spongy ball or other small object to pass around



APPLYING GOD'S WORD/SNACK

- ☐ Prepare and bring snacks.

- ☐ Lesson Flip Chart for Review
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

If you haven't done so, take time to read through the entire book of Esther so that the flow of the events is in your mind. As you teach the lesson, you will be summarizing some events for the students and focusing on a few key passages in your time of study together. As you read Esther, you might notice that something is missing . . . God! Nowhere in the account is God mentioned. Nor is this book alluded to in the New Testament. Though God is unmentioned by name, His sovereign hand is evident throughout these events, and that will be drawn out in the lesson.

The events of Esther take place during the reign of the Persian King Ahasuerus. There is a bit of debate about who this ruler was (see historical section below), but we will connect him to Darius I who reigned from 521–485 BC. This places these events from about 520–510 BC with Esther being made queen in 515—the same year that the Temple was dedicated by Zerubbabel (Ezra 6). So these things happened after the first return of the Jews to Jerusalem, but before Ezra's return in 467.

As the book of Esther opens, King Ahasuerus (Darius I) had prepared a great feast, but his queen, Vashti, refused to appear before the king's guests. As a result, the king's counselors directed him to remove the queen and seek a new queen from among the beautiful young virgins of the Persian Empire. This decree by the king (whose heart was in God's sovereign hand—Proverbs 21:1) brought Esther into the picture.

How does a young Jewish girl wind up as the queen of the Persian Empire? It surely requires an amazing series of events—events under the guidance of an omnipotent God. But these events also require the interaction of many different people. God typically works out His plans in the world through human agents. From the king and queen to the party guests, and from Mordecai to Haman and the many messengers and scribes, all of these individuals and their personal wills, desires, thoughts, and actions ultimately brought about what God intended. Only an omnipotent God could bring about a certain result amid such a myriad of intersecting factors.

Before Esther was known as Esther, her name was Hadassah. Her great-grandfather, Kish, was among the captives carried away by Nebuchadnezzar with King Jehoiachin in 599 BC (Esther 2:5–6). After her parents

died, she was cared for by her older cousin Mordecai. They lived in Shushan (or Susa)—the winter residence of the Persian kings. Esther was among the beautiful young virgins who were gathered together, possibly by force, at the palace fortress. At several points in the account, we learn that Mordecai asked her to not let anyone know that she was a Jew (2:10, 2:20). Hadassah (meaning "myrtle") would be immediately recognized as a Jewish name, so her name was changed to the Persian name Esther, which likely means "star."

In the palace, the women were cared for by Hegai, the king's eunuch, and given beauty treatments for one year before the king would select one as his queen (2:8–14). We see God's hand, behind the scenes, in Esther's favor with Hegai and his special treatment of her (2:9, 2:15). On the day Esther was to appear before the king, she pleased him above all others and was made queen. God had elevated a Jewish captive to the queen of Persia through the decision of a king.

All the while, Esther's cousin Mordecai had been keeping in touch with her. He was likely a scribe or advisor in the palace and had access to her (2:11, 2:19). At one point, Mordecai uncovered a plot to murder the king. He informed Esther, the men were executed, and all of it was recorded in the chronicles of the king. Sometime later, a man named Haman came to power under King Ahasuerus. Mordecai would not bow to Haman, and Haman became enraged. Haman arranged a plot to have all the Jews in Persia killed on a specific day (3:1–15).

As Mordecai and the Jews around the kingdom heard of the decree, they were distraught. Esther had the same reaction when she heard the news and contacted Mordecai (4:1–9). When Mordecai asked her to confront the king and ask him to spare the Jews, she was afraid to do so, knowing that she could be put to death. Mordecai counseled her with wise words, reminding her that since she was a Jew, she would not escape the decree. If she did not go to the king, Mordecai was certain that deliverance would come from another place. He also recognized her placement in the palace as God's providence: "Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (4:14). Esther had a choice to make.

Esther appeared uninvited before the king and was granted access—her life was spared (5:1–2). Surely, the king's heart was in God's hand. After this, a series of events quickly unfolded, again demonstrating God's hand: Esther arranged a banquet for the king and Haman; Haman planned to kill Mordecai; Mordecai

was honored by the king; at a second banquet, Esther revealed Haman's plot to kill her and her people; the king ordered Haman hung on the gallows at his own home; Mordecai was elevated to Haman's position; and Esther and Mordecai were allowed to write their own decree to protect the Jews. Wow! If you think that all this happened by chance, you do not understand who God is.

As you read through Esther, there can be no doubt that God was just as involved in protecting the Jews at this point as He was involved in leading them out of Egypt and as He was in the crucifixion of Christ on the Cross. Even though His name is not mentioned, we dare not deny that God was accomplishing His plans through each of these people.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Although the book of Esther appears relatively early in the Old Testament sequence of books, the events happen rather late in the actual timeline of Old Testament history. The time period of Esther occurs with the historical books of Ezra and Nehemiah while the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, whose books appear later in the Bible, actually lived long before Esther. So be careful to help your students understand where all of the pieces fit together. You can use the History of Israel poster to help with that.

There is debate about the identity of the king in the book of Esther. Some believe the time period of Esther was actually *after* Ezra's return during the reign of Xerxes (485–465 BC). The dates and explanations used in this curriculum are based on the work of Archbishop James Ussher. It is difficult to assign exact dates in this period since there are few records and multiple rulers at the same time. Some rulers used the same titles and names. Also, the records in Greek use different names than the Persian records, and the biblical names are sometimes transliterated into Hebrew. With that said, whether this was one king or another, God was still in control.

The events recorded in the book of Esther are still celebrated by Jews today. After the Jews were delivered from annihilation, the festival of Purim was celebrated

(9:18–32). This festival is still celebrated each year by the Jews to commemorate God's deliverance through Esther and Mordecai.

Here is another important idea to consider from a historical perspective: If Haman's plan had been carried out, Zerubbabel, who had led the return to Jerusalem, would have been killed. Why does that matter? Zerubbabel was a descendant of David who is in the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1:12. This plan would have removed the possibility of Jesus being born as a descendant of David. If the line of David had been destroyed, then the promised Messiah would not have come to pass. Satan would love nothing more than to thwart God's plan, and we can safely assume that Satan was pleased with Haman's plan, if not directly orchestrating it behind the scenes. And yet God's plans stand. Let us proclaim along with Job: "I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You."



BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, I greatly rejoice today as I remember how you providentially moved through the people and events in Persia all those years ago. Each time I read this book, I stand in awe of you. You were in control then . . . and you are still in control, moving in much the same way. It's true! You are still sovereignly accomplishing your will today through your people. I know that. But there are still times when I get scared or depressed. There have been times when I've almost lost hope. Forgive me, Lord. Help me grow in this area. When things look bad, bring young Esther to my mind. Give me the courage to trust you and stand in faith believing you are in control and want what is best for me. Use me as you used her. To glorify you is my one desire—in the good times and the bad. May your Word come alive as I teach this lesson. Use it to penetrate each heart and convict us all to trust you more.

► As you teach, refer often to the Lesson Flip Chart Page to keep the children engaged. When reading the lesson Scriptures, stand up, be enthusiastic, look at the children, and emphasize the answers to the questions you will be asking. This will help to keep the children interested.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will color the Temple Coloring Sheet as a review of Lesson 5.
- If there is time, they can play with play dough.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Flip Chart Pages. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.

Bring your stuffed animal, Bible, Flip Chart, five Lesson Illustrations, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson. See the Lesson Preparation chart for details (page 2).

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets his/her turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

We start our Bible study with prayer. Let's pray. Turn to the Flip Chart Prayer Page. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Adoration is suggested. You might proceed this way:

Today let's say prayers of adoration—and tell God how much we love Him.

I'll start. Dear God, you are great and good. I love you so much because . . .
(insert personal prayer).

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life, and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.

➤ Prior to making your transition to Circle Time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.

➤ Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the Circle Time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer telling God how much they love Him.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away, and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first five questions will be repeated each week this quarter. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

- ? Is there more than one true God? *No. There is only one living and true God.*
- ? Where can we learn about the one true God? *Hold up your Bible. The Bible.*
- ? What does the one true God know? *The one true God knows everything!*
- ? Who should we trust and obey? *The one true God!*
- ? Who alone should we worship? *The one true God!*

The following activity should be repeated at the beginning of each lesson to encourage anticipation and enthusiasm for looking into the Word of God. Use a sticky note to mark today's passage before you begin.

Bible Pass Around

► Before Bible Pass Around, place a sticky note in your Bible to mark the first passage to be read.

► When the Bible Pass Around Activity is completed, continue with the lesson.

We are going to start out today by looking into God's Word, the Bible. *Hold up Bible.* God's Word is true, and we can trust what it says. But where should we look? One of you will help me with that. We're going to play Bible Pass Around. Whoever ends up with the Bible must hold it very carefully until it is time to look in it. When it is time to read, you can bring it to me, and we'll open it to see what we are going to talk about! Here's what we're going to do. I want everyone to count with me up to the number *choose a number.* You may also choose to practice the alphabet, recite the books of the Bible, sing one of the lesson songs, or recite the memory verse as you do this activity. We'll start right here. Hand the Bible to the first student. As we say each number (or word) you must carefully pass the Bible to the person beside you—remember, we don't want to drop it or tear it. Then when we get to the last number (or word), whoever has the Bible will hold on to it until we are ready to start our lesson. Are you ready? Let's begin. *You may want to have the student with the Bible stand next to you until it is time to open it. Continue with the lesson when finished with Bible Pass Around.*

Refer to Lesson 5 Flip Chart. Last week we heard how God led some of His people, called the Jews, home to Judah. They were able to finally leave Babylon and go home. And God chose a man to be in charge of rebuilding His Temple so the people could worship God together again.

- ? Do you remember that man's name? It was a fun name to say. *Zerubbabel.* That's right! Zerubbabel was chosen to lead some of the Jews home. But not all of them went back to Judah. Today we're going to learn about some Jewish people in the land called Persia. Are you ready? Let's look in the Bible and find out about the Jews who were a long way from home in Persia. We are going to read from the book of Esther. *Open the Bible to the book of Esther. Make this a special time as the student brings the Bible, and he/she opens it to where the*

sticky note is. **Here it is right here.** Show the students where the book is. Let them look at it. Carry it around your circle.

The Jews in Persia were in trouble. We're going to read from the Bible and find out what God did to help His people who were in trouble. The book of Esther tells us about a young woman.

? Can you guess her name? It's the same name as the book about her. *Esther!*
Show Lesson Illustration #1.

Yes. A young woman named Esther lived in Persia. She lived a hard life—both of her parents had died. *Show Lesson Illustration #2.* But she had a cousin named Mordecai who took good care of her and loved her like a daughter. Esther and Mordecai were Jewish, and they loved God.

During this time, the king of Persia was looking for a new queen. *Show Lesson Illustration #3.* This was King Ahasuerus. He sent out his servants to search all over the land and bring back all the prettiest ladies. They would all go before the king, and he would choose one to become his new queen. Well, God led the servants to Esther. And she was taken to the palace to go before the king, too.

Now listen carefully. I'm going to read about what happened when it was Esther's turn to go before the king. *Read Esther 2:17 emphasizing "loved Esther" and "made her queen."*

? How did the king feel about Esther? *He loved her.*

? What did the king make Esther? *The queen.*

Refer to Lesson Flip Chart. Wow! Do you think Esther ever thought she would become the queen of Persia? But it was God who led the servants to find Esther. And God led the king to choose her. You see, God had a plan. So let's keep reading and find out what God was doing.

Remember how I said that Mordecai loved Esther like a daughter? *Show Lesson Illustration #2.* Well, after she became queen, Mordecai liked to stay close by at the palace gates so he could hear how she was doing. And one day, God led Mordecai to be in the right place at just the right time to overhear a very evil plan. *Show Lesson Illustration #4.* There were some men there that were mad at the king, and they were planning to kill the king! Mordecai heard them. He knew this was a terrible thing, so he decided to tell someone.

Listen now, so you can tell me who he told. *Read Esther 2:22 emphasizing "Queen Esther" and "Esther informed the king."*

? Who did Mordecai tell? *Queen Esther.*

? And who did Esther tell? *The king.*

Right. God led Mordecai to be in the right place to hear the evil plan. Then God led Mordecai to tell Queen Esther about it. She told the king, so the king was not killed! God was leading a lot of things. What do you think His plan was? Hmmm. Let's keep going so we can find out.

➤ As you present the Lesson Illustrations, get up and walk around the circle showing the pictures to your students. Lay them down on the floor in the circle.

Esther 2:17

➤ Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text. The children should hear God's Word and know they can answer questions from it. It is not too hard for them.

Esther 2:22

After all of this happened, the Bible tells us about a powerful man that worked for the king. *Show Lesson Illustration #5.* His name was Haman. Now Haman hated the Jews—and he hated Mordecai. So Haman came up with a wicked plan. *Refer to Lesson Flip Chart.* Haman lied to the king and told him that all the Jews should be killed. How awful! But wait—remember, God had a plan. God was still in control—even over Haman.

Haman's plan was to kill all the Jews. He knew Mordecai was a Jew.

? But who else was a Jew? *Refer to the Flip Chart or Lesson Illustration #1. Esther.*

Esther 4:16

Yes! Queen Esther was a Jew, too. Esther loved God, and God led her to help save the Jews. What do you suppose God led Esther to do? Let's read some more and find out! *Read Esther 4:16.*

God led Esther to call all the Jews to fast and pray for her. And after all that prayer to God, Esther would go talk to the king. Now, it was against the law for someone to go to the king if he didn't ask you to come. And the king didn't ask for Esther to come. So Esther could be killed when she went to the king! But God gave Esther the courage she would need.

? Do you think God would lead the king? What do you think the king would do? *Allow discussion.*

Esther 5:2

Would Esther be killed? Let's find out! Listen to what happened. *Read Esther 5:2 emphasizing "found favor."*

When Esther came in to see the king, God led the king to look at her and see how beautiful she was—he invited her in! Esther was safe! *Refer to Lesson Flip Chart.*

When the king asked her what she wanted, Esther invited him and Haman to a banquet she had prepared. While they were eating, the king asked Esther what she wanted. But Esther said, "There will be another feast tomorrow, and then I will tell you."

So the next night at the feast, the king asked her again, "What is it you want? I will give it to you." Esther begged the king to save her life, and the lives of all the Jews that Haman wanted to kill. Well, God led the king to grant Queen Esther's request, and all the Jews were saved. God saved His people!

? How do you think the Jews felt when they found out they were saved? *Allow discussion.*

Esther 8:17a

The Bible tells us what they did when they learned they were saved. Listen to this. *Read Esther 8:17a emphasizing "joy and gladness" and "feast and a holiday."*

? How did the Jews feel? What did they have? *Joy and gladness.*

? How did they celebrate? *Had a feast and made a holiday.*

That's right! *Refer to Lesson Flip Chart.* The Jews celebrated because they knew that God saved their lives. Everything turned out just the way God wanted it to. God led Esther, Mordecai, and the king through His plan to save His people.

SONG

Turn to the Flip Chart Song Page. God always has a plan. It is HIS plan. God is sovereign—that means He’s in control of all things. Let’s sing a song about that. Sing “God Is Sovereign.”

Today we saw how God led people according to His plan. Refer to Lesson 5 Flip Chart Page. Remember, last week, we talked about a man that God led to rebuild His Temple.

? Do you remember his name? Zerubbabel. Let’s sing the song we learned about Zerubbabel. Stand and sing the “Zerubbabel Song.”

Turn to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page. Great singing! Now, let’s practice our memory verse. Sing it with me. Here we go! Sing the Memory Verse Song with enthusiasm!

Repeat songs as time allows. You may want to add hand motions, stomping, marching, or instruments. Lyrics can be found on the Flip Chart Song Page and the Song Sheet at the end of this Teacher Guide.

► Turn to the Flip Chart Song Page and Memory Verse Page during this part of the lesson.



God Leads

MATERIALS

- ☐ God Leads Questions Sheet
- ☐ Lesson Illustrations #1–5
- ☐ 5 Tables and/or chairs set out as obstacles in the room
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Long piece of rope or a jump rope
- ☐ Scarf or necktie to use as a blindfold

INSTRUCTIONS

Tape each Lesson Illustration to one of the 5 obstacles. Have the students line up holding on to the rope. Put the blindfold on the first in line. Lead the “blind” student and the others around the room. When you get to each obstacle, remove the blindfold and ask the students questions from the God Leads Questions Sheet. After discussion, have the first person in line move to the back and blindfold the next person. Continue leading the children around the room until you have discussed all of the Lesson Illustrations and/or everyone has had a chance to be blindfolded.

Now we’re going to play a game. Everyone line up behind me and hold onto this rope. As I lead you around the room, we’ll have to go around all these tables and chairs. But

each one has a picture on it that reminds us of someone in our lesson. We will need to remember how God led that person in our lesson before we can move on. So pay attention and follow me. Oh! And whoever is first in line will have to trust me to lead. The first person in line gets to wear this blindfold so you can’t see. Put blindfold on the first in line. Now hold onto the rope, and I will lead you. Here we go! Lead the children around the room.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God is always in control. He knows every detail! He leads us wherever we need to go. And we can trust Him! He can use us to help work His plans, like He used Esther to save the Jews. Sometimes we might not know what God is doing, like when you were blindfolded—you didn’t know where I would lead you. But we can always trust God and follow Him. He is always good and always in control!



Esther Maze

MATERIALS

- ☐ Esther Maze for each student
- ☐ Crayons

INSTRUCTIONS

Today we're going to work on a maze. *Show maze.* You start with the picture of Esther and follow the path all the way to the end where you see the people rejoicing because God saved His people. Then color the pictures.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God is in control of everything! God led Esther to become queen. God led Mordecai to hear the plan to kill the king. And Mordecai was able to help save the king. God knew Haman made a plan to kill the Jews. And God led the king to listen to Esther, and so God saved His people.



Memory Verse Review and Activity

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

MATERIALS

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Soft, spongy ball or other small object

INSTRUCTIONS

Students will sit in a circle and pass the ball as each word in the verse is recited. If needed, use the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page to recite the verse. At the end of the verse, whoever is holding the ball can move to the middle of the circle. Give them an opportunity to recite the verse. Guide the students to go faster and faster, then slower and slower as they pass the ball and recite the verse together.

Everyone sit in a circle here. We're going to say our memory verse together. I'm going to give one of you a ball, and every time we say a word in our verse, you need to pass the ball to the person next to you. It's a

lot like Bible Pass Around. When we finish the verse, the person who has the ball will stand inside the circle and say the memory verse for us! And don't worry. We will all help each other. Pay attention, we might get tricky and go faster or slower. Ready? Here we go.

You may want to sing the Memory Verse Song instead of saying the verse. When finished, see if anyone can say the verse using the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Our memory verse reminds us that God is in control of all things—even our thoughts, and the things we do. God knows what will happen. He knew all about Haman and his plan to kill the Jews. But God was already leading Mordecai and Esther and the king to save His people. Like our verse says, God can lead people "... wherever He wishes."



Applying God's Word/Snack

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

After thanking God for your snack, review today's lesson using the Lesson Flip Chart Page.

What a great God we serve. He was in control of everything that happened. He led Esther. He led the king. He led Mordecai. And through all of it, God saved His people. Some people might say, "Wow! They were really lucky that Esther became queen, that the king didn't kill her, that Haman didn't get his way and kill all the Jews!" Well, there is no such thing as luck. And we know that because we believe in God, the Creator of the Universe. Our God is sovereign; He does all that He pleases! He is the same God today as He was back in Esther's time. He is still in charge of everything that happens—luck has nothing to do with it!

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

God used Mordecai and Esther to save His people from destruction. Esther obeyed God and trusted that He would guide her. God can use us, too, like He used Mordecai and Esther, to make a difference in the world. God already has a plan, and He's in control of everything. Since we know this, it should bring strength and courage to us when we are afraid, worried, weak, sad, or lonely. We can always call on God and trust Him to work things out for our good. God leads us and wants us to follow Him.

➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

- Thank God for His plans.
- Praise God for His sovereignty.
- Pray that God will give us hearts to follow where He leads and obey Him.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring sheet, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

PROVERBS 21:1

(To the tune of "London Bridge")

Shout, "Proverbs 21:1!"

The king's heart is in the hand—

(London Bridge is falling down,)

Of the Lord, of the Lord.

(Falling down, falling down.)

Like the rivers of water;

(London Bridge is falling down,)

He-turns-it where-ever He wish-es.

(My fair Lady!)

GOD IS SOVEREIGN

(To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")

God is sovereign, it is true, it is true, it is true.

(Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb.)

God is sovereign, it is true; He's in charge of all things.

(Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow.)

He controls all things for you, things for you, things for you.

(Everywhere that Mary went, Mary went, Mary went,)

He controls all things for you, and does them for your good.

(Everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go.)

ZERUBBABEL SONG

(To the tune of "O Christmas Tree")

Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel,

(O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,)

Obeded and built the Temple.

(How lovely are thy branches!)

Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel,

(O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,)

Obeded and built the Temple.

(How lovely are thy branches!)

The people sang with joy and praise,

(Not only green when summer's here,)

They worshipped God and gave Him thanks.

(But in the coldest time of year.)

Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel,

(O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,)

God helped him build the Temple.

(How lovely are thy branches!)

Think of fun ways to sing. For example, get children in a circle holding hands. They can go in one direction and at each verse quickly reverse direction. Put one or more than one child in the middle of the circle. Go around them then move in and back out! Get them into a straight line. Have them follow you around the room.