TRACK TWO

Kids Ministry

A complete 45-60 minute lesson for elementary classes (about grades K-5), with notes for preschool and a take-home page for parents.

THE BIG IDEA

God can use me to help others, even when I'm afraid.

LESSON PLAN

	45 MIN	60 MIN
Welcome and opening game	8	10
Bible story (told or film)	10	12
Object lesson	5	6
Craft	10	15
Small groups	7	10
Memory verse	3	4
Prayer and goodbye	2	3

THE STORY IN PLAIN WORDS

Proud Haman was angry that Mordecai would not bow, so he made a plan to destroy all the Jews. Mordecai asked Queen Esther to go to the king for help, even though going without being called was dangerous. Esther and her people fasted. Then she went, and the king held out his golden scepter.

READ BEFORE CLASS

Esther 3-5 and Psalm 31:14-15. If you will show the film, watch it all the way through first.

What Kids May Ask

"Why wouldn't Mordecai bow?" The Bible doesn't say exactly. It says only that he had told them "he was a Jew" (3:4). Say: *We don't know all his reasons, but we know Haman's anger was wrong.*

"Why did Haman want to hurt the Jews?" He was angry at one man and wanted to destroy all his people (3:5-6). Say: *That was a terrible, wicked plan. God loves people from every nation.*

"Was Esther scared?" The Bible doesn't tell us her feelings. It tells us what she did: she fasted, she asked others to fast, and she went (4:16; 5:1).

"What is fasting?" Going without food for a while, often to focus on God. Say: *Kids shouldn't skip meals. You can give up a treat and pray instead.*

"Should I break rules to help?" Say: *If someone is being hurt, tell a grown-up you trust right away.*

Telling the Story

YOU'LL NEED a paper crown, a paper towel tube covered in yellow paper for the golden scepter, a sheet of paper rolled like a letter, and a chair for the king's throne (the leader sits; kids stay on the floor). *SAY lines are a dramatized paraphrase for children; READ lines quote the WEB.*

DO Teach the cues. When you hear "Haman," stomp your feet softly (at Purim, people still make noise at his name). When you hear "scepter," hold one arm straight out.

SAY The king made Haman the most important leader, and everyone had to bow to him. But Mordecai would not bow. Haman was so angry that he made a terrible plan against all of Mordecai's people. He tricked the king into sealing a law with his ring. *(Hold up the rolled letter.)*

SAY	Mordecai was very sad, and he asked Queen Esther to talk to the king. But nobody could go to the king without being called, unless the king held out his golden scepter.
READ	Esther 4:14 aloud: "Who knows if you haven't come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"
SAY	Esther asked all her people to fast for three days. Then she said, *I will go to the king. And if I perish, I perish.*
DO	Sit on the chair with the crown on. Invite a helper to walk slowly toward you. Pause. Then hold out the scepter.
READ	Esther 5:2 aloud: "So Esther came near and touched the top of the scepter."
SAY	The king was kind to Esther! She invited him and Haman to a special dinner, and then to another one. God was at work, and the story wasn't over yet.
ASK	What did Esther do even though it was scary? Who could you help this week?

USING THE FILM INSTEAD. The film runs about 11 minutes. Preview it, and mark your stop times in your player before class. For grades K-2, show 3:41 to 7:33 (Mordecai mourns through Esther's "Not yet. Tomorrow."), and tell the beginning yourself. **STOP AT 7:33,** before Haman plans a gallows for Mordecai. For grades 3-5, the default is two clips: 0:24 to 3:17 and 3:33 to 7:58 (starting at 0:24 skips the opening tease). This skips the decree read aloud, which names "little children and women" (Esther 3:13; 3:18-3:32 in the film), and **STOPS AT 7:58,** before Haman's friends propose hanging Mordecai (7:59-8:14). At the skip, say simply: *The law said all the Jews would be destroyed on one day.* After previewing, a leader may choose the full range, 0:24 to 8:15, for a class that is ready for it. No violence is shown on screen. Times are from the film's final caption file.

Opening Game: The Golden Scepter

The leader holds a paper "scepter" and stands at one end of the room. Kids line up at the other end. One at a time, a child walks slowly toward the leader. When the scepter goes down, they freeze; when the leader holds it out, they may walk again. When they arrive, they touch the tip gently with one finger and go to the back of the line. No running, crowding, swinging, or poking; only the leader holds the scepter. No one is out; anyone who moves early just takes one step back.

Wrap up: *Going to the king was dangerous. Queen Esther went anyway, to help her people. Let's find out what happened!*

Object Lesson: A Voice for Others

YOU'LL NEED a sheet of poster board rolled into a megaphone and taped.

Stand at the back of the room and whisper, *Please help.* Ask: *Could you hear me?* Then say it again through the megaphone. **Say:** *Esther's people couldn't get to the king, but Esther was close to him. Her place in the palace was like this megaphone: she could speak where they couldn't. God puts each of us in places where we can speak up for others, with kind words, or by telling a grown-up when someone is being hurt.* Close by having the class say through the megaphone, *God, help me be brave!*

Craft: My Golden Scepter

Kids wrap a cardboard tube in yellow paper and tape it. For the top, they crumple a sheet of yellow paper into a big ball and tape it on firmly. On a paper tag tied or taped to the scepter, they write **God can use me to help others.** Grades 3-5 can add the memory verse.

SUPPLIES (PER CHILD)

- A cardboard tube (paper towel size)
- Two sheets of yellow construction paper
- Tape and a paper tag (tags pre-cut by leaders)
- Crayons or markers
- No scissors for children; leaders do any cutting before class

Small Groups

GRADES K-2

1. Why was Esther brave?
2. What did the king hold out to Esther?
3. Who is someone you could help this week?

GRADES 3-5

1. Haman had power and riches but was still angry (5:11-13). Why do you think he wasn't happy?
2. Mordecai said Esther might be queen "for such a time as this" (4:14). What do you think he meant?
3. Esther asked others to fast with her (4:16). The verse doesn't mention prayer. Why might it help to have people stand with you when you face something scary?
4. Read Psalm 31:15. What does "My times are in your hand." mean?

Memory Verse Practice

MEMORY VERSE

"My times are in your hand."

PSALM 31:15, WEB

Motions: on "My times," tap your wrist like a watch; on "in your hand," hold out an open hand, then point up. Say it slowly, then quickly, then in a whisper. Grades 3-5: add Psalm 31:14.

Prayer

Invite kids to name someone who needs help or a friend, out loud or silently. Anyone may pass. Then pray: *Dear God, our times are in Your hand. When we are afraid, help us be brave and kind. Thank You for Jesus, who came to save us. Amen.*

CLASSROOM TIPS

- **Attention signal:** hold out the scepter; kids freeze and look at you.
- **Fasting:** never ask children to skip meals. Suggest giving up a treat instead, with parents' permission.
- Use only large, safe items. No coins, rocks, beads, or other small objects: they are choking hazards for little ones.
- **Safeguarding.** If a child or teen tells you about abuse, neglect, self-harm, harmful drinking or drug use at home, or anything else that makes you worried for their safety: stay calm, listen, and thank them for telling you. Don't promise to keep it secret, don't question them for details or investigate, and don't confront anyone involved. Write down what they said as soon as you can, and report it the same day to your church's designated safeguarding lead, following your church's safeguarding policy and any mandatory-reporting law that applies to you. If anyone is in immediate danger, stay with them and call emergency services. Telling a church safeguarding lead does not replace any report the law requires you to make directly to child-protection authorities or police.

FOR PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-5)

- Plan 20-25 minutes: story with cues, the scepter game, the scepter craft, and prayer.
- Tell it as *Esther was brave, she asked the king for help, and God took care of her.* Say only that Haman had a mean plan.
- Questions: *What did the king hold out? Who can you help?*
- Practice "My times are in your hand." with an open hand.

TAKE-HOME PAGE · FOR PARENTS

Today in Kids Ministry

For Such a Time as This

ESTHER 3-5

WHAT WE LEARNED

Proud Haman made a plan to destroy Mordecai's people, the Jews. Mordecai asked Queen Esther to go to the king, though it was dangerous. Esther and her people fasted for three days. Then she went, and the king held out his golden scepter. God was at work, even though His name is never written in Esther. **Big idea:** *God can use me to help others, even when I'm afraid.*

TALK ON THE WAY HOME

1. What was Esther brave about?
2. When is it hard to speak up for someone?
3. Who could our family help this week?

MEMORY VERSE

"My times are in your hand."

PSALM 31:15, WEB

TRY THIS AT HOME

Draw three circles: home, school, and church or team. In each, write someone who might need a friend or someone on their side. Pray for them by name, and choose one kind step to take.

Watch the film together

Scan, or visit phillacolla.com/biblestories. Free, about 11 minutes, listed there from release day. Parents, preview it first: it reads Haman's decree to destroy the Jews (Esther 3:13) and his plan to hang Mordecai (5:14). No violence is shown.

GO DEEPER AS A FAMILY

The **Family Study** track of the full companion guide has the story, questions for every age, and a prayer. Get the full guide free at phillacolla.com/biblestories. Next in the series: *The Gallows and the Reversal* (Esther 6-10).

PRAY TOGETHER

God, thank You that our times are in Your hand. Make us brave to help others. In Jesus' name, amen.

KIDS: DRAW ESTHER AND THE GOLDEN SCEPTER

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