

Victory for the Jewish People

Teacher Preparation

1. Study **Lesson 5, pp. 57–61.**
 - Scripture **Esther 8–10**
2. **Visuals** to use in class.
 - Memory Verse Visual 7
 - Teaching Visuals **23–24**
3. Have **Focus**, Ls 5 ready to distribute after lesson (1 per student).

Opening Sequence (optional)

Greet teens as they arrive; assistant takes attendance.

Welcome Comments

Prayer Teacher

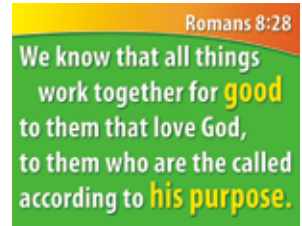
Announcements Notes

Songs *Trust and Obey* p. 16 #6
Trees of the Field p. 14 #8
Shelter in the Time of Storm p. 10 #9

Prayer (Choose 1 or 2 teens to pray.)

Memory Verse

Class read 3x. Say verse 2x.



Verse Visual 7

Lesson 5

Esther petitions the king for her people

Queen Esther asked the king to reverse the letters that Haman had sent to all the provinces. Tearfully she said, *“For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?”*



Card 23

Though Haman was dead, the mischief that he had devised against the Jews was not over. The decree was still the law that all the Jews should be killed on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and the message had gone out to the farthest corners of the Persian realm. The enemies of the

Jews were already preparing to slaughter all the Jews in their area.

In those days, the law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed, even by the king himself; therefore, the king would be unable to reverse the law that had been made.

“Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews. Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king’s name, and seal it with the king’s ring: for the writing which is written in the king’s name, and sealed with the king’s ring, may no man reverse.”

The king called for the scribes and told them to write whatever Mordecai dictated to them. Thus, a second letter was written by Mordecai to all the people of the Persian Empire. It was written in the king’s name and sealed with the king’s ring.

While Haman’s law had given permission for the people to kill the Jews and take their goods, Mordecai’s letter gave permission to the Jews to defend themselves against their enemies. Mordecai carefully worded the law, saying the Jews would be fully supported by the king and that the king encouraged the Jews to be prepared to fight against their attackers. Thus Mordecai’s law would counteract Haman’s law.

From India to Ethiopia

Mordecai’s law was to go out immediately to the Jews, to the lieutenants, to the deputies, and to all the rulers of the king’s provinces from India to Ethiopia—to all the 127 provinces, and the letter was to be translated into the languages of all the people.

The letters are sent

There was not much time to carry the message to all these distant places. Mordecai sent the letters by the fastest riders on mules, horses, and young Arabian camels that were

trained for speed. He wanted to make sure the message arrived in all the provinces in time to spare the Jews.

The Jews rejoice

When Haman's message had gone to the many provinces of the great Persian Empire, the Jews had torn their clothing and wailed in grief. Now the day came when another swift horse galloped into town; the people recognized the rider as a post from the king. Immediately they



Card 24

gathered to hear what new message the king had sent. The post's voice rang out clearly as he read the message: *"Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, Upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar."*

The Jews who heard this were amazed and thrilled; they could hardly believe what they were hearing. It caused great joy and gladness in every Jewish home, as the fathers told their families what the king had declared. They wept for joy and laughed and sang together in every Jewish home.

When the thirteenth day of the twelfth month finally arrived, the Jews were prepared to defend themselves from those who hated them. The king and the local officials were on the side of the Jews. In most areas no one dared to bother the Jews, because they knew the Jews were well prepared to fight back. This was a surprising turn of events, and many people were so impressed with the Jews and with their God Who was working for them that they, too, became Jews.

After the thirteenth day of the twelfth month came and went, the Jews celebrated by resting, feasting, and rejoicing. Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces telling them that in the future they should keep the fourteenth and

fifteenth days of the twelfth month each year as holidays in remembrance of God's delivering them from their enemies and causing them to greatly rejoice.

This special holiday each year was called Purim, and the Jews were to celebrate those days in feasting, rejoicing, and sending gifts to one another. Many Jews today still celebrate Purim on March 14 and 15; they read the book of Esther together, recalling what brave Queen Esther did for the Jewish people.

After that King Ahasuerus exalted Mordecai in the kingdom next to himself and in that exalted position Mordecai always looked after the welfare of the Jewish people. In return, the Jews loved and respected Mordecai.

God's intervention

Do you wonder how this tragic story could have such a happy ending? It is because the Jews fasted and prayed, and God changed their great tragedy into a triumph. The events all turned around because they prayed. God is able to do surprising things, because He is all-knowing, all-wise, all-loving and all-powerful. The story of Esther makes us know how important it is to pray. It really does pay to pray.

It was after the Jews fasted and prayed that the events changed in their favor. Remember, the night before Mordecai was to be hanged, God made the king not able to sleep; the king called for the royal records to be read to him, and hearing what Mordecai had done, he wanted to honor Mordecai. So instead of hanging Mordecai, Haman was hanged and the Jews were spared.

Though God's name is never mentioned in the book of Esther, we do see His power throughout the events. We see His love for His people; we see that He rules over kings and changes events, when His people pray.

The God of Esther and Mordecai is also our God. He will answer our prayers as He answered theirs. We can trust him with our lives, because He loves us and knows what is best for

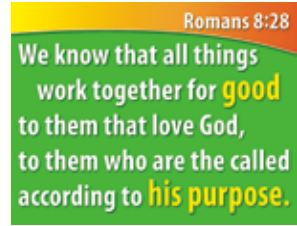
us. We know that God is in control of all things and that He can make everything work together for good if we love and trust Him.

Prayer

Review **Romans 8:28**.

Sing *Shelter in the Time of Storm*
p. 10 #9

Distribute *Focus 5*.



Verse Visual 7