

July 27, 1997
2 & 3 Year Olds

Esther
3EST45EC

God Used Esther to Protect His People.

Materials I Need:

Memory Work:

The Prophet - Esther

The Principle - God used Esther to protect His people.

The People - Israelites in the Persian capital of Susa

God's Attribute - God is a powerful protector.

Aim Questions:

1. Who did God use in our Bible Adventure today to protect His people, the Jews? (Esther)
2. Did Esther learn to obey God by obeying her adoptive father, Mordecai? (Yes)
3. What did Queen Esther do that was hard and took courage? (She went to ask the king to save her people.)
4. Did King Xerxes help the Jews? (Yes. God used Esther to save the Jews.)
5. Do you want to be brave like Esther and do the right thing?

 Hook:

Make a Grager Noisemaker: All you need to make a grager is some kind of container that closes tightly and something to put inside the container that will rattle. The container can be a small box, or a screw-top metal or plastic can. You can use a soft-drink can if you firmly tape up the opening. Or you can staple together two paper plates or paper bowls. Before you close up your container, put inside a few dried beans, dried corn kernels (popcorn), or pebbles. Decorate your grager with bright colors and designs or perhaps with the face of a character from the Esther story. You might want to glue on yarn for hair, or add other touches of your own. Now you are ready to make Purim noise! It is a Jewish custom that on the evening of Purim, the book of Esther is read at the synagogue service. Instead of listening quietly, whenever Mordecai or Esther is mentioned, everyone cheers and whistles. But when the name of Haman is spoken, everyone makes such a racket--booing, stamping the feet, rattling the gragers--that the noise totally drowns out the sound of the villain's name. The gragers can be used during the Bible Adventure or afterwards, to reinforce the story.

Relay Game: Divide the children into two teams, the red team and the blue team. Give each team a bag of clothing articles and a hat to put on one of their members that they choose to be "it." They can look at the clothes and plan who goes when and what piece of clothing they will put on their "it." The team that happily works together to get the job done first is the winner! "You had an easy, fun job to do. In our Bible Adventure today you will hear about someone who was willing to help get a hard job done."

Musical Parade: Use the musical instruments and streamers you made last week and march around the room singing "God is so Good." Today in our Bible Adventure, we will find out how good God was to the Israelite Jews living in Persia.

Dress Up Center: (3EST45ECGF9) Bring in fancy dresses, scarves and shoes for the children to try on. Let them pretend to be dressing up as a king and queen. Let the children decorate crowns to wear throughout the morning.



Paper Palace Wall: Help kids make a wall of the classroom into a face of Queen Esther's palace.

Collect used paper, transparent tape, markers, cardboard wrapping paper tubes and empty aluminum cans. Explain that kids will be working together to build the front of a palace. Remind them that Esther went to live in a huge palace when she became queen. Set the used paper and tape in the middle of the room. Show kids how to hold the paper vertically, roll the paper so the ends just overlap, then secure it with tape. Have students roll paper for a few minutes until they have a good stock of building materials. When kids have a good supply of paper rolls, show them how to tape the rolls to the wall vertically to resemble columns of stone. Have kids plan how their palace will look, using the wall with the door, and using cardboard wrapping paper tubes as turrets. When kids have finished, they can stack or flatten empty aluminum cans and use them as decorations. Have each child stand at the "palace door," touch the gold scepter, and walk through to talk to the king. Those who do not receive the gold scepter may not go through the door.



Book:

Presentation Ideas -



Show the 3EST45ECGF1, 3EST45ECGF2, 3EST45ECGF3, 3EST45ECGF4, 3EST45ECGF5, and 3EST45ECGF6 story pictures as you tell the Bible Adventure.



Wear a crown and fancy robe today as you tell the story of King Xerxes and Queen Esther.

Bible Adventure -

(Show a picture of Esther.) Esther is the name of the next book of the Bible we will be reading. Say the name "Esther" with me. God had an important job for Esther to do. Esther was willing to obey God and help her people, the Jews.

(Show the GF2 picture.) Esther learned to obey her adoptive father, Mordecai, when she was a young girl. You see, her parents had died and Mordecai had adopted her as his own child. Mordecai loved Esther and took good care of her. Esther always obeyed her father.

Esther grew up and one day King Xerxes' messengers came to Mordecai's door. "King Xerxes wants us to bring all the beautiful young women throughout Persia to the palace so he can choose a new queen. We want to take Esther with us to the palace." Mordecai told Esther what the messengers had said. Mordecai said to Esther, "Don't tell anyone that you are a Jew." Esther listened to Mordecai and obeyed, as always.

Esther went to the palace and waited for the king to choose a queen. Finally, it was Esther's turn to be taken to the king. When King Xerxes saw her, he liked her the best and said, "You are the one I choose to be the next queen!" So he put a crown on Esther's head and she became the queen of Persia. God had a special plan to use Esther to help her people, the Jews.

(Show the GF3 picture.) King Xerxes' assistant was named Haman. He had the king's signet ring, which meant he could do whatever he wanted. Wherever Haman went, people bowed and honored him because the king had ordered everyone to. There was only one person who refused to bow down to Haman. Mordecai was a Jew who refused to bow down to Haman. The men at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why don't you obey the king and bow to Haman?" Mordecai said, "I don't bow and worship men." Haman was furious with Mordecai and decided to kill Mordecai, and every Jew, in all of Persia.

Haman thought of a plan. He asked King Xerxes, "Will you issue a decree for the Jews to be destroyed on March thirteenth of next year?" King Xerxes said, "Do as you want with the Jews." So Haman wrote a letter and sealed it with the king's signet ring, sending messages to all the towns around Persia that on March thirteenth, all the Jews were to be killed. This was now the Law of the Medes and Persians and no one could change it.

When Mordecai heard the decree, he was so upset that he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went out into the city, wailing loudly. Mordecai said to Esther's servant, "Tell Esther to go beg the king for mercy. Maybe God has made her the queen so that she can help her people stay alive." Esther was scared to go the king. If Esther went to Xerxes and he did not hold out the golden scepter to her, she

would be killed. But Esther also knew that if she didn't go to the king, she would be killed on March thirteenth with the rest of her people.

(Show the GF5 picture.) Esther sent a message to Mordecai, "Get all the Jews in Susa together, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days. My maids and I will fast for three days. Then I will go to the king, and, if I die, I die." Esther was very brave to go to the king. On the third day, she put on her royal robes and stood at the door of the king's hall. Her heart was beating fast, she was so scared. When Xerxes saw Queen Esther, he was pleased with her and held out the golden scepter to her. Esther came to the king and touched the scepter.

"What is it you want, Queen Esther?" asked King Xerxes. "I will give you whatever you want." Esther said to the king, "I am inviting you and Haman to a banquet today." King Xerxes said to a servant, "Go get Haman right now. We will go to the banquet." *(Show the GF6 picture.)* As the three were eating, the king said, "What is your request, Queen Esther? I will give you whatever you want." Queen Esther said, "There is a wicked man who is trying to kill me and my people. Will you help my people?" King Xerxes said, "Who is the man who would do such a thing to you?" Queen Esther said, "The wicked man is Haman," and she pointed right to him. King Xerxes jumped to his feet, angry that Haman would try to hurt Queen Esther. King Xerxes said, "Guards, take Haman away right now!"

King Xerxes sent another letter to all the towns throughout Persia saying, "On March thirteenth, the Jews can fight to protect themselves from the people who hate them and want to kill them." When March thirteenth finally arrived, no one helped the Jews' enemies. What a happy day for the Jews! God used brave Esther to protect His people.

Mordecai was given a crown, a royal robe and the king's signet ring. He sent a message to the Jews throughout the kingdom saying that each year, the Jews should remember God's protection by celebrating a happy feast, the feast of Purim. March fifteenth was set aside as a day of joy and feasting, a day for giving gifts to each other and to the poor. The Jews loved Mordecai because he worked hard for his people. They were happy to celebrate the day God protected His people through Queen Esther.

Prayer: Most High God of Heaven, You protected Your people in a special way. Thank You for giving us this story of Queen Esther. We know You are powerful and protect us every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Look:



Story Review Center: The children act out a simplified version of the story, with the boys being the king or Mordecai and the girls being the queen. They act according to what is read by the teacher.

The king was looking for a new queen. *(Boys put hand over brow.)*

Mordecai let Esther go to the palace. *(Girls walk in place.)*

All the beautiful women went to the palace to get ready to see the king. They put on oil and perfume and fixed their hair. *(Girls rub faces and arms and comb hair.)*

Esther received the crown as the king chose her to be queen. *(Girls put on crowns.)*

Mordecai didn't bow down to the king's assistant, Haman. *(Boys stand straight and tall.)*

The king's helper wrote a new law that said to kill all the Israelites on March thirteenth. The king signed it and sent it to everyone in the country. *(Boys pretend to write and then walk in place, handing a letter to the people.)*

Mordecai heard about the law that would kill all the Jews in Persia. *(Boys cup ears.)*

Mordecai told Esther about the scary news. *(Girls cup ears.)*

Esther asked all the Israelites to fast for three days and find out what God would want them to do. *(Boys and girls get on knees, or fold hands, as if praying.)*

Esther risked her life and went to the king who handed her the scepter. It was okay to talk to him. *(Boys reach hand out towards the girls.)*

Esther wanted to talk to the king so she invited him to a banquet. *(Girls pretend to be mixing up some food.)*

The king and Haman came to the banquet. *(Boys walk in place and then pretend to be eating.)*

Esther said, "Come again tomorrow and I will give my request then." *(Girls motion "to come.")*

The king and Haman came the next day. *(Boys walk in place.)*

The king told Esther she could have whatever she wanted. *(Boys reach hand to girls.)*

Esther told the king about the bad law that Haman wrote. "Please let my people live," she said.

The king was angry and asked for his servants to take Haman and kill him. (*Boys stomp feet and pound hands.*)

The king wrote a new law that protected the Israelites. (*Boys pretend to be writing.*)

All the Israelites Jews were happy. Queen Esther was willing to help God in His plan. They celebrated with a feast and gifts. (*Everyone clap hands.*)

Simplified Story: (3EST45ECGF11) Group Publishers has a simplified story that you may want to use in place of the Bible Adventure or as a story review. Be sure that the children get the point that God protected His people and used Esther's obedience and courage as part of the process.

"Haman Says" Game: The teacher will ask the children to do various activities, using either "Haman says" or "Esther says." If the teacher says, "Esther says to go to the king," all the children clap their hands and cheer. If the teacher says, "Haman says hurt God's people," the children will rattle their gragers and hiss. Haman was not a good person to follow. Use all kinds of requests, like "hold our the scepter, go to the banquet, kill Mordecai, send a decree, bow to the king, help the Jews," etc.

Haman Toss Game: Let the children throw wet sponges (or wadded newspaper balls) at one of the teachers who is pretending to be the villain, Haman. This activity is best done outside if the sponges are very wet. Each time a sponge is thrown, the children can yell, "God protected His people!"

Vest of Courage: (3EST45ECGF7 & 3EST45ECGF10) Each of us is different. Some of us have brown hair, some of us have blue eyes, some of us are short and some of us are tall. Some people are really good singers, some people are really good at playing ball and some people are really good at drawing pictures. God gives each person his or her gifts and talents. We should use these gifts and talents to glorify God. God made Esther beautiful and she used her looks to help save the Jewish people. Remember in the story when Esther had to go to the King to save her people? She was scared, but she knew she had to try and save the Jews. She asked Mordecai to ask the people to fast for her, not eating or drinking anything for three days. After the three days, she put on her royal robes and stood at the door where the king was sitting. Her beauty pleased him, and he told her "I will give you whatever you want." Esther was able to save her people because she had the courage to go to the king. "Today, we are going to make vests of courage. We can pretend that our vest is the royal robe like the one Esther wore when she went to the king." (See the cutting instructions on the GF7 page. The kids can decorate their vests with crayons and markers or glue on cut out paper or GF10 pictures.)

Esther Coloring Page: (3EST45ECGF8) Have the children color this page as you talk about obedience, and using God's strength to help us obey. "Esther obeyed Mordecai even though she had to do things which scared her because she was concerned about her family and her people. God wants us to be obedient to our parents, too, even when it seems hard to do. What should we do when we think that it will be hard to obey? We should pray like Esther did. God will help us when we look to Him. What could we pray about so that God will help us obey?" If you like, you could have the children put a praying hands sticker on the page, too.

Kids-Life Video Center: Watch the "Brave Queen Esther" segment of the Kids-Life Video that can be requested from the Children's Department. Be sure and preview the video before showing it to the children and use it only as a reinforcement of the Bible Adventure. The video segment is five to eight minutes, depending on whether you include the song at the end.

Snack Time: Explain that kids will be making cookies to celebrate Esther's victory over Haman. Have a volunteer mix 1 stick of softened margarine with four tablespoons of powdered sugar. Choose another child to mix in two egg yolks and three tablespoons of ice water. The mixture will be lumpy; don't worry if the water doesn't mix in well. Call on someone to measure out and add 1 1/2 cups of flour. Have the children take turns mixing the dough well. Divide the dough into twelve balls and give one to each child. Have kids roll the dough into four-inch circles, then spread a spoonful of apricot jam in the center. Show them how to fold up and pinch together three edges of the dough into the center of the cookie. Explain that the cookie is a reminder of Haman's three-cornered hat. Be sure they pinch the edges tightly; otherwise the cookies will flatten out while they're baking. Bake the cookies in a 350 degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes. When done, the cookies should be golden

brown. If you have more than twelve children in your class, have them make two batches of cookies. It is a Jewish custom to celebrate Purim by giving gifts of food to their friends and those who are in need. The children could wrap their cookies in colorful tissue paper and present the sweet gifts to each other. As they give the gifts to each other, have kids say, "God used Esther to protect His people."

Songs:



God Used Esther (Tune: "Frere Jacques")

God used Esther, God used Esther,
To save the Jews, to save the Jews.
Esther was willing. Esther was willing
To help God's plan, to help God's plan.



I'll Obey (Show the 3EST45ECGF8 picture as you sing this song.)

I'll obey and serve You, I'll obey to show I love You.
I'll obey, my life is in Your hands.
'Cause it's the way to prove my love when feelings go astray.
If it costs me everything, I'll obey.



God Is In Control (by Twila Paris) *Could play this song.*

Chorus

God is in control.
We believe that His children will not be forsaken.
God is in control.
We will choose to remember and never be shaken.
There is no power above or beside Him, we know.
Oh, oh, oh
God is in control.



Esther (to the tune of "Michael Row the Boat Ashore")

C *F C*
Esther was a lovely queen--hallelujah!
Em F C G7 C
Esther was a lovely queen--hallelujah!

She obeyed Mordecai--hallelujah!
She obeyed Mordecai--hallelujah!

God used her to save the Jews--hallelujah!
God used her to save the Jews--hallelujah!

I want to obey--hallelujah!
Follow my parents every day--hallelujah!



Took:



"Celebrate God's Power" Center: Plan a joyful celebration. Since praise songs, using the gragers. Use the gold scepter to point to a child who will choose another happy song. Let all the "Esthers" stand up for one verse, then the Mordecais for another. Emphasize the fact that God used Esther to protect His people. God used Esther in her time and God uses us in our time. Pray that we will be willing to be used by God in His plan.



“Queen Esther’s Story of Courage” Booklet: (3EST45ECGF10) Cut the pictures into approximately 3 3/4 inch squares and staple them together to make a booklet. Let the children “read” their books, telling you what is happening in the pictures. Help the younger ones remember the story by briefly explaining what the pictures mean. The children will love to read their books over and over. Encourage them to “read” their books to their parents when they go home.



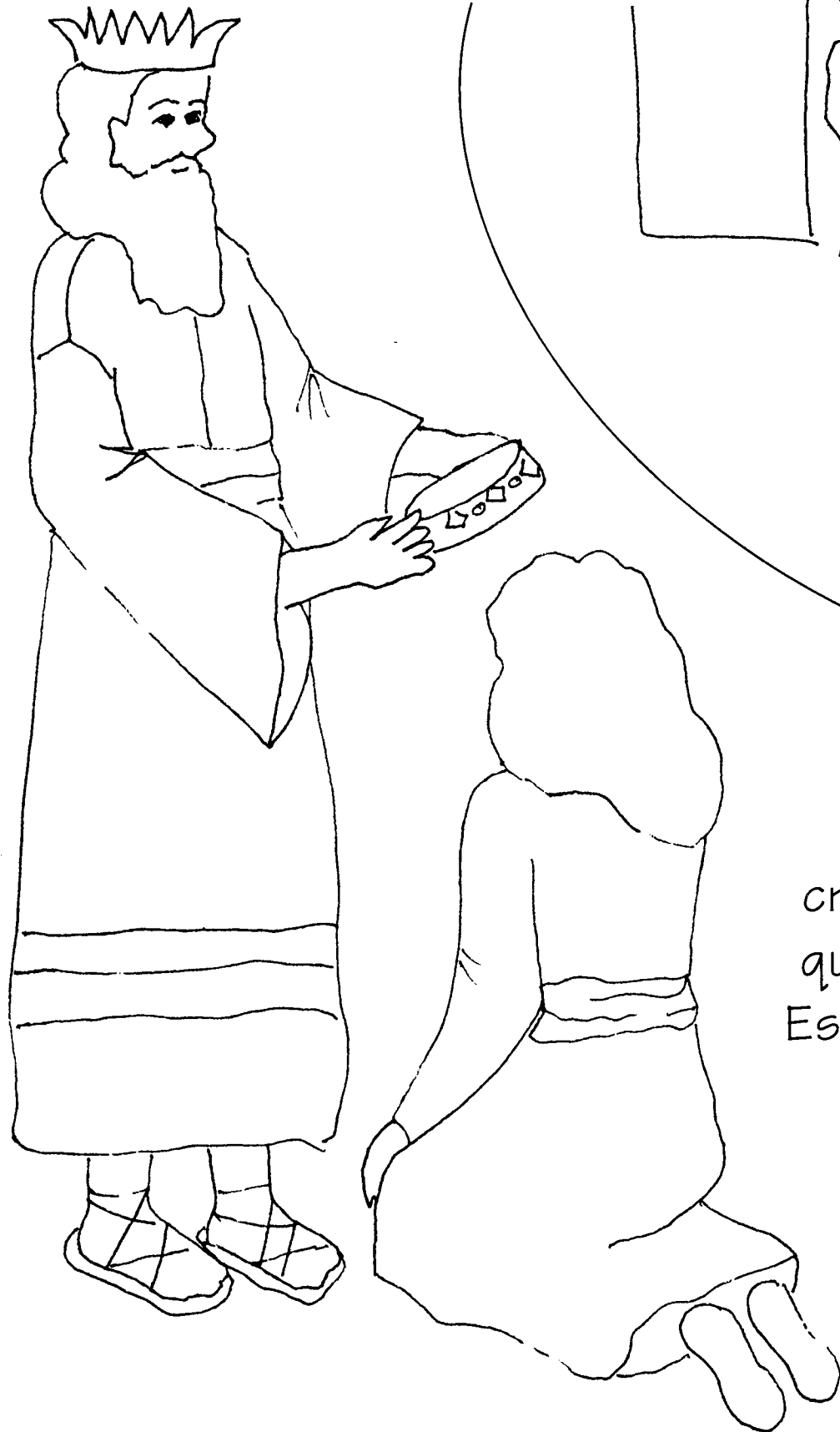
Magazine Hunt: Ask the children to find pictures of people celebrating birthdays, Christmas, family reunions, etc. Talk about how we celebrate happy times together. “In the Bible Adventure today, why were the Jews celebrating?” God protected them from the wicked plan of Haman. He used Esther’s courage to save her people. Let’s pray right now for courage to obey God even when it seems hard.



Queen Esther

3EST45ECGF1

Esther learned to follow Mordecai's instructions as a child.

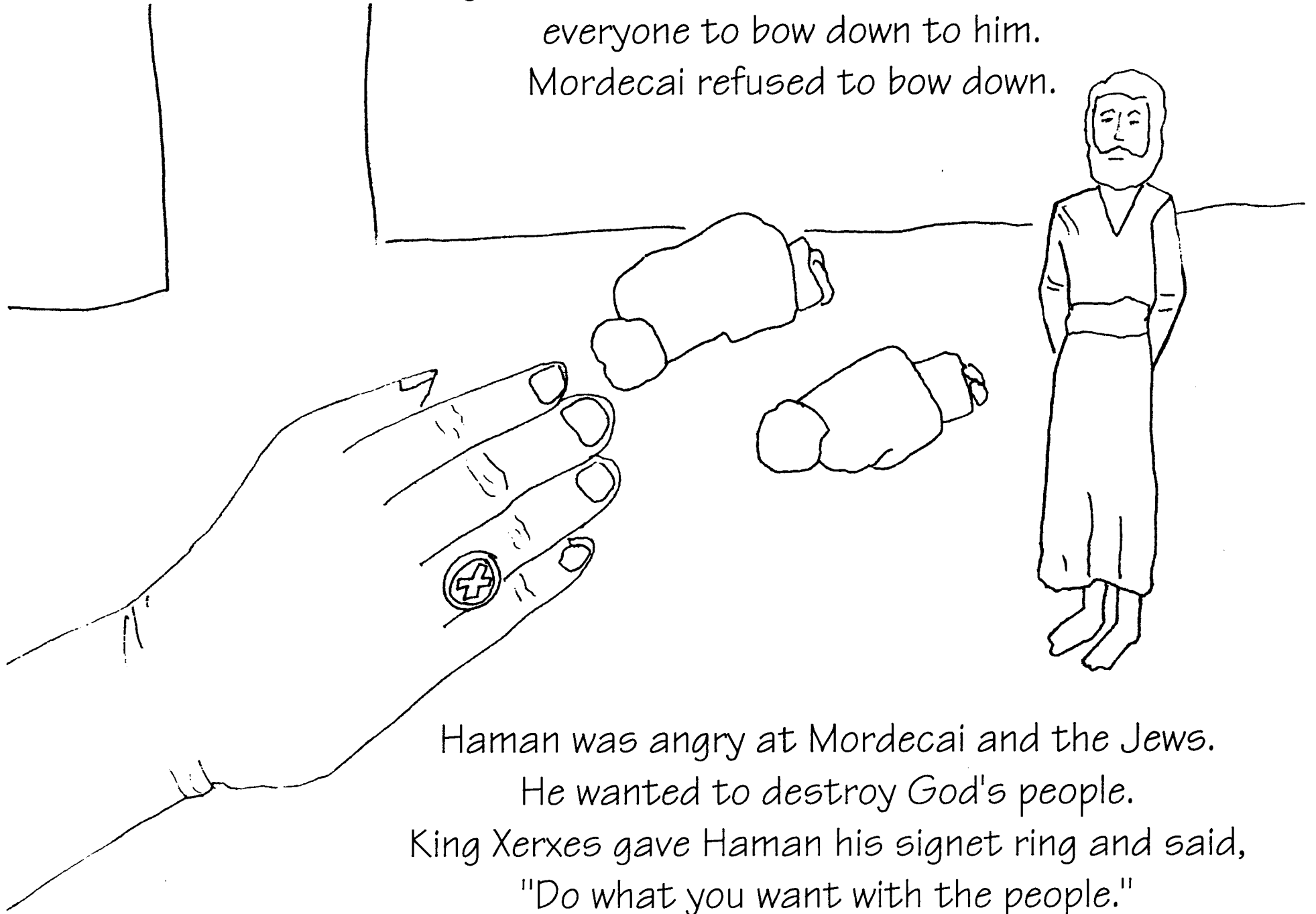


"Esther, it's time to come inside."



King Xerxes crowned Esther queen of Persia. Esther continued to listen to Mordecai's advice.

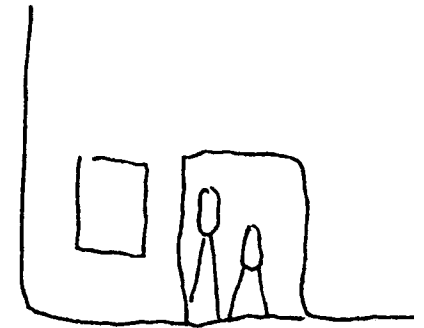
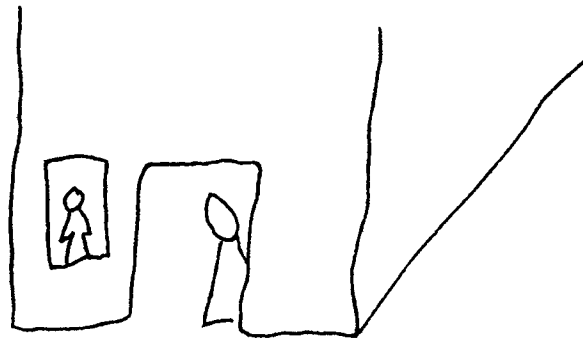
King Xerxes honored Haman and commanded everyone to bow down to him. Mordecai refused to bow down.



Haman was angry at Mordecai and the Jews. He wanted to destroy God's people. King Xerxes gave Haman his signet ring and said, "Do what you want with the people."



Haman cast lots
to find a day to
kill all the Jews.



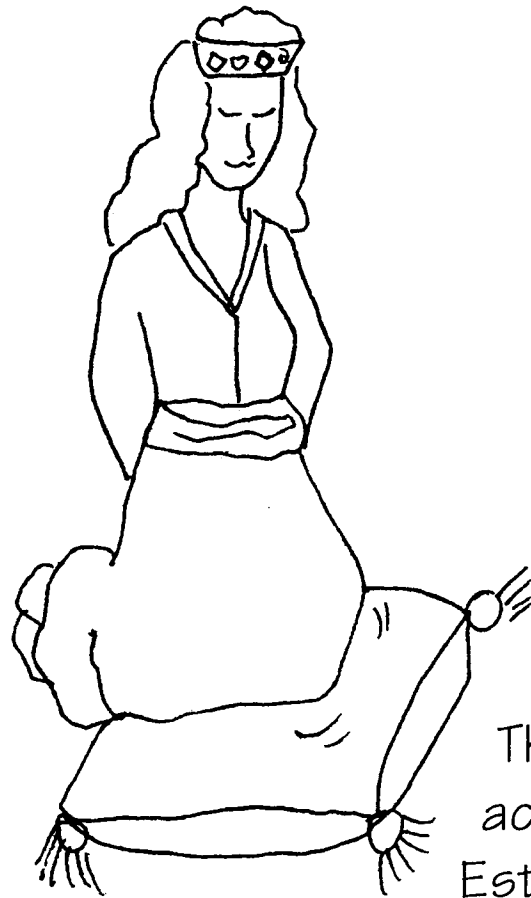
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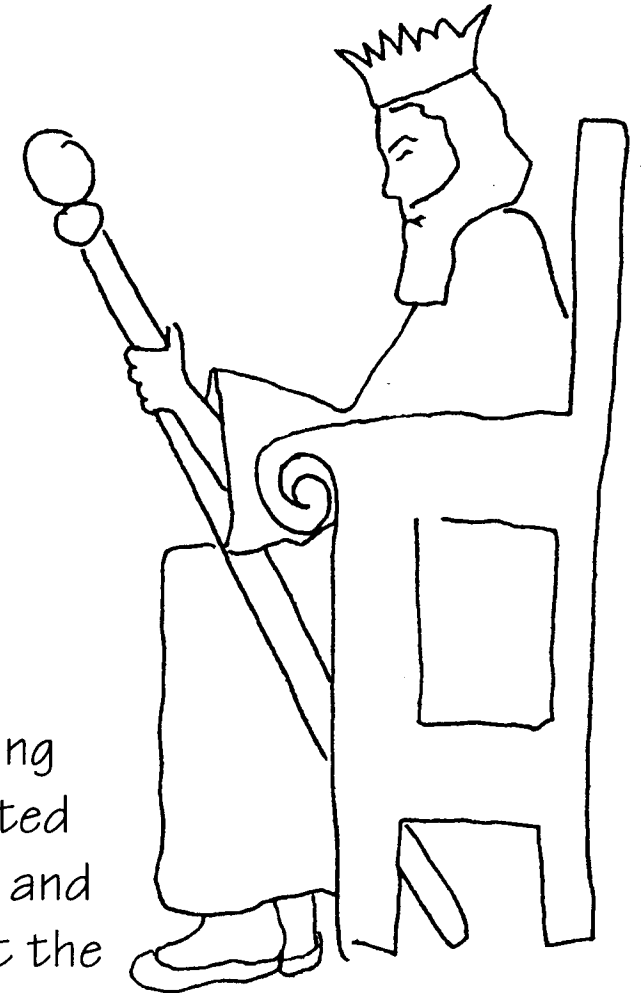
Esther and her maids fasted for three days before she went to the king.



Esther had courage to go to King Xerxes. She said, "If I die, I die."



The king accepted Esther and held out the golden scepter.



Esther prepared a banquet
for the king and Haman.
She told the king that
Haman was trying to
kill her people.

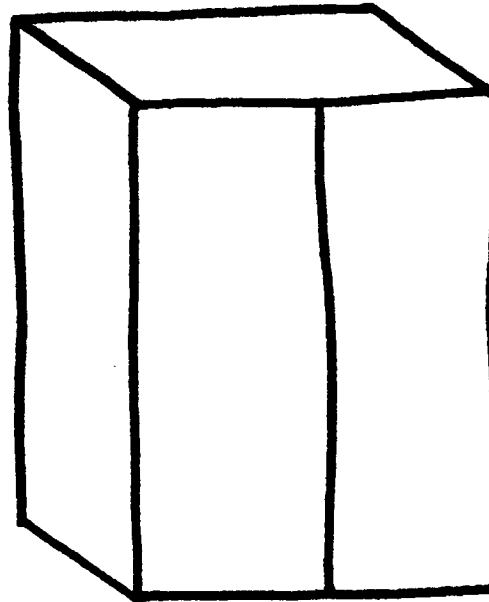
The king was angry and said,
"Take him away!"



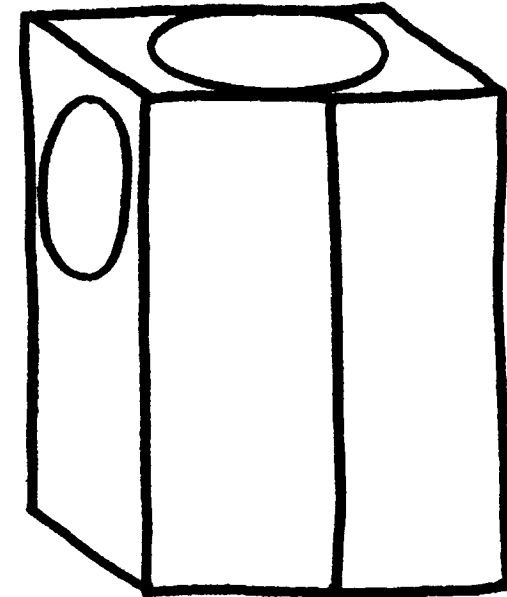
Vest of Courage



- 1 Lay grocery bag flat with opening at the bottom. Use scissors to cut up the center of the bag.
- 2 Cut a round opening into top of bag for neck. Cut out round arm holes in each side of the bag.
- 3 Cut ribbon in half, each piece should be about 6 inches (15 cm) long. Staple ribbons to vest to tie closed.



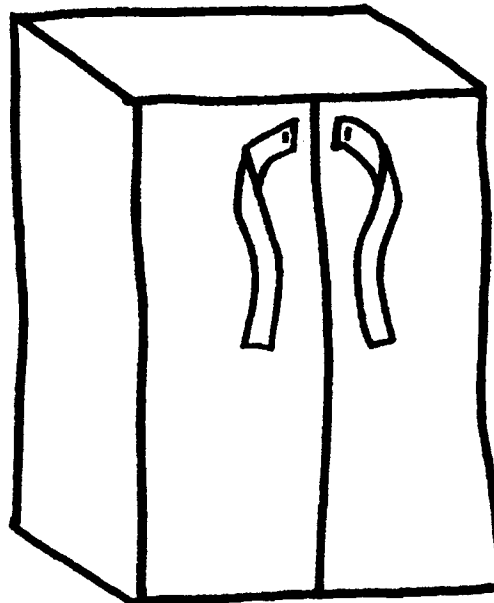
Cut up center



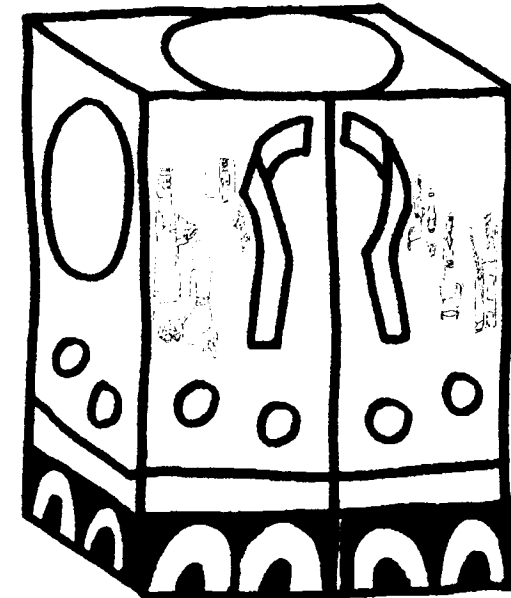
Cut out neck and arm holes

MORE ART FUN!

- ★ Glue pictures from today's Bible Adventure on the vest.
- ★ Use scissors to cut fringes on the vest.
- ★ Cut sponges into shapes, dip into poster paint, and print onto vest. Allow to dry completely. Glue fabric scraps and trim onto vest.
- ★ Glue iridescent strips to front and back of vest and wear with your helmet when riding your bike.



Staple on ribbons



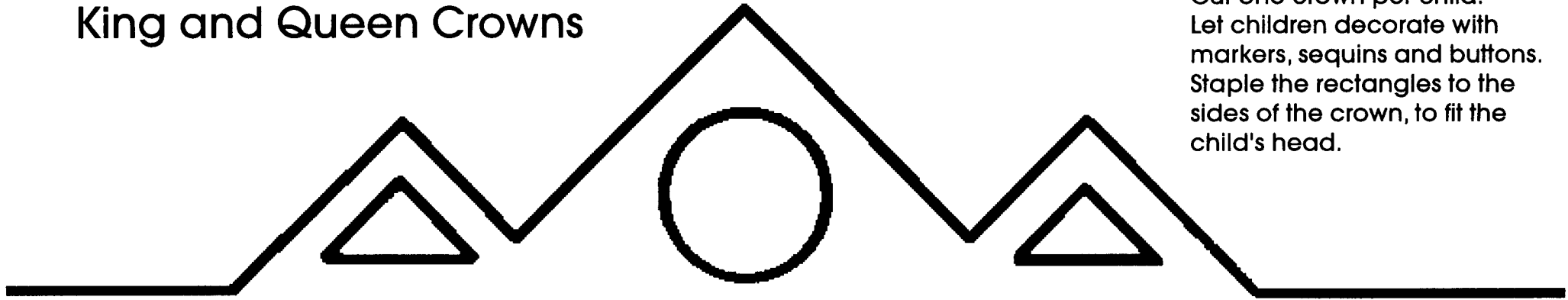
Decorate vest

Esther and her maids
fasted for three days,
asking God to protect
her people.

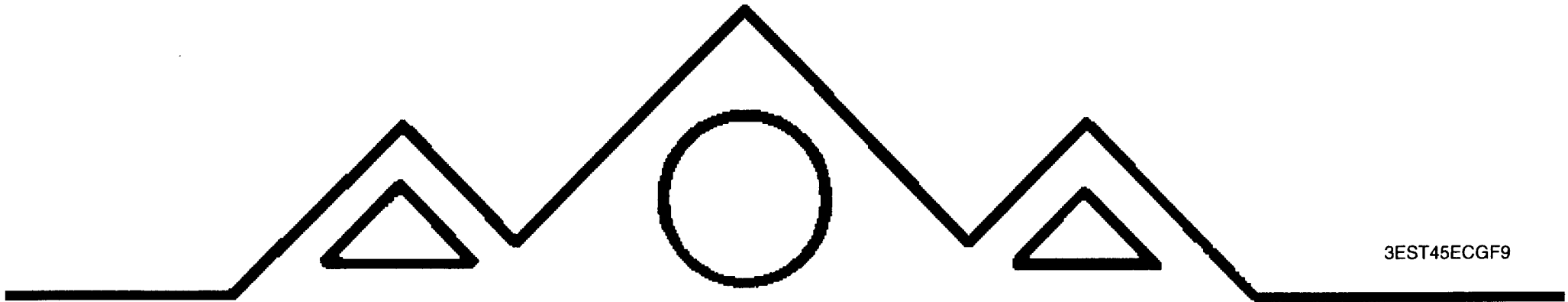
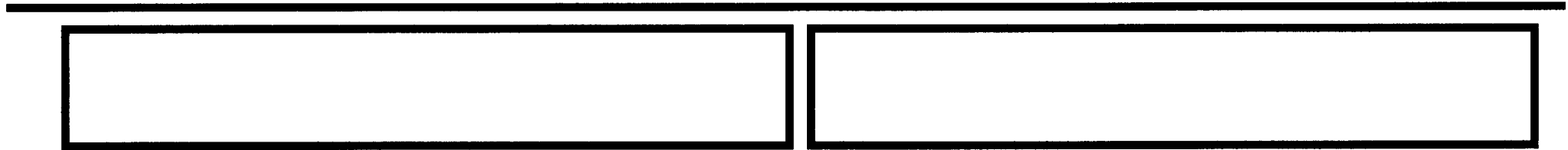


King and Queen Crowns

Cut one crown per child.
Let children decorate with
markers, sequins and buttons.
Staple the rectangles to the
sides of the crown, to fit the
child's head.



Queen Esther used courage to save her people.



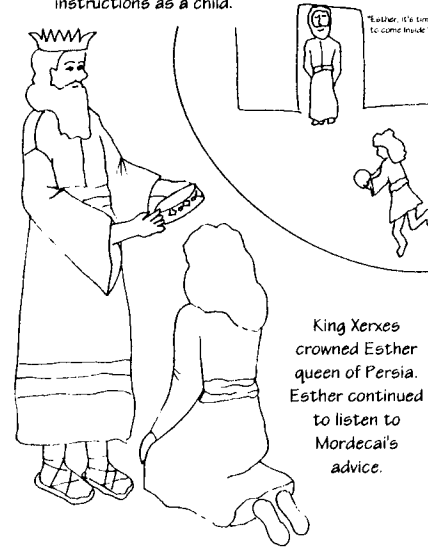
3EST45ECGF9

Queen Esther used courage to save her people.



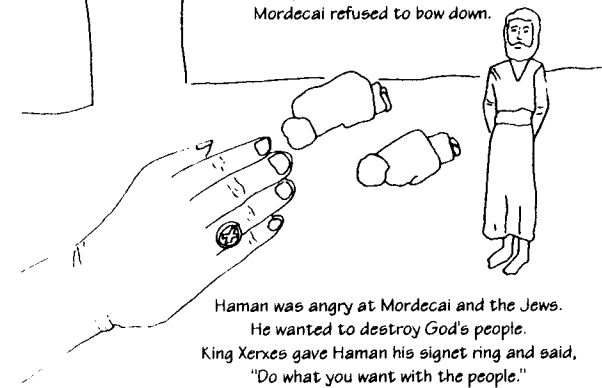
Queen Esther's Story of Courage

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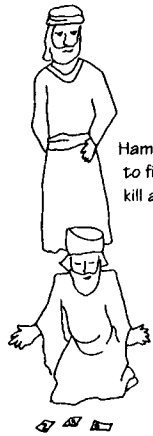
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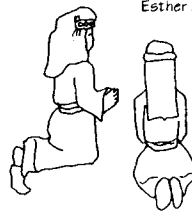
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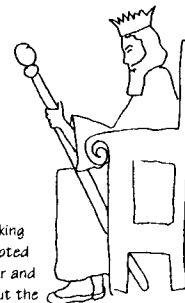
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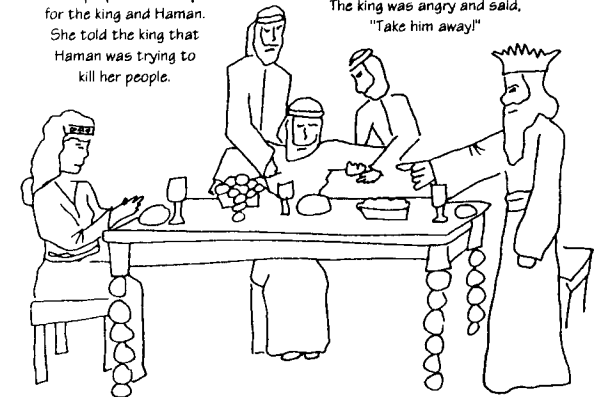
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The king accepted Esther and held out the golden scepter.



Esther prepared a banquet for the king and Haman. She told the king that Haman was trying to kill her people.



The king was angry and said, "Take him away!"

Directions: Cut these pictures into approximately 3 3/4 inch squares. Staple them into a little book for the children to "read."

Simplified Esther Story by Group Publishing

2. The Bible Story (up to 10 minutes)

Have the boys sit on one side of you and the girls on the other. Open your Bible to the book of Esther, and show the book to the children. Say: **The queen's story is found in the book of Esther in the Bible. In fact, the queen's name is Esther and the book was named after her! Listen carefully as I tell the story, because I have some actions for you to do. Boys, you'll be the king. Girls, you'll be the queen.**

One day before Esther became the queen, the king had a party. Boys, pretend to put on party hats. Pause. The king told Queen Vashti to come to his party, but she said no. Girls, shake your heads.

This made the king very angry. Boys, let me see your angriest faces. Pause.

The king decided to look for a new queen. He invited all of the most beautiful young women in the land to come to his palace. Servants arranged the girls' hair in pretty styles. Girls, pretend to brush your hair. Pause. They put on makeup and sweet perfume. Girls, pretend to put on makeup and perfume. Pause.

The king looked at all the girls. All the girls were lovely, but the king chose Esther to be the new queen. Girls, put on your crowns—Esther is the new queen! Pause. The king loved Esther very much.

The king had a lot of work to do to keep his huge kingdom running smoothly. He listened to his helpers. Boys, cup your hands around your ears as if you're listening. Pause. The king wrote new laws to keep his people safe. Boys, pretend you're writing a new law. Pause.

One day an evil man named Haman tricked the king and got him to sign a bad law. The law said that all the Jewish people would be killed. The king didn't know that Esther, the beautiful queen, was Jewish.

When Esther found out about the law, she told all of the Jewish people to pray and stop eating for three days. Girls, hold up three fingers for the three days. Pause.

At the end of the three days, Esther prepared a feast. Girls, let's pretend we're fixing a fancy dinner. What would you fix? Pause.

Esther invited the king and the evil man, Haman, to the feast. While they were eating, the king asked, "What do you want, Esther? I'll give you anything, even half of the kingdom."

Esther smiled and said, "Just come back tomorrow for another feast. Then I'll tell you what I want."

So the king and the evil Haman came back for another feast the next night. Again the king asked, "What is it you want, Esther?" Boys, let's ask the girls "What do you want?" Pause.

Queen Esther replied, "Please, my king, let my people live. They will soon be killed."

The king was angry that anyone would kill the queen's people. Let's see those angry faces again, boys. Pause. He said, "Who is the evil person responsible for this terrible thing?"

The queen pointed at Haman and said, "This is the man who wants to kill my people." So the king punished Haman, and Queen Esther and her people were safe. Esther's people shouted for joy. Let's all shout for joy and say, "Hooray!"