

HEROES

OF THE

FAITH

Ordinary Men and Women . . .
Super Ordinary Power

27

MORDECAI HALTS PLOT AGAINST THE KING

HEROES OF THE FAITH CURRICULUM—2012

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Arlington † Metroplex
Taking church to the people



27

MORDECAI HALTS PLOT AGAINST THE KING

Memory Verse:

Anyone who knows the right thing to do, but does not do it, is sinning.
(James 4:17 NCV)

Lesson Goals:

- #1 - Understand how ordinary Mordecai was
- #2 - Discover what faith led Mordecai to do
- #3 - Desire to let God do extraordinary things in the life of the ordinary student

Audience:

Young, un-churched learners
Adaptable for all ages, including adults (See **For more training** on Activities page)

Scripture to Study:

Esther 1, 2



MORDECAI HALTS PLOT AGAINST THE KING

Esther 1, 2

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Mordecai

His Heroic Feat: Reported a plot to kill the king

Reporting a plot to kill the king may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

Think back to our lessons about Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. What country were they taken to as young men? (Babylon) What country was ruling by the time Daniel was thrown in the lions' den? (the Medes and the Persians) We find ourselves still in the land where Daniel and his friends served for so long. Many of the Hebrew captives returned to Jerusalem when Cyrus, the Persian, ruled. Some stayed, though. The country, part of the Persian Empire, was being ruled by Xerxes, the son of Darius I.

We enter the story of King Xerxes in the middle of a celebration. This was a huge celebration for a huge empire, 127 provinces. The party lasted for six months and was intended to show off King Xerxes' wealth. You see, King Xerxes wanted to fight a battle against the Greeks and he needed to convince the leaders and everyone else that he could afford this war.*

After the six month long party, the king gave another party that lasted a week. The men and women were separated, each having their own party. In the midst of this lavish party, the king got a little out of control and demanded that his wife, Queen Vashti, appear before the men at his party so that he could show off her beauty. This was not the way a husband should treat his wife and she refused.

After consulting with the experts of his kingdom, the king decided to banish the queen from his presence! Queen Vashti could never again enter the presence of the king. And just in case any other wife decided to do the same, a law was passed that said "each man was to be the ruler of his own family."

King Xerxes got the approval he wanted and went off to war against the Greeks and lost miserably. When he returned, he wasn't angry at Vashti anymore and he wanted a wife. The king's personal servants suggested that the king search for beautiful, young girls so that he could pick one to be his next wife. The king loved the idea!

Now, we are introduced to our hero. He doesn't stand out, but he's a Jewish man who works in the palace. His name is Mordecai. He is a descendant of King Saul, Israel's first king and he decided to stay in Persia when other Jewish captives returned to Jerusalem. Mordecai enters our story because he has adopted his cousin, Hadassah. Hadassah's parents died and Mordecai raised her as his own daughter. Hadassah, like others from the Babylonian captivity, changed her name. Her name was changed to Esther. Esther was very beautiful and she was one of the many young women taken to the palace as part of the search for a new queen.

Esther kept her Jewish heritage a secret, but by God's plan the king was pleased with Esther more than with any of the other young women. "He liked her more than any of the others, so he put a royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti." (Esther 2:17 NCV) And then the king gave another party; this one was in Esther's honor.

Now we get back to Mordecai, who had taken up sitting at the city gates as a judge. One day, Mordecai had the opportunity to overhear a plot. Two of the king's guards, Bigthana and Teresh, were there at the gate and they were angry. The more they talked, they began to form plans to kill King Xerxes! Mordecai reported the information to Queen Esther. Then Esther told the king how Mordecai had "discovered the evil plan." (Esther 2:22 NCV) The report was investigated and found to be true and Bigthana and Teresh were punished. "All of this was written down in the daily court record in the king's presence." (Esther 2:23b NCV) There was no award or parade for Mordecai. But Mordecai did what was right, reward or not.

* McGee, J. Vernon. Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. Griffin Printing: Glendale, California. 1981. pp 179, 180.

YOU CAN BE A HERO, TOO!

When you live a life of faith in Jesus Christ, you don't have to leap tall buildings to be a hero. Mordecai reported a plot to kill the king and saved the king's life.

Nothing special was done for Mordecai, but Mordecai did the right thing anyway. Our memory verse says that, "Anyone who knows the right thing to do, but does not do it, is sinning." (James 4:17 NCV) Mordecai chose to do the right thing. Will you?



NEXT WEEK
Queen Risks Her Life to Save
Her People

PRE-SCHOOL!

LESSON

Who can tell me what a hero is? A hero is someone who is courageous and brave and compassionate. There are heroes and heroines in the Bible. All of them are brave and courageous and more, but not in the way you would expect.

Our hero: Mordecai

His Heroic Feat: Reported a plot to kill the king

Reporting a plot to kill the king may not sound very heroic, but let's look at the facts and see what you think when you have heard the whole story!

We enter the story of King Xerxes in the middle of a celebration. This was a huge celebration. The party lasted for six months. After the six month long party, the king gave another party that lasted a week. The men and women were separated; men at one party, women at another. The king got a little out of control and demanded that his wife, Queen Vashti, appear before the men at his party so that he could show off her beauty. This was not the way a husband should treat his wife and she refused. Because she didn't obey the king, she wouldn't be queen any longer. The king was lonely and sad, though. The king's personal servants suggested that the king search for beautiful, young girls so that he could pick one to be his next wife. The king loved the idea!

There is a man who works at the palace. His name is Mordecai. Mordecai has a cousin who is very beautiful. Her name was Esther. He adopted her after her parents died. Mordecai raised Esther as his own daughter. Esther was one of the many young women taken to the palace as part of the search for a new queen. Esther was Jewish, but she didn't tell anyone. God planned for the king to be pleased with Esther more than with any of the other young women. King Xerxes liked Esther more than any of the others, so he put a royal crown on her head and made her queen in place of Vashti. And then the king gave a party for Queen Esther.

With Esther as queen, Mordecai sat at the city gates as a judge. One day he had the opportunity to overhear a plot. Two of the king's guards, Bigthana and Teresh, were there at the gate and they were angry. The more they talked, they began to form plans to kill King Xerxes! Mordecai reported the information to Queen Esther. Then Esther told the king how Mordecai had "discovered the evil plan." (Esther 2:22 NCV) The report was investigated and found to be true and Bigthana and Teresh were punished. "All of this was written down in the daily court record in the king's presence." (Esther 2:23b NCV) There was no award or parade for Mordecai.

ACTIVITIES!

- Memory Verse Activity - Make road signs on large pieces of construction paper. Print the memory verse on the road signs in the same kind of font that is used on road signs.
- Continue adding heroes' names and heroic feats to your "Heroes Banner."
- Sing "The Lord Has a Will," "Trust and Obey," "Jesus Draw Me Close," "Create in Me a Clean Heart" or other praise songs related to the lesson.
- Re-enact the lesson. Stage your own reality show "Persian Princess," for the search of the next queen. Talk about the beauty treatments mentioned in Esther 2.
- Make paper crowns and decorate them with jewels and glitter.
- **For more training:** Read Psalm 4:5, 15:1-3, 37:17, 106: 3, Proverbs 4:26, Zechariah 7:9, and 1 John 2:29, 3:7. Discuss in light of our memory verse and lesson.
- **For more training:** Read Daniel 2. God is the God who gives kings power and takes it away. (Daniel 2:21) This prophecy is evidence that God is the one in control. It describes Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom of Babylon and mentions those to come. The two arms of the statue describe the Medo Persian empire that is followed by Greece. Discuss this in light of our lesson, including the interim between Esther 1 and 2.

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James 4:17

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HERO IN TRAINING

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HERO TRAINING!

Scripture: Esther 1, 2

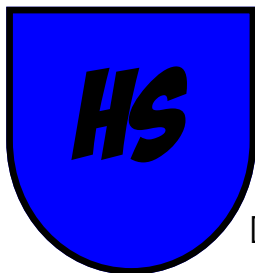
Memory verse:

Anyone who knows the right thing to do, but does not do it, is sinning. (James 4:17 NCV)

Our Hero: _____

What did our hero do that was so heroic? _____

What can you do to be a **Hero of the Faith**? _____



What power do Heroes of the Faith possess?

Do you have the power? _____

Read Esther 2:21-22. How did Mordecai know what was right? Read Exodus 20:13. How can you know what is right? _____

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Can you crack the code to find the Hidden Message?
Beginning at the arrow, cross out the first letter and every other letter
around the circle. Copy the letters into the spaces below.

ratniyoolnjedwyhoopkzfnfonwesttmhrefriingrhktotqhsienfgttyomdfodbiuothdjogetstfnhovtndioolpirtstsdiscnvninyg

James 4:17

WORD

SEARCH!

B S M C G N E D X E G D E
D M O A N Y L O N V M E X
P E R S I A A D R A C H A
H S D N K D S N O S L U B
E R E H T S E N E E U Q E
Y X C W S D W O B T N O D
C E A I N E W Q U E E N N
I R I K I N G X E R X E S
T I R I A C E D R O M L G
H N E M G Q U E I A D O O
S I P H A H C A H S E M N
A D O P T E D C O U S I N
V T R E O R F A Z D I U E
G N T N L H A N A O I A H
H T S U P T F T E G P L C

- Persia

- King Xerxes

- Vashti

- new queen

- Mordecai

- adopted cousin

- Queen Esther

- plot against king

- Mordecai reports

HIDDEN MESSAGE!

Answer Page

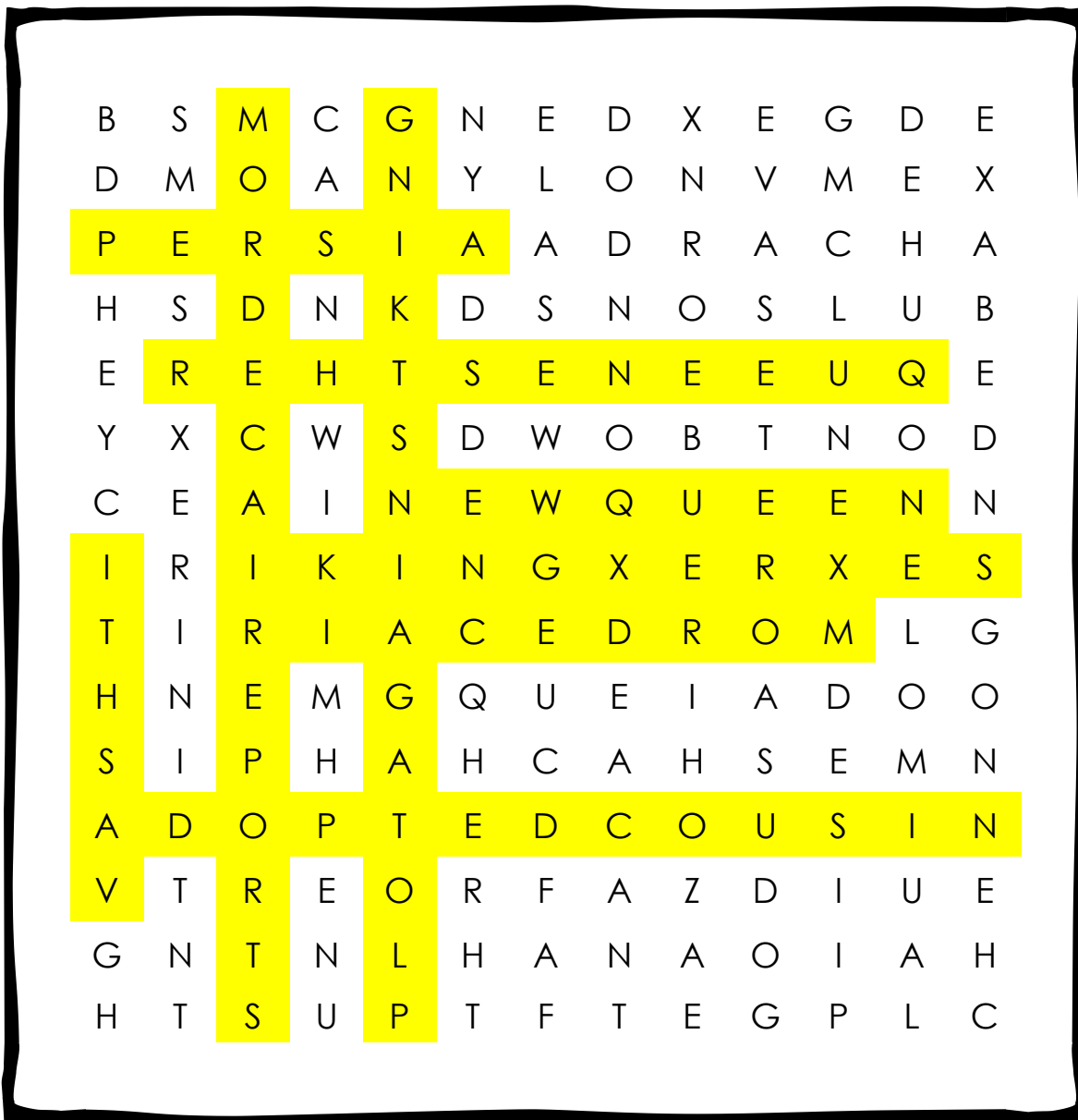
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James 4:17

WORD

SEARCH!

Answer Page



- Persia
- King Xerxes
- Vashti
- new queen
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- adopted cousin
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