

## The Jews Celebrate

Bible Point: God has special plans for us to worship Him.

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

### Prayer

Read Psalm 21:13.

List five things God has done in your life that are worthy of celebration.

Pray: God, throughout the ages you have shown yourself faithful to each generation. Help the children I teach understand that knowing you is reason to celebrate by...

### Make Gragers (optional)

*SUPPLIES: foam cups, crayons or markers, bowl of dry beans, masking tape, plastic spoons*

Set out crayons or markers, plastic cups, wide masking tape, plastic spoons, and a bowl of dry beans. Have each child pour a spoonful of beans into a cup and then set the rim of a second, empty, overturned cup on top of the first cup’s rim. Help children securely tape the rims together to seal the gragers. Allow children to decorate their noisemakers with crayons or markers. As children shake the gragers, explain that Jewish people today use these noisemakers to celebrate a holiday called Purim. Tell children that during the festival of Purim, Jewish people remember the way God worked through Queen Esther to save them from Haman’s evil plan.

### Bible Story Time

*SUPPLIES: Bible, crepe paper streamers, gragers*

Point to the Bible and say: **Our Bible story today comes from the book of Esther. First let’s see what you remember about the story of Esther. I’ll tell you parts of the story we’ve heard so far. If I say something that’s not true, stomp your feet and say “no!” If I say something that’s true, clap your hands and say “yes!”**

- Esther was a kangaroo. (No.)
- Esther was a beautiful girl who became queen. (Yes.)
- Mordecai wouldn’t give Haman a piggyback ride. (No.)

- Mordecai wouldn't bow to Haman. (Yes.)
- Mordecai told Esther about Haman's plan to kill the Jews. (Yes.)
- Hathach rode a skateboard as he carried messages between Mordecai and Esther. (No.)
- Esther risked her life when she approached the king without being invited. (Yes.)
- When the king held out his baseball cap, Esther knew everything would be OK. (No.)
- Esther took Haman and King Xerxes to McDonald's. (No.)
- Esther told the king that Haman was planning to kill the Jews. (Yes.)

Say: I couldn't fool you! You're too smart! Now help me worship and celebrate as we learn what happened next.

Encourage children to worship and celebrate at the appropriate times as you read the following story.

**When King Xerxes learned about Haman's wicked plan, he became furious. Since Esther was a Jew, Haman was accused of plotting to kill the queen. The king ordered that Haman be put to death immediately.**

**But the king's decree that the Jewish people should die couldn't be taken back because it had been marked with the king's seal—even the king himself couldn't change the decree. But King Xerxes could issue a new law. And that's just what he did. He told Mordecai to make a new law and stamp it with the king's seal.**

**The new law said that Jewish people could defend themselves against anyone who tried to hurt them. The law gave Jewish people throughout the kingdom of Persia permission to destroy their enemies.**

**Messengers on horseback took the new law all over the land so everyone would know about it. And whenever the proclamation was read, God's people rejoiced because they knew they were saved! The Jewish people held a joyous holiday with feasting and celebration! They gave presents and food to the poor. They danced and sang because God had worked through brave Queen Esther to save them.**

**Mordecai knew this was a special day his people should always remember. So he declared this special day a holiday to be celebrated every year. He told the people to remember the day they'd been saved from their enemies. Every year since that time long, long ago, Jewish people have celebrated and praised God during the festival of Purim to remember the day they were saved.**

Have children set their praise items in front of them. Ask:

- **What did Mordecai's new law say?** (That the Jews could fight against the bad people; that his people could defend themselves.)
- **How did the Jewish people feel when they heard the new proclamation?** (Happy; excited; glad.)
- **What did they do to celebrate?** (Had a feast; made it a holiday; gave gifts to the poor.)

Say: **The Jews worshipped God because they were saved. Mordecai wanted the Jewish people to remember that special day with the holiday called Purim. That makes me think of our Bible verse for today, which comes from Psalm 138:8a: ►“The Lord will work out his plans for my life.” God worked out his special plans for the Jewish people, and they thanked God by worshipping him. God will work out his plans for us, and ►*God has special plans for us to worship him, too.***

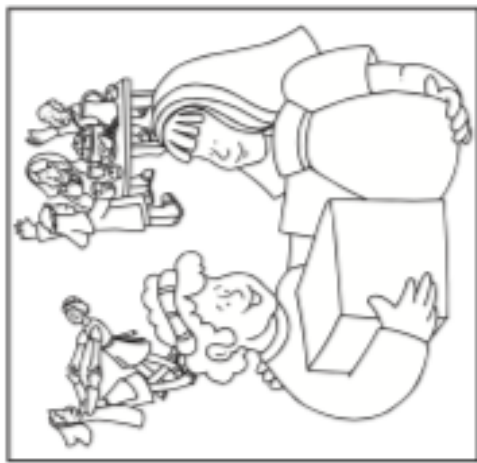
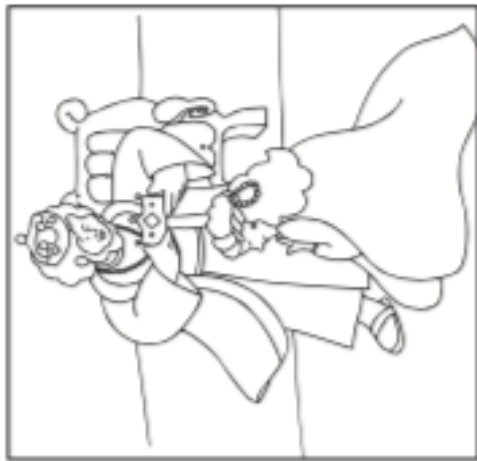
**Let's celebrate and worship God right now!**

## **Craft: Let's make a scroll!**

Color the pictures. Cut on the dotted line. Children may tape the end of the handout to a paper-towel tube to make a megillah, or scroll.

# Megillah

Photocopy the handout, and have children color the pictures. Children may tape the end of the handout to a paper-towel tube to make a megillah, or scroll.



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