



Date: _____
Series: Good Kings – Bad Kings
Fall Year 4, Lesson 15

Be Ready to Do What God Wants

Primary Scripture: Esther

Key Verse: Joshua 1:9, “Be strong and courageous! Don’t tremble or be terrified, because the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Esther came to the conclusion that she was where the Lord wanted her to be for “for a time such as this.” She was ready to be used by God to help rescue her people. Kids need to be aware that God can use them, too. The key to this is to be ready. The more they focus on God and how he will provide for them wherever he leads them, the more they will be ready.

On this Labor Day weekend volunteers may be in short supply. Therefore, the lesson is largely a video and ties into the Kingdom Quest lesson, as well.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Esther was a type of Jesus who was courageous enough to risk her life to save her people. Jesus rescued his people by going to the cross.

Jesus in us: Jesus promised to dwell in us through his Spirit so that we would be ready for such a time that the Lord calls us to do what he wants.

Jesus through us: Jesus can use us to reach others with God’s rescuing power.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols, such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Invite a child onstage and have him/her stand next to you. Bow at the waist to the child.

What does it mean when I do that?

Call on one kid with a raised hand.

A "bow" means I respect another person. It is something I might do when a person is very important, such as a king.

What about this?

Demonstrate a curtsy.

What does that mean?

Allow one child to respond.

This is a curtsy and is also a sign of respect.

Today we will find in our Bible event a man named Haman who was the king's right-hand assistant. Haman wanted the king's gatekeeper, Mordecai, to bow down to him. Now understand that back in Esther's time, they didn't bow like I did earlier. They did this.

Kneel down and bow with head touching the floor.

Mordecai refused to do this. Mordecai loved God and would only bow down to him. Haman was angry, because of this and wanted Mordecai and his people, the Jews, killed. I wonder how this story comes out? We will find out today!

Who do you bow down to? It is not a part of our custom to bow down. But in worship, God asks us to bow down. We bow down in our hearts. Worship is a way that we bow down and honor God. We are proclaiming that he is the King.

Let's all kneel down on one knee and bow before God as I pray. This is our way to show him honor.

Dear God, we love you and want to honor you in our songs and worship today. You are our King. We worship you with all our hearts. Help us be ready to always do what you want. Help us worship no one else but you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies needed: a clock or a calendar and a cross

There was a queen named Esther who faced a challenge. She needed to speak to the king about saving her people. But she would risk her life if she appeared before the king without an invitation. No one could speak to the king without his invitation.

If anyone forced himself or herself into the king's chamber, they would be killed. So, if Esther went to see the king and the king did not want to see her, it would cost her her life. But if the king permitted her to come into his chambers and talk with him, she might be able to convince the king not to kill the Jews.

What was she feeling and thinking?

Hold up the calendar or clock.

She was probably wondering if she was made queen for such a time as this. “God needs me and this is the time for which he has prepared me. I am ready and I must do the brave thing.”

In a little while, we will find out what happened to Queen Esther. But now, let’s think about Jesus.

Hold up the cross

Jesus’ life had a special purpose. He also came for “such a time as this.” He came to go to the cross and pay for the sins of the world.

Was he ready? Did he do it? Yes! He was courageous and went to the cross because that is what God wanted him to do. Because of this, he paid the price for our sins and rescued us. Now he is with believers so they will be ready for such a time God needs them. God wants us to be courageous and do what he wants.

Let’s pray.

Dear God, Esther knew you put her here on earth for a purpose—for such a time as this. She helped save your people, the Jews.

You put Jesus on the earth for such a time as this, too—to save us from our sin. Thank you for your forgiveness and your saving power in our lives. Now help us be ready for the work you have for us to do. You have placed us here for a purpose—for such a time as this—a time when we can do what *you* want. Help us to do it. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Supplies: clock and hula hoop

Place the clock in a hula hoop on the floor close to the offering basket. Have the children come forward and put their offering in. Ask them to see themselves standing in the “offering plate.” This is a way of saying, “My whole life is an offering and I want to be ready for such a time as this—to do whatever God wants.” Say:

Boys and girls, when we come forward to give our offering today, remember that we offer not just our money, but all of our lives. Everyday we can say the prayer, “Dear God, I give you my whole life.”

When you come forward, you will see a clock here. What will that remind you of? It will remind you of the words that Esther said, “Maybe my whole life was to get ready for such a time as this—to do what God wants and help rescue his people.”

When you give your offering and your life to God today, you are ready “for such a time as this.” A time as this might be a time you could help someone else during the week. Stand up for someone who is getting picked on, or stand up for Jesus.

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The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

There will be no learning game today. Children will watch the video listed below.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Story telling the Bible event centered in the page.

Supplies: Veggie Tales: Esther, by Big Idea Productions

The Veggie Tales movie “Esther” is used. However, a more clear presentation of Esther needs to be done before the video is shown. The following story can be told so the children can make connections between the Bible story and the events that happened in the Veggie Tales movie.

The Bible says in Joshua 1:9, “Be strong and courageous! Don’t tremble or be terrified, because the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

How was Esther strong and courageous? This is her story:

Esther was a little girl when her parents died. Her cousin Mordecai took care of her. They were Jews living in the foreign land of Persia. Persia was ruled by King Ahasuerus also known as Xerxes.

This king wanted all of his friends to admire his beautiful wife. He called for her to come, but she refused. The king was angry that his wife would disobey him. His advisors suggested that his beautiful wife, Queen Vashti, should no longer be queen. They set out to find another queen.

For such a time as this, Esther was chosen by the king to be the new queen. Now, Esther lived in the grand palace and didn't see her cousin Mordecai much. Mordecai, for such a time as this, was the gatekeeper in the king's service. He learned of a plot where two men were going to kill the king. He reported this to Esther as soon as he could. She, in turn, told the king and saved his life. The king forgot Mordecai's kindness and he was never rewarded.

There was a man in the kingdom that hated Mordecai. His name was Haman—the chief advisor to the king. You see, Haman loved the praise of men and wanted all men to bow down to him, but Mordecai refused to do this. Mordecai, being a Jew, would only bow down to God.

Haman was so angry that he plotted to get even with Mordecai and all the Jews. He told the king that all the Jews should be killed. The king trusted Haman as he knew very little about the Jews. So, the king used his ring and signed an order that on a certain day, all of the Jews of every age were to be killed. This order was sent throughout the kingdom. Haman was pleased because he thought this would be the end of Mordecai.

Mordecai once again got the word to Esther that her people were going to be killed because of Haman's evil plot. If Esther did not talk to the king on behalf of the people, they would all die.

Esther knew it was a great risk to talk to the king. It was against the king's order for anyone, even the queen, to come to him unless they were invited. The queen could be put to death. Mordecai reminded Esther that maybe it was for such a time as this that she was made queen. She should be courageous because God could use her to save his people.

Esther had all the Jews pray and fast for her as she approached the king. When Esther came to him, he welcomed her into his chambers. Esther requested the king come to a special dinner in his honor and also invited Haman to attend.

That night, the king could not sleep. He asked a servant to read to him from the official records. As it was being read, he remembered that he had not rewarded Mordecai for saving his life. He decided to give a reward to Mordecai.

The king asked Haman what should be done for someone who has served the king well. Haman, thinking the king was talking about him, suggested a parade be held where this person could be honored throughout the streets of the city.

“What a wonderful idea!” said the king. “Let’s do this for Mordecai. He once saved my life and I have never rewarded him.” Haman was shocked! Now he was to honor Mordecai and parade him around the city. Mordecai was his enemy.

Meanwhile, Queen Esther invited the king and Haman back for another banquet. The king asked, “Esther, what can I do for you? Whatever it is, it will be given to you.”

Esther replied, “Please do not kill me along with Mordecai.”

The king was shocked. Why would he kill her and Mordecai? Esther continued to explain, “The king has ordered all of the Jews be killed. Haman tricked you into signing such an order.”

King Xerxes was outraged! Haman would be the one put to death. The king quickly sent out the order that all Jews would be able to defend themselves if anyone tried to kill them. The whole country left them alone. Queen Esther had saved her people! God had placed her in this position for such a time as this.

Watch the video, *Veggie Tales: Esther, The Girl Who Became Queen*.

Application:

Game options for after the movie.

Supplies: chairs—one per kid; trashcan or box—one per team; plastic or tennis balls—one per team; straws—one per kid

Play any or all of the games shown below, according to your time allotment.

Xerx-Xerxes Game

Have eight to ten players in a circle with enough chairs for all but one. Place chairs in a close circle, facing the center. Choose one child to be the “chair snatcher” and to stand in the center of the circle. Have the rest of the group sit in the chairs.

When the chair snatcher yells “Xerx” begin the game. Players move one chair to the right while the chair snatcher tries to find a seat to sit in. Movement continues to the right until the chair snatcher says “Xerxes.” Then everyone moves to the left. The chair snatcher may call “Xerxes” at any time. When the chair snatcher finally snatches a seat, the person who is left without a chair is the next chair snatcher.

Play for _____ minutes (insert minutes your ministry setting decides on) and then have the kids sit down.

Have your parents ever made a decision and then, after thinking about it or discussing it with you, changed their minds about their decision?

In our Bible event today, we saw how King Xerxes changed his mind and drastically affected the lives of the Jewish people. What did he do first and then how did he change his mind? *(King Xerxes gave the order to kill the Jews because he believed Haman who said the Jews would not obey the king. When he discovered that Haman's plot would destroy all of Esther's people, he allowed Mordecai to issue an order that the Jews could defend themselves against their enemies.)*

Trash Ball Game

Place a trashcan in the center of ten kids. The object is to bounce the ball so it falls into the trashcan. Give the following instructions.

Stand in a circle about three feet back from the trashcan. When I say "begin," you will take turns bouncing the ball attempting to get it into the trashcan. Your team will get one point for every ball that goes into the trashcan. Have one person on your team keep track of the points. The team with the most points, when time is called, is the winner.

Remember that the ball must bounce before it goes into the trashcan or it does not count. Are you ready? Begin.

Play the game for _____ minutes and have the kids sit down. Then debrief:

In our Bible event today we heard about Haman and Mordecai. Haman hated Mordecai because he did not bow down to him. Mordecai would only bow down before God. For this reason, Haman wanted to "trash" Mordecai and all of his people, the Jews. But, God rescued them, as there was a bounce or change of events. In the end, Haman was the one trashed.

Air Ball Game

Have teams of eight compete against each other in this relay race. Divide each team in two and have four stand at one end of the room and have the other four at the other end of the room.

The idea of this game is to take your straw and by blowing through it, move the ball across the floor to your teammate at the other side of the room. This teammate will in turn blow the tennis ball back to the next teammate. Continue until all have attempted the task. The winners are the first team to finish.

Are you ready? Go!

This game can be played again with two team members blowing on the ball with the straws at the same time. When this is finished have all the kids sit down.

Haman thought he could use his “hot air” to influence the king and destroy God’s people. But, through Queen Esther, God turned the events around, rescued his people, and destroyed Haman.

How did God already rescue us from eternal destruction? *(He sent Jesus to rescue us from the plot of Satan. Jesus defeated death and Satan’s power through his death and resurrection, so all who believe in Jesus as Savior and Son of God, will have life with him forever.)*



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Let kids tell about a time they felt they should do something brave and they did it. Say this to each child after they have shared: **God had you ready for such a time as this.**

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees, and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Power of the Cross:

- calendar or clock
- cross

Offering:

- clock
- hula hoop

Bible Presentation:

- Veggie Tales—*Esther* video—order from <http://www.veggiegear.com/noname.html>

Application:

- trashcan or box—one per team
- plastic ball or tennis balls—one per team
- chairs—one per kid
- straws—one per kid
- tennis ball—one per team