LESSON 12

ESTHER'S FEAST



Aim: **To show the children how God answered his people's prayers.**

Scripture Reading: **Esther 5:1–14; 7:1–10; 9:1–4**

Memory Verse: **Exodus 20:9–10 (the Ten Commandments) "Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work …"**

Presenting the Lesson

Starting point

What does it feel like when you are really frightened? Suggested answers: Your mouth goes dry, you feel as if there is a big knot in your stomach, your knees might even be knocking together.

Main Points of the Lesson

1. Queen Esther had a very dangerous task to do, but she had all the Jewish people praying for her. She had to go and see the king even though he had not called for her. As we saw last time, this could mean death for her unless he held out his golden sceptre to her (Est 4:16).
2. **Describe how Esther dressed herself beautifully and went to see King Xerxes.** He did hold out his sceptre to her; in fact, he was very pleased to see her (5:1–3)! **Show Picture 10.**
3. Esther wisely did not tell the king of her great problem. She just invited him and his prime minister Haman to a feast that she had prepared for them. The king agreed immediately (5:4–5). After they had enjoyed the food and drink Esther asked them to come again the next night (5:6–8).
4. Haman was very proud to have been invited to a feast with the king and queen. He boasted about it. But his happiness turned to anger when he remembered Mordecai, who still refused to bow to him even though he was so important. So Haman and his family erected a special gallows as high as the city walls, where they would hang Mordecai when the day came to kill all the Jews (5:9–14).
5. At the second feast the king asked again, "Queen Esther, what do you want? Ask me anything, even half my kingdom, and it shall be done."
   The following verses, Esther 7:1–6, are very dramatic. **Learn the words of the conversation by heart and act the parts of King Xerxes and Queen Esther. Remind the class that Esther was a Jew.** She was pleading for her people's lives as well as her own. **Show Picture 12.**

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6. The king was very angry when he heard of Haman's wicked plans. He realised that Haman had tricked him. Haman was hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai, and the Jewish people were saved (7:7, 9-10; 9:1-4). God was with Esther in her difficult task and he answered his people's prayers. Today the Jews still have a special feast day to remember Queen Esther's act of obedience and courage (9:26-28).

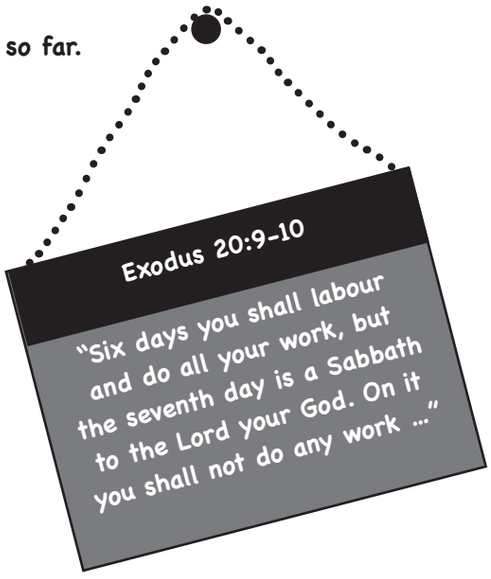
Our Response to the Story

"God stepping in to save South Africa" – this was the heading in a newspaper after 25 000 people from the province of Natal in South Africa met in a sports stadium for a Jesus Peace Rally to pray for the government elections. While these thousands prayed a meeting between opposing tribal and political leaders took place. Their prayers were answered, and the elections were peaceful, with all groups being represented. God protected the people of South Africa from civil war.

God still hears and answers prayers today.

Instil the Memory Verse

Recite all the commandments learnt so far.



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