

## Esther Becomes Queen

Bible Point: God has special plans for us to work together.

Bible Verse: “The Lord will work out his plans for my life.” Psalm 138:8a

### Prayer

- Read Hebrews 10:24-25.
- How has God worked through your combined efforts with others to accomplish great things for him? Pause to reflect.
- Pray: Lord, help me combine my efforts with others to fulfill your purposes, especially in teaching and leading my family, as I...

### Partner Experiment (optional)

Help each child find a partner of similar height. Say: **We’re going to try an experiment to see how well you and your partner work together.**

Have partners sit back to back and link arms at the elbows. Say: **Now try to stand up. It’s a tricky task, but work with your partners to do it.** If children have trouble with the task, encourage them to push up and against each other. After everyone is standing, ask:

- **With your arms linked like that, could you stand up by yourself? Why or why not?** (No, because my partner pulled me down; yes, but it was hard because I had to pull my partner, too.)
- **What made it easier to stand up?** (Pushing against each other; working together.)

Say: **Working together makes lots of things easier! In our Bible story today, we’ll learn that Esther and Mordecai worked together to carry out God’s plan. Today we’ll also learn that ► God has special plans for us to work together. Let’s sing our Bible song and get ready to hear about the team of Esther and Mordecai.**

### Bible Story

Say: **Let’s go around the circle and let each person say one thing he or she remembers about our Bible story last week.** Encourage children to tell things they remember, such as Esther loved God, Esther became the queen, Esther was pretty, the people celebrated, or God has special plans for us.

**Say: You've remembered lots of things about Queen Esther. Today we'll learn more about the plans God had for Esther and for her cousin Mordecai. Point to the Bible and say: Our Bible story comes from the book of Esther.**

**Today we are going to act out the Bible story together! We need one person to be Esther, one person to be Mordecai, and one who will be Hathach (Hay-thak).**

***Give Esther a crown, Mordecai a paper streamer and give a rolled up piece of paper to Hathach. (optional)***

## **Act it Out!**

**Say: As I read our story, listen for me to say the name of your character. When I say "Esther," all the Esthers may hold up their crowns. When I say "Mordecai," all the Mordecais may tear their streamers a little bit to remind us that Mordecai tore his clothes to show how upset he was. When I say "Hathach," all the Hathachs may hold up their pretend messages and then hide the messages behind their backs.**

As you read the following story, remind children of the appropriate actions.

**About four years after Esther became queen, the king gave an important job to a man named Haman. Haman was so important that people who worked in the palace bowed down to Haman to show him their respect.**

**Esther's cousin Mordecai was one of the king's officials, too. But Mordecai wouldn't bow to Haman. Because he was a Jew, Mordecai would only bow down to God.**

**This made Haman hopping mad! He came up with an evil plan to get back at Mordecai. Haman told King Xerxes lies about the Jewish people and said they weren't obeying the king's laws. He asked the king to send out a decree that these people be put to death. King Xerxes didn't know that**

**Esther was Jewish, so he allowed Haman to write the terrible decree.**

**When Mordecai read the king's decree, he tore his clothes to show how sad and upset he was. Then he put on rough, scratchy clothing called sackcloth and poured ashes on his head. Mordecai went through the streets of the city crying loudly.**

**When Queen Esther heard what Mordecai was doing, she sent her servant Hathach to find out what was going on.**

**Mordecai told Hathach about Haman's wicked plan and gave him a copy of the royal decree. "Take this to Esther," he said. "Ask her to beg the king to have mercy on her people." So Hathach took the message back to Esther.**

When Queen Esther got the message, she said, “Tell Mordecai that no one can go to the king unless they’re invited. Anyone who goes to the king without an invitation is put to death—it’s the law! The only way I won’t die is if the king sees me and raises his golden scepter.” Hathach delivered the message to Mordecai.

When Mordecai read the message, he told Hathach, “Even Esther won’t be spared from Haman’s evil plan. Maybe this is why God allowed her to be queen!” Hathach quickly took the message to Esther.

Esther said to Hathach, “Take this message back to Mordecai. Tell him to get all the Jews in the city together. Pray for me. Don’t eat or drink anything for three days. My servants and I will do the same thing. In three days, I’ll go to the king—even though I might die.”

Hathach went to Mordecai and told him what Esther wanted him to do. Then all of God’s people prayed for the queen for three days.

**You’ll have to tune in next week to see what happened next!**

Ask: • **Who had an evil plan to kill the Jewish people?** (Haman.)

• **What did Mordecai want Esther to do?** (Ask the king for help; ask the king to save the Jews.)

• **Why was Esther scared to help?** (The king hadn’t invited her; she might die if she visited the king.)

Say: **Mordecai and Esther worked together to find a way to save the Jews. They needed each other to carry out God’s plan, and God helped them both to carry out his plans for them. Our Bible verse for today, from Psalm 138:8a, tells us that God will help us, too: ► “The Lord will work out his plans for my life.” Just as God helped Esther and Mordecai to work together, *God has special plans for us to work together, too.***

***Mordecai and Esther Work Together (Esther 4:1-17)***

