TRACK ONE

Family Study

For parents, grandparents, and kids of every age. Watch together, read the story, talk, play, and pray.



"He brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter; for she had neither father nor mother." (Esther 2:7a, WEB)

The Story, Simply Told

Part One of the Esther Series, retold from Esther 1-2. Quoted words are paraphrased for children. The gathering of young women for the king is told simply.

In the Daniel stories, Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians. Many years later, a Persian king named Ahasuerus ruled from India to Ethiopia, over 127 provinces. His palace was in the city of Susa.

The king threw a feast that showed off his riches for 180 days, and then a seven-day party in the palace garden. On the last day he sent for Queen Vashti to come and show her beauty to his guests. She refused. The Bible does not tell us why. The king was very angry, and his advisers told him to make a law: Vashti could never come before the king again, and someone else would be queen. Letters went out to every province.

Later, the king's servants gathered young women from all over the empire to the palace, so the king could choose a new queen. In Susa lived a Jewish man named Mordecai. He had raised his cousin Hadassah, also called Esther, because her father and mother had died. Esther was taken to the palace too. Mordecai told her not to tell anyone that she was Jewish, and every day he walked near the women's house to find out how she was doing.

Everyone who saw Esther liked her, and the king loved her more than all the others. He set the royal crown on her head and made her queen. Then Mordecai, sitting at the king's gate, heard that two guards were planning to hurt the king. He told Esther, and Esther told the king, giving Mordecai the credit. The guards were punished, and it was all written down in the king's book. But no reward was given to Mordecai then. The story wasn't over.

God's name is never written in Esther, but His hand is everywhere.

Talk Together

AGES 4-7

1. Who took care of Esther when she had no mom or dad?
2. What did Mordecai do every day?
3. Who helped Esther in the palace? How was God caring for her too?

AGES 8-12

1. Esther was taken to a place she didn't choose. When have you had to go somewhere new?
2. Mordecai's good deed was written down but not rewarded at the time (2:23; 6:3). What does Hebrews 6:10 say about good things people don't notice?
3. Where have you seen God at work when you didn't notice at first?

TEENS

1. God is never named in Esther. Why might a book of the Bible tell a story this way?
2. Mordecai told Esther not to reveal that she was Jewish (2:10). How is her situation like, or unlike, times when you're unsure whether to share your faith?
3. Proverbs 16:9 says we plan, but God directs our steps. Where do you need that today?

Try This Together

Connect the Dots 10 MINUTES On a long sheet of paper, draw five dots in a row. Label them: *a queen refuses*, *a search*, *an orphan finds favor*, *a plot overheard*, *written in a book*. Talk about how no one in the story could see how the dots connect. Then each person adds one dot from their own year that turned out to matter. Finish by thanking God together for one dot each.

Name Hunt 5 MINUTES Read Esther 2 together and look for the word *God*. You won't find it! Then list the places where you think He was quietly at work. Close by reading the memory verse together.

MEMORY VERSE

"A man's heart plans his course,
but Yahweh directs his steps."

PROVERBS 16:9, WEB

Yahweh is God's personal name; many Bibles print it as LORD. Younger children: learn "...Yahweh directs his steps." while walking in place.

A FAMILY PRAYER

Dear God, thank You that You are always at work, even when we can't see You. Thank You for caring for Esther when she had no mom or dad, and for caring for us. When we are in places we didn't choose, help us trust You. Thank You for Jesus, who makes us part of Your family. In Jesus' name, amen.