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Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:1-6:16

Theme: Prayer and action go hand in hand

PreK-K (Ages 3-5)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Esther's Brave Heart" Opening Wonder: "Who's ready to meet a brave girl named Esther today?" Show a picture of Esther smiling (or draw one!) and ask, "What makes someone brave? How can we be brave too?" Share that Esther was chosen by God to help her people, just like He places each of us in special spots for His purpose! Story Time (Esther 1-10): "Long ago, a king named Xerxes had a big party. But Esther, a kind Jewish girl, stayed home because she didn't want to go. 'Why was she hiding?' you might ask. Because she wanted to help her people! God had a plan for Esther to save her friends, just like He places you in this room today for something wonderful!" Repeat: "God sees you! He has a purpose for you!" Practice Bravery: "How can we be brave like Esther?" Give examples: helping a friend, sharing God's love, or standing up for what's right. End with a prayer: "Dear God, help me be brave today! Teach me to trust You!" (Use a simple hand-clap or chant for kids to remember: "God's plan, God's plan, He sees me, He loves me!") Closing Wonder: "Who will be brave today?" Hold up a mirror or point to a child, "You're part of God's big story! What will you do with your time?" Leave them excited to explore God's purpose in their lives. Keep it fun, visual, and heart-centered!

Bible Story

Esther's Brave Heart

Long ago, in a big, beautiful palace, there lived a kind queen named Vashti. One day, King Ahasuerus (that's what the Bible calls him) called the queen to a feast. She wore her beautiful crown and sat beside him, shining so bright. But the king said, "I don't want to see her like this today!" So he sent for a young woman named Esther, who had been raised in the palace. She was as pretty as a flower, with a kind heart, and she was the queen now.

Esther's uncle Mordecai was worried because no one had asked about her or her people. "God sees what we do," he whispered. "One day, something important will happen." The king loved Esther so much that he let her wear her own

clothes and jewels. She sat beside him, and everyone loved her, even though her people were not invited to the big feasts.

One night, Mordecai told Esther, "The king wants to punish someone very badly!" He showed her letters from the king's enemies, saying, "We will kill everyone!" Esther prayed, "God, help me!" She thought, "Maybe I can be brave and speak to the king!" She took a bath, dressed in her best clothes, and went to see the king. When he saw her, he was so happy to see her! "Who is this brave girl?" he asked. She said, "I am Esther." The king was kind and let her speak.

Mordecai knew God was with Esther, and Esther knew she could trust God. One day, the king's enemies planned to hurt everyone, but God had a special plan! Esther stood up for her people, just like God wanted her to. She said, "If I am brave, God will help me!" And guess what? The king's enemies were punished, and God saved his people. "For such a time as this," Esther said, meaning "God uses us when it's time!"

This story shows that God can use even the smallest hearts to do big things, just like Esther! Can you imagine being brave enough to help others, even when it's hard? Let's trust God to give us courage, like He did for Esther. What can you do for others today?

Key Verse

Nehemiah 2:18

God's Big Plan for You! Once upon a time, there was a brave girl named Esther who was very special. She wasn't always the queen, she had to wait and work hard to get there. Just like Esther, God has a special reason for you, too! He made you just the way He wants you to be for a very important time. What's Your Job? Sometimes, when we grow up, we learn to help others, just like a kind friend, a helper at school, or even a teacher! God uses us to make the world a happier place. Esther didn't know it then, but God wanted her to be brave and speak up for others. And guess what? He might be using you right now too! Brave Hearts & Big Miracles Imagine if someone is sad or needs help, and you know how to fix it! God puts people in our lives for a reason, maybe to share kindness, smile, or even stand up for what's right. Esther's story shows that even small, special moments can lead to big wonders. And you? You're part of God's amazing story! Thank You, God! So remember: God has a plan for you, just like He had for Esther. He loves you so much and wants you to be brave, kind, and full of wonder! Now go share that love today, it's a gift from God! Who knows what adventures you'll have?

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Show the Bible: Read Esther 1-2 aloud. Ask, "Who was brave like Esther?" Let kids clap.
2. Cut the mask: The teacher cuts plates into circles (or cut one plate in half for smaller kids).
3. Decorate: Give crayons to color bravery (e.g., red for heart, blue for water, gold for treasure).
4. Act it out: Each child puts on the mask and pretends to speak up for someone, boom!, like Esther did!
5. "Treasure Hunt Treasure Box" (Movement & Roleplay)
6. Read the story: Highlight Esther's hiding and bravery: "She kept her secret... then acted bold!"
7. Hide treasure: Glue coins/stickers in 3 boxes (e.g., one labeled "Hiding," one "Speaking Up").
8. Play the game: Kids find the boxes, open them, and mimic Esther's actions (e.g., whispering then shouting).
9. Share: "What did you learn about being brave like Esther?" (Repeat: "Brave hearts hide big ideas!")

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions inspired by Esther , For Such a Time as This, designed for young children (ages 3, 5) with simple language and gentle wonder:

- What did Esther do when she was afraid?
- "How do you think Esther felt when she was hiding? Maybe you've felt shy or nervous too. When we're scared, what kinds of things can help us feel brave? What can you do when you're unsure or worried?"
- Why did the king want to see Esther?
- "Esther was special because she was kind and brave. What are some things you like about yourself? How can you be brave like Esther, even when things feel big or hard?"
- What made the queen different from others?
- "Esther wore special clothes and had a special job. What makes you unique? What would make you feel like a queen or hero in your own way?"
- How can we be brave like Esther today?
- "Esther trusted God and took a big step. What's one small thing you can do today that might feel brave, like sharing, asking for help, or being kind?"
- These questions encourage kids to share their thoughts, wonder about bravery, and see themselves in Esther's story. Would you like any tweaks to fit a specific lesson focus?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Esther , A Time of Wonder and Courage (Teacher starts gently, making the airy sound like a soft breeze: "Shhh... whisper...") "Dear God, Look how kind You are, Like Esther, You see each little heart, Each child like us, who wants to do what's right. Today, we wonder: How did Esther stand strong? How did she trust You? Just like her, we ask You to be brave, To speak up when it matters. Help us trust You, like Esther trusted You, You're always with us, like the stars in the sky! Amen." (Pause for wonder, point to the sky or hold up a star-shaped paper.) "You made us just for You, God. Like Esther's courage, our hearts hold big dreams, but sometimes they feel tiny... So, we ask: How can we use our time? Like Esther, let's be ready, To listen, to care, to be kind, and trust You when we don't know what to do! You're the best Storyteller, God, Shine bright in our hearts, today and always!" (Repeat the first part softly to close.) Why it works for 3-5-year-olds: - Repetition: "Look how kind You are" + "trust You like Esther" loops the wonder. - Wonder: "Like the stars in the sky" makes God feel tangible. - Short sentences + breathy words ("shhh... whisper") for quiet engagement. - Action focus: "Speak up," "trust You," ties to now rather than Esther's story alone. Optional: Add a hand motion for "brave" (clap twice) or "trust" (pretend to hold God's hand).

>> Missions Spotlight

The Persian-speaking peoples of Iran (Farsi) have a deep love for the story of Esther, which takes place in their homeland. Iranian believers use Esther's story to encourage courage in the face of persecution, God is at work even when He seems hidden.

-> To the Cross

Esther was placed in the palace 'for such a time as this' to save her people. Jesus was placed on the cross 'for such a time as this', to save all people. God has a plan, and He uses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.