



QUEEN
ESTHER



Queen Esther

Tough Choice

Our character studies begin with one of the greatest heroines in history, a woman named Esther. Esther was a Jew, and at the time she was born, her people were captives of the Kingdom of Persia. Esther was chosen to become queen to the great King Xerxes after the old queen made him angry. It was a great honor, but soon, Esther found herself in a difficult position. There were men plotting to kill many of her people, and her uncle sent word, begging her for help.

READ ESTHER 4:8-17

If Esther dared to see the king without being called and he chose not to see her, she could die. But if she didn't take the chance, her people would die. Esther had a tough choice to make, and with God's help, she found the courage to make that choice.

READ ESTHER 5:1-3

MAIN POINT: I hope you'll all read the book of Esther for yourself, but I'll go ahead and tell you how it ends. Esther does persuade the king to save her people. Not only that, the king turns around and ordered the men who wanted the Jews dead to be killed. Not only did Esther save her people, she helped to prevent the enemies of Israel from trying again!

Esther made a difficult choice. She could have stayed silent and not gotten involved, but she risked her life to do what is right. Esther shows us that heroes always find the courage to make the right choice.

Object Lesson

ITEMS NEEDED: A jar of crunchy peanut butter and a jar of creamy peanut butter

Ask: How many of you who are going to school bring a lunch from home? Who takes a peanut butter sandwich? How many hot lunch kids do we have?

Now, those of you who are peanut butter sandwich eaters, here's the real question. Crunchy, or creamy? Who here prefers crunchy? Who here prefers creamy? Some decisions are no brainers. You don't have to think about crunchy vs. creamy because odds are you made that preference long, long ago. Same goes for those of you who are allergic. Peanut butter is always a no for obvious reasons!

Some decisions aren't so easy. Sometimes it's hard to know what's right and what's wrong. Sometimes it's pretty obvious that one thing is wrong, but it's hard to make the right choice when all your friends are making the wrong one. Do you have the strength to make the right choice, even when it's hard?

When you find yourself faced with one of those tough choices, do what Esther did. Pray. Ask others to pray with you. Ask God for the courage to make the right choice. Be brave enough to make the right choice, and who knows? God could make you a hero to someone who needs it.

Power Point

Ask for God's help making a tough choice.

MEMORY VERSE

Psalm 118:14, "The Lord gives me strength and makes me secure. He has saved me." (NirV)





Apply the Lesson

As kids, many of the choices you face aren't nearly as difficult as Esther's. Most of the choices are pretty routine. Am I going to wear pants or a skirt to school? Will I



eat Rice Krispies or Cheerios for breakfast? Will I sit by this person or that person at lunch? Will I choose to read *Little House on the Prairie* or *The Chronicles of Narnia*? These choices may sometimes seem tough, but they're not the choices we're talking about. Have you ever made the choice to befriend the new kid in school?

What about the choice to stand up for the kids all the bullies want to push around? Would you be brave enough to step in and defend a fellow student who looks different, acts different, and gets picked on just for being different? Have you ever had to make a choice between right or wrong when all your friends have already made the wrong choice? Peer pressure can make even the simplest choices very difficult. You know in your heart what the right choice is, but are you willing to be rejected by your friends to do what is right? Making the right choice is never easy.

SMALL GROUP GAME/ACTIVITY:

Play a game of "Would You Rather" with the kids, asking them to choose between some crazy, silly options, such as, "Would you rather be able to fly like a bird or swim like a dolphin?" "Would you rather have a pet dinosaur or a pet dragon?" "Would you rather eat pizza for every meal or ice cream for every meal?" "Would you rather have super speed or super strength?" "Would you rather live in a house made of candy or a house made of toys?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Read Esther 4:8-17 and 5:1-3

- Who was Esther?
- Why were Esther's people in danger?
- Why was it a tough choice for Esther to see the king?
- Was Esther able to save her people?
- Is there a tough decision you have to make right now?

SIMPLE PRAYER:

Dear God, Show us the right thing to do, and help us to do it. In Jesus' name, Amen





Apple Object Lesson

Class, today we're going to learn a big idea with the help of a little apple. *(Have an apple to show)*

Imagine an apple tree full of bright, yummy apples. Each apple is different; some are big, some are small, some are super shiny, and some have funny shapes. But guess what? Every single apple is important and has a special job to do.

Just like apples, each of us is unique. We all look different, like different things, and are good at different stuff. And that's awesome because it means we all have our own purpose – our own special part to play in the world.

Think about it. Some apples are perfect for making apple pie, and some are just right for snacking or making juice. Some apples might even become seeds that grow into new apple trees! They all have a purpose.

And just like those apples, we all have something special to give. Maybe you're great at drawing, or you can run really fast, or you're super good at sharing and making friends. Whatever it is, it's your gift to the world.

So, remember, no matter how different we are, we're all like apples on a tree – each with our own purpose that makes the world a better, more interesting place.

Whatever happens and wherever our life paths lead, we recognize God's hand is on us and will give us all we need. He is our Father, and just like our earthly fathers, He cares for us and has remarkable things in store for our lives! Anything is possible when we remember who we are in Christ.

