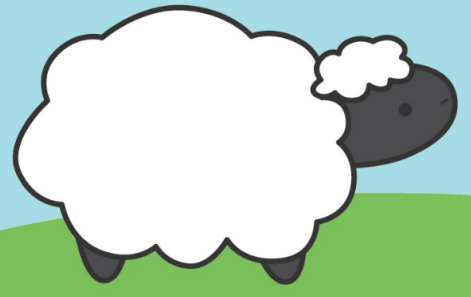


# LESSON 6



## MORDECAI AND HAMAN

### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### The King's Seal

Signet rings were used in ancient times as personal signatures. Such rings usually had a raised imprint made of metal or wood. The king had his own imprint, and official documents were sealed by pressing the king's ring into soft wax.

In the book of Esther, these official documents or decrees issued by the king and sealed by his signet ring became "the laws of the Persians and Medes" (1:19). This describes the uncompromising nature of the laws that governed the Persian Empire.

Once a law was issued, it could not be revoked or changed, not even by the king himself.

#### Casting Lots

Casting lots (i.e., throwing dice) was commonly used in the past to make important decisions. It was believed that this practice would reveal the best solution.

Haman casts lots to determine the best day to carry out his plan to kill the Jews, including Mordecai. In the book of Jonah and at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, casting lots was also practiced to make decisions.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Hatred is something that can easily consume people. It may begin with not liking someone because of the way he looks or acts. Whatever the reason, hatred will only grow and corrupt the heart. Haman was so consumed with hatred for Mordecai that he formulated a plan to eliminate all the Jews living in Persia. His heart was full of hatred and bitterness.

Your students will begin to develop certain dislikes at their age. Those things may include the disdain for vegetables, homework, or even certain people. The former two are usually brushed off and it is hoped that the students will outgrow them with age. However, the dislike for others should not be taken lightly.

Parents often laugh it off when their children say that they don't like boys or girls in general. That may be a normal part of growing up. But it is also common for children to form cliques and exclude others from their group. Gangs are not an uncommon sight in schools nowadays. They target people for many reasons: their race, their looks, their culture, or their gender.

It usually starts out on a small scale. Maybe your students will giggle knowingly or make faces amongst themselves when someone they do not like is mentioned. It seems like a game, a secret they share. But it can grow into something much worse if the attitudes are not corrected.

### BIBLE TEXT

Esther 2:19-23, 3, 5:9-16, 6:1-12

### BIBLE TRUTH

God blesses those who are humble.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To be humble children of God.
2. To have love, instead of hatred, in our hearts.

### MEMORY VERSE

"God resists the proud,  
but gives grace to the humble."

(1 Peter 5:5b)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus we pray. Lord Jesus, You are the only true God. We want to be obedient and humble, and to follow the good examples of Esther and Mordecai by keeping Your commandments. Please watch over us and keep us from becoming proud and boastful and from thinking of ourselves as better than others. Hallelujah! Amen.

In Hebrews 12:15, it warns us against "any root of bitterness springing up" that will "cause trouble, and by this many become defiled."

Remind your students that God commanded them to love their neighbors as themselves. They should not dislike anyone for any reason. Maybe they feel that they are pressured due to their need for friends and approval. Either way, it is not acceptable and such an attitude does not please God.

It is important to ensure that your students have the correct attitudes growing up so that they can stand firm under any situation in the future. Remind them of the memory verse: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

### VOCABULARY

**gallows:** a wooden frame used for hanging people

**decree:** an official order

### REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how a beautiful Jewish woman became the new queen of Persia. Her name was Esther. She was brought up by Mordecai, who had taught her to be obedient and to worship God.

Before she had been chosen, King Xerxes had been angry with his queen, Vashti, because she had not obeyed him. As a result, he banished her from the palace. Then he had to find a new queen to replace her.

The king's ministers selected the most beautiful women in the land and pampered them for one year to prepare them to see the king. When a year had passed, the women went in to see Xerxes one by one. When it was Esther's turn, the king was very pleased with her. He immediately crowned her as the new queen and held a great feast for everyone.

We learned that Esther was blessed by God because she was obedient. Even though she was a queen, she never boasted and always humbled herself.

## BIBLE STORY

### Mordecai Foils a Plot

After Esther became queen, she lived in the palace. Mordecai, her adopted father, was concerned about her and wanted to make sure that she was all right. Fortunately, Mordecai was always near the gates of the king's palace, so he was not far from her. Many times he would go near the palace courtyard to find out how Esther was doing.

One day, as Mordecai sat at the gates, he saw two men talking secretly to one another. Because he was sitting close to them, he overheard their conversation. They were plotting to kill the king! They said that the king had angered them and now they wanted revenge.

When Mordecai heard this, he quickly thought of a plan to stop them. He knew the best way was to tell Queen Esther, who could then report it to the king. So he sent a message to the queen. When Queen Esther heard the news, she immediately told her husband, King Xerxes.

The king wanted to be sure, so he sent his servants to investigate. When they reported that it was true, the two men were arrested and hung. This event was also recorded in the king's palace history books.

Now Mordecai was a humble man and he did not go around telling people how he had saved the king's life. And because the king was so busy, he forgot to reward Mordecai. But Mordecai did not become angry because he was a good person and felt that it was a natural responsibility to help others.

### The Proud and Evil Haman

Now around the same time, there was a very important official who worked for the king. He was the prime minister and his name was Haman.

Haman was very different from Mordecai. He was a proud man and liked it when people bowed down to him because he thought he was better than them. But whenever Haman passed by the king's gates, he noticed that Mordecai never bowed down to him. Mordecai knew that he could only bow down to God and not to anyone else.

Haman became very angry and began to think of ways to punish Mordecai. He knew that Mordecai was a Jew. The more Haman thought about it, the more enraged he became. Haman was so evil that he thought it would be best if all the Jews were killed. That way, Mordecai would be killed with them and he wouldn't have to make an extra effort or have it look like a personal grudge.

### The Decree Is Issued

Haman decided to take action on his plan. He knew that he had to get permission from the king because there were many Jews in the land. Haman thought of a way to convince the king without raising suspicion about his real motive. When he was ready, he went to see King Xerxes in the palace.

"King Xerxes," said Haman, "There is a certain group

of people in the land who are evil and they do not follow your laws. It would be best if they were killed."

The king did not realize Haman's evil plan and just blindly trusted Haman's words.

"What should we do then?" asked the king.

Haman replied, "Let the king issue a decree saying that all these people, men or women, young or old, be destroyed on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and their properties confiscated."

This proposal sounded good to the king so he signed a letter to seal the fate of the Jews. Haman had come up with this plot in the first month of the year. So there were still another eleven months before the Jews would be killed.

Haman was very happy about this new law. But since the end of the year was still a long ways away, he would still become angry whenever he saw Mordecai refusing to bow down to him. He always went home mad and complained to his family.

One day, Haman's family and friends tried to comfort him. They suggested that he build a gallows and hang Mordecai in public. That way, Haman could get his revenge. Haman thought that this was a wonderful idea and had the gallows made immediately. He could hardly wait till the morning when he would see the king and tell him about his plan.

### Mordecai Is Honored

But God knew about Haman's evil plans and would not allow such an evil man to have his way.

Strangely, the same night that Haman came up with his evil plan to hang Mordecai, King Xerxes could not fall asleep. The king did not understand why. So he got up and asked his servant to read the palace's history to him.

It so happened that the servant read about how

Mordecai had saved the king's life some time ago. Then the king remembered that he had not rewarded him. But he could not think of a good way to thank Mordecai for his heroic actions.

Just as the king was thinking of what to do, Haman came into the king's court, wanting to speak to King Xerxes about hanging Mordecai. When the king saw Haman, he immediately asked him an important question.

"Haman, what should be done for someone I want to honor?" the king asked. He thought Haman might have a great idea.

When Haman heard this, he thought the king was speaking about him. So Haman gave the king an answer, picturing himself as the man to be honored.

"The king should give this man a royal robe to wear and have an official lead him in a parade through the streets on horseback. It should be announced that this is the man the king wants to honor so that everyone on the streets can hear it."

Haman was very excited about his clever idea, thinking that it was him the king wanted to honor.

The king thought that this was a good way to thank Mordecai, so he gave an order to Haman.

"Do as you say, Haman. Take the royal robe and horse and give them to Mordecai, who is at the gates. You will be the official that leads him in the parade."

Haman was so humiliated when he heard the king's orders. He did not realize the king was talking about his enemy. There was nothing he could do now except to follow King Xerxes' instructions.

Haman reluctantly did as the king ordered. He put the royal robe on Mordecai and led him out on the streets with Mordecai riding on the royal horse. Afterwards, Haman went home feeling worse than ever. His plan to hang Mordecai was ruined.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

### Fill In the Blanks/True or False/Questions

- Mordecai was a \_\_\_\_\_ (humble) man. He did not boast about saving the king.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (Haman) was the prime minister in King Xerxes' palace.
- The king wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ (honor) Mordecai for saving his life.
- True or False: Haman came up with a plan to kill the Jews, including Mordecai. (True)
- True or False: Haman was a humble man. He was glad Mordecai was being honored. (False)
- Why didn't Mordecai bow down to Haman?  
He did not want to disobey God's commandment—ask students which of the Ten Commandments to which this refers [the second].
- What was Haman's plan for taking revenge against Mordecai?  
To destroy all the Jews.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.

You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

### LIFE APPLICATION

From the story of Mordecai and Haman, we learned about the importance of being humble.

### SPIRITUAL TEACHING

**[1]**

We need to learn  
to be humble.

The Bible states “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (1 Pet 5:5b). Therefore, it is pleasing to God for us to be humble.

Have you ever looked down on others just because you felt that you were a little better than them? (For example, you did well on a test at school or you were better than them at a certain sport.)

Sometimes, it is easy for us to become proud and arrogant when we are good at something or when we can do something better than someone else. But we must remember that God does not like people who are proud, like Haman. In fact, those who are proud will be punished by God in the end.

### SPIRITUAL TEACHING [2]

Those who are  
humble will be  
blessed by God.

### LIFE APPLICATION

Mordecai was a humble man. Even when he managed to save the king, he did not seek to be praised or to be given any reward. In the end, we see that God truly blessed Mordecai.

Boys and girls, we all know the importance of being humble. But what does it mean to be humble? What kind of behavior does a humble person show? (For example, a humble person would give praise to God when he does well on a test at school. He would not go around showing off to others about how smart he is.)

Apart from Mordecai, can you think of any other person in the Bible who was humble? What did that person do to show that he was humble? How did God bless that person? (Examples may include Moses, Jesus, Joseph, etc.)

### SPIRITUAL TEACHING [3]

We must not  
have hatred  
in our hearts.

### LIFE APPLICATION

God wants us to show love to the people around us, even those that we don't like. What are some good things we can do for people that we don't really like?

## HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

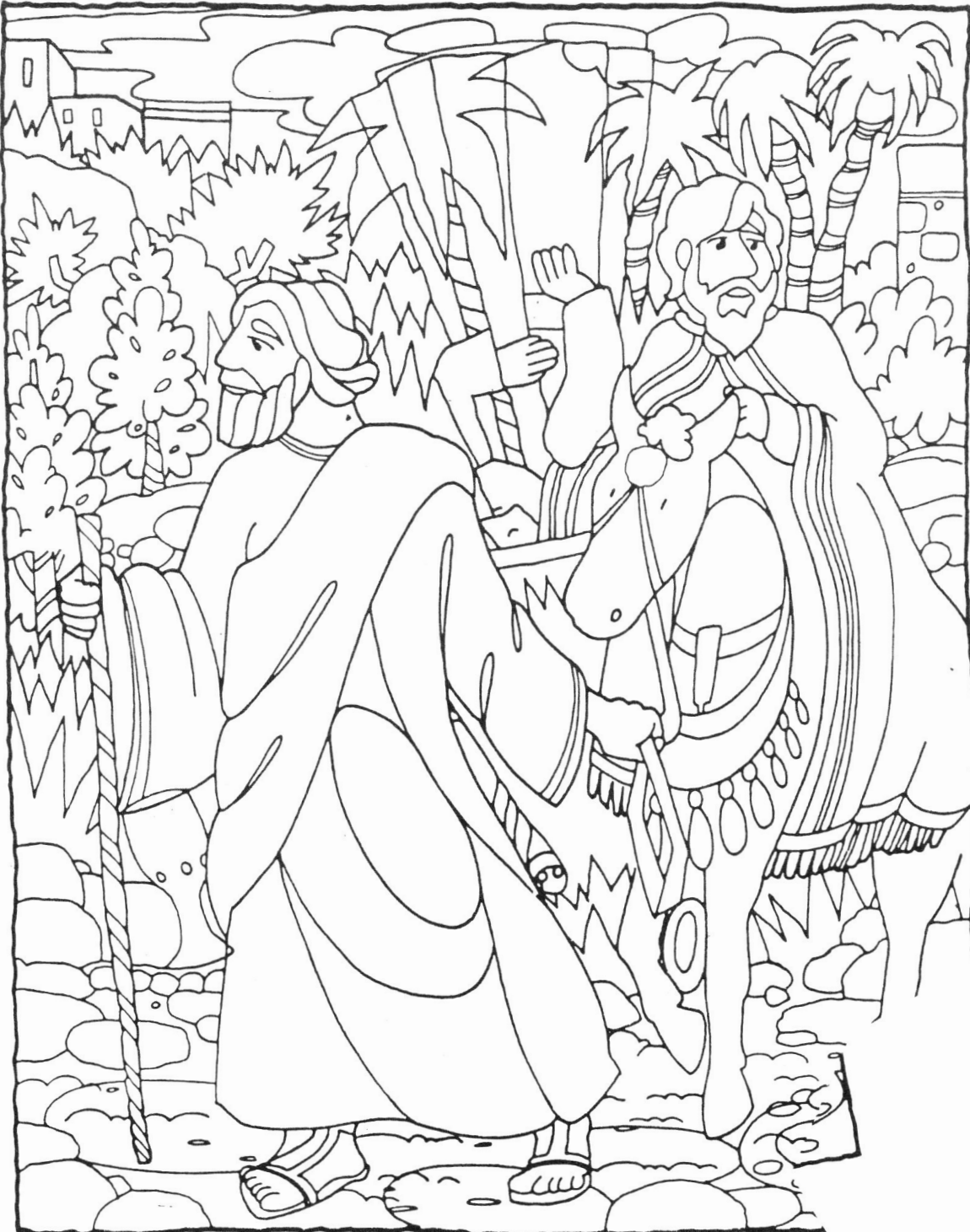
1. He told Queen Esther to warn the king.
2. Haman was prime minister to King Xerxes.
3. He wanted people to bow down to him.
4. Mordecai kept God's commandment to only worship Him alone.
5. Proud, hateful, wicked
6. Because the hatred in his heart was great and he thought that it would make it easier to cover up his true motive.
7. Student response
8. He put the royal robe on Mordecai and had Haman lead Mordecai in a parade through the streets while he rode on the king's horse.
9. Student response

## ACTIVITIES

1

## Mordecai Is Honored

Look at the picture of Haman leading Mordecai through the streets on the king's horse. This was King Xerxes' way of honoring Mordecai for saving his life. Look carefully at the picture. Can you find the king himself, the king's crown, the king's ring, a sandal, a scepter and a goblet hidden in the picture? Color them in.



**2****Mordecai and Haman Puppet Role-play**

**Objective:** To get students to make their own puppets for the play.

**Materials**

- empty toilet rolls
- scissors
- construction paper
- glue

**Instructions**

1. Using the materials listed, make puppets for the following characters:
  - Mordecai
  - Haman
  - King Xerxes
  - two guards that conspired against the king
  - Queen Esther
2. After all the students finish making their puppets, ask them to retell the story of Haman and Mordecai in a puppet role-play.

E1 Year 2 Book 3 Lesson 6—Mordecai and Haman

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** God blesses those who are humble.

**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To be humble children of God.  
2. To have love, instead of hatred, in our hearts.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(1 Peter 5:5b)

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## What I Learned From the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

1. What did Mordecai do after hearing the plot against the king?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was Haman?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What did Haman want people to do when he walked past them?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Why didn't Mordecai bow down to Haman?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. List out some of Haman's weaknesses.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Haman only hated Mordecai. Why did he eventually want to kill all the Jews in the land?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you think it was a coincidence that the king read the palace's history books just before Haman wanted to hang Mordecai?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How did the king reward Mordecai?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What happens when we are obedient to God?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Life Application: Have you ever disliked someone? Does the mention of that person's name make you angry? God tells us that this is the wrong attitude to have. As children of God, we need to learn to be humble and we must not dislike other people. If we dislike someone or have hatred in our hearts, what can we do to change ourselves for the better? Write your ideas down on another sheet of paper.