

Esther's Banquet

Esther 5, 6; Prophets and Kings, p. 602

Have you ever been to a special dinner where everyone dressed in their best clothes? Esther planned a special dinner, a banquet, for the king and Haman.

After three days and nights of not eating and drinking, Esther dressed in her prettiest clothes. Then she went to see the king. She walked to the door of his throne room and stood quietly. When King Xerxes saw her, he smiled and held out his gold scepter. Esther walked toward him and touched it.

"What can I do for you, my queen?" he smiled. "I'll give you up to half of my kingdom."

"I've prepared a banquet for you and Haman today," replied Esther. "Will you please come?"

"Of course! We'll be there," he said to Esther.

Later when Haman and the king were at her banquet, the king asked Esther, "What can I do for you, Queen Esther?"

Remember, I'll give you up to half of my kingdom."

"Come back tomorrow with Haman to another banquet," she replied. "I will answer your question then."

Haman left for home feeling very happy. Not everyone was invited to dinner with the king and queen! Then he saw Mordecai sitting at the gate. Mordecai did not bow to him. He didn't even stand up when he saw Haman. Haman was very angry, but he said nothing.

When Haman arrived home, he bragged to his family and friends, "I have ten sons. I have money and power. The king likes me. He gave me a great position. I'm the most important person in the palace after the king. I'm the only person Queen Esther invited to her banquet for the king. And she invited me back again tomorrow."

Then he complained to them about

Mordecai. "Everything would be perfect except for him," he said. "He's always sitting at the king's gate. He refuses to honor me."

"Why don't you have him hanged?" someone suggested.

Haman liked that idea. So he had his workmen build a hanging platform.

That night, the king had trouble going to sleep. So he asked one of his servants to bring the daily court record to him. He read about the two guards who had planned to kill him. Then he read about Mordecai's part in reporting those plans.



The Message

With God's help, I have the courage to do what is right.

Memory Verse

"In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight"

(Proverbs 3:6, NIV).

"Mordecai saved my life! Did we reward him?" the king asked his servant.

"No, sir," said the servant. "We never did."

The next morning Haman came before the king. He planned to ask for permission to hang Mordecai. But before he could say anything, the king asked him a question, "What should be done to honor a man who has done a good thing?"

Haman thought the king was talking about him. So he replied, "Give him a royal robe and crown to wear. Let him ride through the streets on a royal horse. Have your servant announce, 'This is what the king does for a man he wants to honor.'"

"I like that idea, Haman," King Xerxes replied. "Do everything that you've said for Mordecai right away. Don't leave anything out."

Haman had to do what the king asked. But he was so

embarrassed and ashamed, he hid his face all the way home. When he got there, he told his friends and family what had happened.

"You're losing all your power to Mordecai," they said.

"You can't win.

You're going to be ruined." But before Haman had time to answer, the king's servants arrived.

They hurried Haman away to the second banquet Queen Esther had prepared.

What would happen? What would Esther say?

God would be with her. And God will be with you, too. He wants to be your best friend!



S A B B A T H

READ With your family, read the lesson story and talk about other Bible stories in which someone did something brave. Think of words to describe Esther that begin with each letter of the word BRAVE. Examples: B - Beautiful, Brains, Banquet. R - Ready, Right.

PRAY Thank God that He helps us make the right decisions.

M O N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss Esther 5:4-8.

ASK Ask if you can plan a Friday night banquet for the family. Help plan the food. Make name cards.

SHARE Try to make up a poem using the words you thought of using the word *brave*. Share the poem with your family during worship.

PRAY Ask God to help you to be brave.

T U E S D A Y

THINK Queen Esther and Mordecai were heroes. What did they do for their people?

DRAW Draw a happy face next to each statement that tells something about a real hero.

-A hero is someone with big muscles.

-A hero is someone who might be scared but has the courage to do what is right.

-A hero is never afraid.

-A hero asks God to help him or her do what is right.

PRAY Ask God to help you be a true hero.

S U N D A Y

READ For family worship read and discuss Esther 5:1-5.

MAKE Make a scepter by covering an empty tube or roll of stiff paper with bright paper. Write your memory verse on the scepter. Teach the memory verse to your family.

DO During family worship, find a map and ask someone to help you measure the distances between two places if you go in a straight line. Now measure the distance if you follow the road. Which is longer? Ask God to keep you walking on the straight road.

Esther
and her maids prayed very hard because Esther knew that only God could save her from death if she went to see the king without being invited.



W E D N E S D A Y

READ During worship today, read and discuss Esther 3:1-6. Find the word *prejudice* in a dictionary. Write the meaning here.

THINK In the lesson story, who was prejudiced? With your family, think of three ways to overcome prejudice.

PRAY Review the memory verse. Then pray that you will not be prejudiced.

T H U R S D A Y

READ For worship today read and discuss Esther 6:1-10.

DO Before worship, create a Queen Esther Award. During worship give the award to someone in your family who stood up for what is right.

PRAY Review your memory verse together. Ask God to make your paths straight.

F R I D A Y

DO Help your mother prepare and serve your family the banquet you planned on Monday. After eating, act out the lesson story together.

ASK Ask each person to tell about a time God helped them to make the right decision.

SING Sing songs of praise. Then pray for those who are facing difficult situations.



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PUZZLE

Directions: You can be brave, too, if you understand why Esther was brave. Using the alphabet, place the letter that follows each letter in the sentence below. For example, the first letter is R, so you should write the letter S.



Rgd jldv Fnc vntkc ad vhsg gdq
